

# Church expansion through church planting in Ghana: A case study of the Lighthouse Chapel International Model

**EMMANUEL LOUIS NTERFUL**

**#23699787**

Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree *Magister of Arts* in Missiology at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University

in co-operation with

**Greenwich School of Theology**

United Kingdom

Supervisor: Prof Dr B Talbot

Co-supervisor: Prof Dr PJ Buys

November 2013

## **ABSTRACT**

Jesus Christ instructed His disciples before His death to limit the preaching of the gospel to the ‘lost sheep of the house of Israel’ (Matt 10:6). After His resurrection, however, He broadened the scope of proselytizing to all: “Make disciples of all nations” (Matt 28:18-20). This meant that the gospel should be preached everywhere and to all peoples. This mandate has come to be known by Christians as the Great Commission.

Since the 1970s a new wave of churches, commonly referred to as the charismatic churches, have come to be firmly established on the religious landscape of Ghana, West Africa. One of the most prominent is the Lighthouse Chapel International (LCI). Headquartered in Accra, the LCI is a large worldwide denomination that aggressively employs the agency of church planting in its attempt to facilitate the fulfilment of the Great Commission.

This study enquires into the church planting activities of the Lighthouse Chapel International with the aim of documenting the processes, principles and strategies underlying the denomination’s mission. It is hoped that this empirical analysis of the LCI will benefit newer struggling churches, particularly those within the charismatic tradition, in their efforts to spread the gospel of Christ, while providing a new self-understanding that will carry the LCI itself into the future.

The study employs a qualitative methodology through the review of some relevant literature, interviews with key informants (LCI ministers, non-LCI charismatic leaders, and non-LCI leaders conversant with the LCI church planting model), together with collated views from focus group discussions and the results of a qualitative questionnaire. The literature review on the LCI relies primarily on the sermons and writings of Heward-Mills, the founder of the denomination, which have informed the strategies and other processes in the church’s missionary work and advancement. The study reveals that, overall, the LCI’s mission strategies, including the focused emphasis on church planting, lay ministry, administrative support systems, and use of permanent

church halls, have combined to create a productive and robust church planting model in Ghana.

The study concludes that the fulfilment of the Great Commission must be the main preoccupation of the charismatic churches in Ghana, and that the foremost strategy for achieving this is church planting. The study recommends the development of a wellthought-out biblical and theologically based mission strategy. Church planting will be enhanced by more effective use of lay people, appropriate attention to a doctrine of loyalty, efficient administrative support systems and the building of permanent church halls. Each network of churches ought also to appoint a missions department with a named director to ensure that the missional aspect of the work of the Christian church in Ghana remains central in its planning and activities.

**KEY WORDS:** Great Commission, Church planting, Missions, Lighthouse Chapel International, Church Expansion, Charismatic Churches, Ghana, Lay Ministry, Loyalty, Permanent Church Halls.

## **PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The mandate of the Lord Jesus Christ to His church to carry out the Great Commission is without doubt the greatest testament He left His church. The preaching of the gospel to all lost peoples of the world should be the utmost preoccupation of every Christian and every church.

The Lighthouse Chapel International's church planting emphasis to expand the kingdom of God is exemplary amongst the churches of the charismatic strand in Ghana. Both the need to accomplish the Great Commission and the Lighthouse Chapel International's efforts to make this happen have inspired this research work.

I am grateful to the Lord Jesus Christ for saving me, and the Holy Spirit for His presence and help in my life and ministry. I would like to thank Bishop Dag Heward-Mills for relentlessly pushing the agenda of soul-winning across all frontiers of the world; his work with the Lighthouse Chapel International has served as the needed platform for the study.

Many people have helped to make this study a reality and are worthy of special mention. My lead supervisor Professor Brian Talbot and co-supervisor Professor Phillipus Buys have amply guided me throughout the study. Their suggestions and inputs have undoubtedly strengthened the research. The administrative support of Peg Evans and Tienie Buys, both liaison administrators of GST/NWU, has been immense. To them also I express my heartfelt gratitude.

Being a distant learning student I soon realized that I needed a local scholar in my area of research who could help me to understand how best I could undertake the research within the Ghanaian context. Professor David Kpobi of the Trinity Theological Seminary, Accra, played this role very well.

Furthermore, I wish to acknowledge and also thank the leaders of the charismatic churches that I selected for this study, as well as their delegated key officers, for cooperating in terms of completing questionnaires, granting interviews and supplying needed available data on their churches. The same acknowledgement goes also to the bishops, missionaries and administrative staff of the Lighthouse Chapel International.

My acknowledgement and gratitude will be woefully inadequate without the mention of my able research assistants Dr. Esi Colecraft and Michael Molenaar, as well

as my colleagues at the Anagkazo Bible School, Rev. David Asomani, Bishop Hamish Oddoye, Rev. Kingsley Tetteh, Rev. Eric Bandoh, and my executive secretary Mrs. Selasi Wemegah.

Finally, I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to my dear wife Paula-Danielle and our children for enduring my long periods of absence that were needed to enable me to concentrate on this research work.

To all the aforementioned and many more that space will not allow me to list here, I say thank you for all your help and input that has made this study a reality.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

### **CHAPTER 1: General Introduction**

1.1 Background to the Study.....	2
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	5
1.3 Research Aims and Objectives.....	6
1.4 Methodology.....	8
1.5 Scope and Limitations of the Study.....	10
1.6 Significance of the Study.....	10

### **CHAPTER 2: Biblical and Theological Foundations for the Church Planting Approach of the LCI Denomination**

2.1 Biblical Foundations for Church Planting.....	12
2.1.1 The Example of the Early Apostles and the Jerusalem Church.....	15
2.1.2 The Example of Paul.....	15
2.2 Theological Foundations for the LCI Church Planting Model.....	16
2.2.1 The Great Commission must be Literally Fulfilled.....	16
2.2.2 Churches must be Planted to Make Disciples and Advance the Kingdom.....	20
2.2.3 Many are Called to do the Work of the Kingdom of God.....	22
2.2.4 The Kingdom of God must be Actively and Unceasingly Expanded.....	23
2.2.5 Loyalty as a Necessary Foundation.....	28
2.2.6 The Ingredient of Christian Sacrifice.....	32

### **CHAPTER 3: Literature Review of Some Church Planting Models**

3.1 Church Planting Models.....	35
3.1.1 The Model of David Stroud.....	37
3.1.2 The Model of Ed Stetzer.....	45
3.1.2.1 Redeveloping a Missional Mindset for North America.....	
3.1.2.2 Involving Lay Leaders.....	
3.1.2.3 Missional/Incarnational Churches.....	
3.1.2.4 Model of Church Plants and Church Planters.....	
3.1.2.5 Churches Planting Churches.....	
3.1.3 The Model of Richard Foli.....	55
3.1.3.2 Conclusions on Church Planting Surveys	
3.1.3.3 Hindrances to Church Planting in Ghana	

3.1.3.4	The Challenge of Unreached Peoples	
3.1.3.5	How to Start a New Church Plant	
3.1.3.6	Foli's Strategies for Church Planting in Ghana	
3.2	Theology of Missions: Michael W. Goheen	66
3.2.1	The Church's Identity and Role	66
3.2.2	Ecclesiology and the Missional Identity	67
3.2.3	How the Western Church Lost its Missional Identity and Role	68
3.2.4	God Forms Israel as a Missional People	71
3.2.5	Jesus Gathers an Eschatological People to Take up their Missional Calling	72
3.2.6	The Missional Church in the New Testament Story	74

#### **CHAPTER 4: The Lighthouse Chapel International**

4.1	Dag Heward-Mills, Founder of LCI	78
4.2	Early Christian Ministry Work	82
4.3	Call to Ministry, Establishment of LCI, Early Challenges and Successes	84
4.4	Growth and Missions	91
4.5	Statement of Faith, Vision and Mission of the Lighthouse Chapel International	99
4.6	Church Governance and Organizational Structure	101
4.6.1	Early Church Governance	
4.6.2	Current Church Governance	
4.6.2.1	The Bishops' Council	
4.6.2.2	The Stallion Council	
4.7	Important Statistics and Milestones	104
4.8	Christian Literature, Parachurch and Social Ministry of LCI	106
4.8.1	Christian Literature	
4.8.2	Parachurch and Social Ministry Activities	

#### **CHAPTER 5: The LCI Model of Church Planting**

5.0	Development of the Model	111
5.1	How the LCI Model Works	112
5.1.1	Planting Churches to Fulfil the Great Commission	112

5.1.2 Key Strategies for the Identification and Selection of LCI Church Planters.....	113
5.1.3 Key Strategies for the Training of Potential LCI Church Planters.....	115
5.1.4 The Involvement of Lay People in Church Planting.....	119
5.1.5 Heward-Mills’ Doctrine of Loyalty as a Prerequisite for Church Planting...	122
5.1.6 Construction of Permanent Church Halls for Effective Church Planting.....	122
5.1.7 Sending, Supporting, Sustaining, Expanding and Monitoring LCI Missions.....	124
5.1.8 Key Principles for Starting a New Church.....	128

**CHAPTER 6: Evaluation and Analysis of the LCI Model of Church Planting**

6.1 Survey Results of LCI Church Planters.....	133
Table 1: Background Characteristics of LCI Church Planters.....	134
Table 2: Church Planter Information.....	135
6.1.1 Strengths of the LCI Model for Church Planting.....	139
Table 3: LCI Church planters’ perceptions of the strengths of the LCI model for church planting.....	140
6.1.2 Perceived Weaknesses of the LCI Model for Church Planting.....	151
Table 4 LCI Church planters’ perceptions of the weaknesses of the LCI model for church planting.....	151
6.1.3 Suggestions for Improving the LCI Model for Church Planting.....	156
Table 5: Suggestions for improving the LCI model for church planting.....	156
6.2 Analysis of Interviews with LCI Founding Fathers.....	158
6.3 Survey Results for Non-LCI Charismatic Church Leaders.....	165
Table 6: General characteristics of non-LCI charismatic churches in Ghana...	166
Table 7: Number of churches planted by non-LCI charismatic church planters in regions of Ghana.....	169
Table 8a: Number of churches planted in different continents by non-LCI Charismatic churches represented in the study.....	170
Table 8b: Number of churches planted in different continents by Charismatic denominations represented in the study (Dec, 2012).....	170
Table 9a: Number of permanent church buildings owned by non- LCI charismatic church planters in regions of Ghana.....	172
Table 9b: Number of permanent church halls (not leased) by	



Charismatic denominations in regions of Ghana represented in the study (Dec. 2012).....	173
Table 10: Charismatic denominations and key church planting indicators (Dec 2012).....	174
Table 11: Comparative table of number of churches planted in the regions of Ghana (2012).....	175
6.4 Survey Results of Non-LCI Church Planters Conversant with the LCI Model.....	177
Table 12: Responses about the influence and use of the LCI church planting model by non-LCI church planters conversant with the model.....	178
6.5 Conclusions.....	180

## **CHAPTER 7: Conclusions and Recommendations**

7.1 What are the Main Conclusions?.....	183
7.1.1 Fulfilling the Great Commission must be the Primary Preoccupation.....	183
7.1.2 Church Planting is the Principal Strategy for Expanding the Kingdom.....	184
7.1.3 Persistent Vision-Casting is the Key to Raising up Church Planters.....	184
7.1.4 The Priesthood of all Believers and the Deployment of the Laity are Potent Tools for Expansion of God’s kingdom.....	185
7.1.5 Loyalty as a Necessary Foundation for the Expansion of the Kingdom.....	185
7.1.6 Permanent Church Halls Promote Church Planting.....	187
7.1.7 New Church Plants Accelerated by Team Launch and adequate Financial and Logistical Support by the Mother Church.....	188
7.1.8 Church Planting Requires Efficient Governance and Administrative Support Systems.....	189
7.1.9 Church Planting Models Predicated on Biblical and Theological Principles.....	190
7.2 Recommendations.....	192
7.2.1 Recommendations for LCI.....	192
7.2.2 Recommendations for Charismatic Churches.....	193
7.3 Suggestions for Further Research.....	195
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY.....</b>	<b>196</b>
<b>ABBREVIATION.....</b>	<b>202</b>

# CHAPTER ONE

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Jesus Christ prior to his crucifixion had commanded His disciples in line with His own mission not to go to the Gentiles or Samaritans but to “the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matt 10:5-6). Before His ascension, though, He commissioned the church (believers/Christians) to “make disciples of all nations” (Matt 28:19), and thus expand the frontiers of the kingdom of God. This mandate has come to be known among Christians as the Great Commission:

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. *Therefore go and make disciples of all nations*, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matt 28:18-20, NIV, emphasis mine).

The resurrected Christ reiterated this injunction, saying “...and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and the uttermost parts of the world”, indicating that this global evangelisation would be carried out under the influence of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8). Hence the church’s existence is predicated on the premise that it has a goal to achieve, a task to perform and a charge to keep. The goal is that through her witnessing, the world shall see the light, disciples will be made and the purpose of God to save a sinful world will materialize.

In its quest to fulfil the Great Commission, the church has employed various strategies to propagate the gospel of Jesus Christ. Cardinal among these strategies is church planting through missionary work. Bavinck (1979:82) asserts that missions have always been an activity of the church. The idea of “missions” as exemplified in Scripture (see Matt 10:3-7; Luke 10:1-9) is the pattern of being sent out. It also encompasses the concept of cross-cultural ministry (that is, sending people to minister in cultures other than their own). The person who is sent by the church to do cross-cultural missions is called a “missionary”(Hale, 2003:240). However, this term “missionary” may also be used of those sent out in the home field as well as those sent overseas, both within and outside a particular cultural context. Ed Stetzer(2006:2) rightly observes that “it’s possible to be a missionary without ever leaving your zip

code”.Aubrey Malphurs(2004:125)also affirms that “Christ’s mission for the church is to proactively make and mature believers at home and abroad”.

The establishment of local churches through church planting processes was the bedrock of the missionary activities of the early Christians that propelled the advent of missionary enterprises in the African milieu in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The enormous role that missions and missionaries have played in planting and advancing the church in Africa cannot be understated.

While it is well understood that the work of missions is God’s work (that is, spiritual), it is also well recognized in most missiological circles that the church must make herself available as an instrument to be used by God. Therefore, church planting through missions cannot be wished into being. It must be purposely and intentionally pursued by the church (Heward-Mills, 1998:5-7). Michael W. Goheen(2011:19) points out that “the church’s function in this story is to participate in God’s mission; we are to be caught up in God’s own work of restoration and healing. This defines the identity and role of the church”.

The Lighthouse Chapel International (LCI), a charismatic denomination headquartered in Ghana, has over the years established thousands of mission churches through effective church planting both in Ghana and elsewhere in the world. Describing and evaluating the processes underlying these achievements will be the focus of this research project. The motivation for this research topic stems from my personal desire to see the Great Commission fulfilled through effective church planting.

## **1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

The Lighthouse Chapel International was founded in 1988. Initially called The Lighthouse Chapel, it was renamed on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1989 to reflect the intent of the church’s founder to contribute to fulfilling the Great Commission of Jesus Christ by planting churches around the globe. From a five-member congregation in a small classroom, the church has expanded into what is now the LCI denomination of over 1,200 mission churches in Ghana and more than sixty other countries ([www.lighthousechapel.org](http://www.lighthousechapel.org)). This is an exceptional achievement given that few charismatic denominations in Ghana have been able to attain this level of expansion. This researcher shares the views of David Kpobi, one of Ghana’s foremost missiologists,who highlights the impact of the LCI’s work in Ghana. He observes:

Anyone who has followed the work of the LCI will attest to the fact that it is currently one of the churches with the most significant impact on the Christian scene in Ghana. With its policy of aggressive evangelism and a conscious intent at church growth and expansion, the LCI, under the charismatic leadership of its founder, Bishop Heward-Mills, has easily become the preferred church for many young Christians in Ghana today. They appear to be succeeding through sheer commitment to the literal fulfilment of the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-20 (Comment made at a seminar on “The Pentecostal-Charismatic Impact in Ghanaian Christianity”, Legon, December, 2012).

The emergence of the charismatic movement in Ghanaian Christianity brought along with it many new forms of evangelism and nurture which have impacted the religious environment in many ways. This movement has challenged the older churches (Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, Anglican and Methodist) in ways that have far-reaching implications for Ghanaian Christians (Asamoah-Gyadu, 2005:115-117). The Lighthouse Chapel International, a relatively young denomination, which has been in existence for the past twenty-five (25) years, is one of the best known of such new churches. The notable proliferation of the LCI denomination has attracted keen interest from other churches to learn from LCI’s church expansion through its church planting model. This is evidenced, for example, by the increase in the number of affiliates (which are independent of the LCI and known as Family Lighthouse Churches) from 67 in 2009 to 104 in 2013, a rise of 35.5 percent in four years (Unpublished Archival Records, LCI Denominational/Missions Offices). Moreover, a number of other churches cherish the LCI’s church planting principles and therefore ask the church to train their prospective church planters. The significant propagation of LCI churches has been the result of a deliberate policy by its founder and leaders to start churches in every possible location in order to facilitate the fulfilment of the Great Commission. This policy is aptly embodied in the statement “A church at every door and in every language” (Heward-Mills, 1998:5). In his book entitled *Church Planting* Heward-Mills (1998:1-3), founder of the LCI denomination, explains how the planting of churches fulfils the Great Commission:

The more gatherings and groups there are, the more the Great Commission is being fulfilled. The more groups that are taught, the more the Great Commission is being fulfilled. These groups are the churches that are being planted by the obedient servants of the Lord. There is a need to start many gatherings of people in every possible location in order that we fulfil the Great Commission. The vastness of the world and the distribution of

people demands that pastors and people move away from one congregational church to multiple gatherings of different locations. If we are really serious in obeying our Lord, then we have no choice than to obey this.

The desire to fulfil this commission has over the years resulted in the LCI church mounting an aggressive and relentless effort of church expansion through church planting both in Ghana and elsewhere in the world. A cardinal aspect of the church planting policy of the LCI denomination is embedded in the belief that whereas evangelism, especially massive organized evangelism, is very important in winning the lost into the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, this alone is not enough to retain converts in the long-term. E. Mathews (2001, Vol. 4:1) asserts in his article “Mass Evangelism: Problems and Potentials” that mass evangelism is riddled with a countless number of problems which ultimately limit its effectiveness in achieving the intended result of gaining and retaining converts. Furthermore, according to K. Hadaway (1991:29), “there is no evidence that mass evangelistic events help churches grow”. In 1965 Wagner (1987:140,141) assessed the impact of a year-long evangelistic campaign in Bolivia on church growth in Bolivia and found that the campaign failed to make any significant impact on the rate of growth of the churches associated with the campaign. Wagner (1987:141) also noted that the percentage of annual growth in the churches was greater during the year preceding the evangelistic campaign than during the two years following the campaign. Mathews (2001, Vol. 4:1), however, contends that mass evangelism is still a powerful tool for outreach but should be combined with comprehensive church-centred follow-up through church planting.

The foregoing assertions make it imperative for mass evangelism to be combined with church planting to make it more effective towards the conversion of the winnable souls in the world. The views of Wagner and Mathews on mass evangelism resonate with Heward-Mills’(1998:6)interpretation of the “Great Commission” as evangelism followed by planting of churches. The LCI has a lifetime vision to plant at least 25,000 churches in 150 countries. This research project will explore and evaluate the church expansion philosophies, strategies and processes that have contributed to the proliferation of the church todate and that are anticipated to make the vision for 25,000 churches a reality.

## 1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The rapid growth and expansion of the LCI has become a challenge not only to other churches in Ghana and elsewhere but also a challenge to the church itself. As the years have gone by, it has become necessary to document and examine the processes and principles underlying the church's work and to reflect theologically on them in order to achieve a self-understanding that will carry it into the future. This necessity is also born out of the recognition that, whilst the LCI model has been well-regarded as a success story that other charismatic churches (commonly known in Ghana as the Charismatics) want to emulate, much of what is known about the growth of the LCI charismatic denomination is anecdotal and would benefit from empirical analysis. Such an analysis would enhance understanding of the factors underpinning the expansion of the church and hence its contribution to spreading the gospel message. Indeed, the lessons learned from the LCI model should not be lost but rather studied, critiqued, and reshaped where necessary for even better results in the future. There is a paucity of written material that describes the church's model of church planting. The vision and strategies of the founder have been stated in his numerous books but these have not been analysed critically in any academic study. The numerous challenges and lessons on the field have also not been captured adequately to aid further planning and implementation, as well as improve outcomes. It has become the burden of the church to produce such a study for its own benefit and for the benefit of the Christian community generally. This work therefore sets out to do a thorough study of the LCI with particular reference to its strategic church planting programme. The strategies of this programme will be thoroughly discussed in the Chapter Five of this research.

The study specifically seeks to answer the following research questions:

- How did the LCI begin and what were the specific objectives and theological convictions of the founder?
- How did the LCI achieve rapid growth in such a short time?
- Which specific strategies have been used?
- How does the LCI model really work?
- What challenges has the LCI faced in using this model?
- How should the model be evaluated and critiqued from a missiological theological perspective?

- What are the models for church planting used by other charismatic churches in Ghana?
- How does the LCI model for church planting compare with those of other contemporary charismatic churches in Ghana?

### **1.3 RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The overall objective of the research is to analyse and evaluate the LCI church's approach to church planting as a model for missionary work, especially for the churches of the charismatic movement in Ghana.

The specific objectives of the project are to:

1. Provide a comparative analysis of the trends in church multiplication between the LCI denomination and major charismatic churches in Ghana.
2. Identify and discuss the broader philosophies, processes, and influences that have contributed to the church's expansion through church planting.
3. Identify the unique features of the LCI "church planting through missions" approach.
4. Identify the major challenges experienced by LCI churches in implementing these strategies.
5. Develop a conceptual model for the LCI "church planting through missions" approach and discuss how the church's model for church expansion through church planting may be adopted by other contemporary charismatic churches in Ghana and eventually in Africa.
6. Assess critically and provide a theological evaluation of the LCI set goals and its model of Church expansion through church planting. Since the aim of the LCI's church planting model is the achievement of its set goals in its mission statement, the following goals will serve as the benchmarks for the evaluation of the model:
  - The proliferation of churches, including cross-cultural missions and growth in membership.
  - Growth in the number of church planters produced by the church.
  - Distinctive theological missiological principles that have resulted in a more effective church expansion in comparison with other contemporary charismatic churches in Ghana.

These benchmarks as indicated above are not born out of mere pragmatism, but have strong biblical and missiological underpinnings. The extent to which the LCI Church planting model helps it to spawn churches in different locations should be an indicator of its effectiveness towards achieving the goals of the Great Commission. Not only does Christ instruct Christians to teach lost humanity the gospel, but also to teach this gospel to all parts of the world (Matt 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8) – that is, to all people groups and in all places. As a result, the more individual churches the LCI is able to form (hence reaching more people) and in different mission fields (hence reaching more regions, that is, cross-cultural missions) the closer it would be approaching the desire of the Lord Jesus Christ. This aspiration is shared by the proponents of *The Cape Town Commitment* (2010:36) when they rightly call for more commitment from the worldwide church to double its efforts to evangelise both the *unreached* (referring to peoples in whom there are no known believers and no churches) and the *unengaged* (peoples where there are no churches or no agencies that are trying to share the gospel with them). Hence, the LCI's church planting model's capacity to multiply churches both in Ghana and in other cultures can be used as an index for its assessment.

Furthermore, there is the need for more unchurched people to be brought into the kingdom of God so *that my house shall be filled* (Luke 14:23). God's wish is to save all of humanity (2 Peter 3:9). These and other biblical texts (Luke 15:4-7; John 10:16) clearly demonstrate the fact that just planting churches in itself does not meet the full demands of the Great Commission. There is an additional necessity for multitudes to be saved. Consequently, church growth (in terms of membership of the Christian Church) helps to evaluate the success of the methodologies that are deployed for global evangelization. There is further scriptural evidence for this line of argument. The apostolic example of discipling people, coupled with the concrete numerical measurement of their converts (Acts 2:41; 4:4; 5:14), must be emulated as a means of assessing the efficacy of missiological methods. These considerations have underpinned the inclusion of membership growth in the standards that will be employed to evaluate the LCI's model.

In this rather enormous mission field of lost humanity, there is the urgent need to train and equip all God's people for the work of evangelism and church-planting to which we are called (Ephesians 4:11-13; Romans 10:9-15). In this regard, it is appropriate to agree with the tenets of *The Cape Town Commitment* (2010: 45, 46) that

*all of us, women and men, married and single, are responsible to employ God's gifts for the benefit of others, as stewards of*



God's grace, ...All of us, therefore, are also *responsible to enable all God's people* to exercise all the gifts that God has given for all the areas of service to which God calls the church (emphasis mine).

Since God has committed to *us* the word of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:19, emphasis mine), meaning all members of the Christian church must be involved in spreading the gospel, and since such members of the Christian community are expected to be equipped for this work by the ecclesiastical leadership (Eph 4:11, 12), it follows therefore that the degree to which a church is able to empower its membership for missionary work could be a reflection of the effectiveness of its expansion approach. These theological and biblical understandings make it imperative to include the LCI's ability to equip and enable its membership to participate in its missions for evaluation of its model.

Additionally, it is of utmost importance for the LCI's model for church expansion to be based on principles of scripture (Psalm 11:3). Stetzer (2006:2) appropriately argues that

church planting depends on solid theology ... Bible-based theology is the foundation of a successful church plant ... We'd be wrong to send out planters with organisational, strategic, and marketing tools but not the fundamental truths of God's Word and the principles of scripture from which to work (2006:37).

Therefore the distinctive theological missiological principles of the LCI's church planting methodology should also be evaluated. Consequently, in evaluating the LCI's model, any failure to advance in these three aforementioned benchmarks would be considered as a failure.

#### **1.4 METHODOLOGY**

The study will adopt a largely qualitative methodology through the review of some relevant literature, interviews with key informants and others and the collation of views from focus group discussions as well as the use of qualitative questionnaires.

A review of literature showed that not much has been written on church expansion through church planting in the context of charismatism in Ghana. Prominent African scholars of charismatism like Asamoah-Gyadu (2004) have written about various aspects of this Christian strand. However, in his work little or no mention is made about the expansion of the charismatic movement both nationally and internationally. Furthermore, to date little has been documented about missions and

church expansion within the LCI denomination outside of what has been said and written by the church's founder, Dag Heward-Mills. Therefore my literature review on the LCI will rely primarily on Heward-Mills' sermons and writings, which have informed the strategies and other processes in the church's missionary work and advancement. Key books authored by Heward-Mills that will be consulted include: *Church Planting* (1998), *The Mega Church (How to Make Your Church Grow) 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* (1999), *Lay People and the Ministry* (1999), *Tell Them* (2008), *Many Are Called* (2009) and *Church Growth* (2010). In consulting these books, I will give attention to his footnotes, references to scripture, and other writings or individuals that may have impacted Heward-Mills' ideas and writings or informed the church planting activities of the church.

Additionally, I will review the following publications:

*The Cape Town Commitment* (2010); David Stroud (2009), *Planting Churches Changing Communities*; Ed. Stetzer (2006), *Planting Missional Churches*; Richard Foli (2006), *Christianity in Ghana - A Comparative Church Growth Study*; Michael Goheen (2011), *A Light to the Nations, the Missional Church and the Biblical Story*; Donald McGavran and C. Arn. Winfield (1997), *Ten Steps for Church Growth*; Van Rheenen (1996), *Missions: Biblical Foundations and Contemporary Strategies*; Elmer Towns (1995), *A Practical Encyclopedia of Evangelism and Church Growth*; Charles Chaney(1991), *Church Planting at the End of the Twentieth Century*.

The document/literature review will be supplemented with in-depth interviews using semi-structured interview guides with the following four categories of ministers:

- Senior founding LCI ministers,
- Some church planters of LCI,
- Ghanaian non-LCI charismatic ministers/leaders and
- Non-LCI ministers conversant with the LCI church planting model.

The interviews with some of the founding leaders (Bishops Jake Godwyll, Hamish Odoi and Richard Aryee) will help to throw more light on the LCI denomination, to show how and why it started and also how the vision for the expansion of the church through church planting evolved. Key LCI missionaries who have been groomed and sent on missions using the unique LCI model will be interviewed. This will help to find out how effective this model has been in terms of results and challenges. In order to find out more about the administrative processes as well as the monitoring and supervisory

processes that the LCI denomination uses in its expansion through church planting, I will interview principal characters of its Denominational Office, Mission Board and Bishops' Council. It is a well-known fact that Heward-Mills has influenced other ministers of the gospel to undertake church expansion through church planting both nationally and internationally over the years. As a result, these ministers who otherwise had a mentality based on onelocationhave planted churches in other locations. The immense influence of Heward-Mills on these ministers has come about through personal close associations, usage of his print and electronic media, audio-visual materials and attendance at his well-recognised annual Iron Sharpeneth Iron Work of Ministry Conference (ISI), camp meetings and pastors' conferences during his evangelistic crusades (Healing Jesus Crusade). A semi-quantitative questionnaire with closed and open-ended questions will be used to interview a purposive sample of these ministers to obtain their perceptions on the effectiveness and challenges of the LCI model as well as challenges and weaknesses they have had to contend with.

The results obtained from these methods will be subjected to analysis, evaluation and interpretation. A statistical analysis of the growth patterns will help to form opinions about the viability, suitability, sustainability and theological foundations of the model. Results from the LCI churches outside Ghana will also be compared with those within the country to determine whether there is uniform expansion or otherwise.

## **1.5 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS**

This work encompasses the entire LCI community in Ghana and abroad, numbering over 1,200 church branches in over 61 countries in Africa, Europe, Australia, Asia, the Caribbean and the American continent. However, the study is limited in scope in the sense that it deals only with the LCI and focuses mainly on the area of growth and expansion through church planting in Ghana. This work is a pioneering one in this field;because there are few published references for the researcher to refer to it is necessarily limited.

## **1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The study will provide much information that is currently unavailable about the LCI and its processes of growth and expansion through church planting and also make a contribution to the history and process of mission work in Ghana particularly from the

charismatic perspective. It will also provide an innovative framework or model for church planting through mission work that may be emulated by other churches in Africa and elsewhere.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR THE CHURCH PLANTING APPROACH OF THE LCI DENOMINATION**

#### **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

Church planting must be undergirded by sound biblical and theological truths. In this chapter, the researcher will discuss his understanding of some of such biblical teachings that must undergird the planting of churches. I will then proceed to reflect on the biblical theological foundations of the LCI's model.

#### **2.1 BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR CHURCH PLANTING**

Church expansion through church planting finds its roots in the scriptures. God loves lost humanity; He wants them saved and added to the church, and that is why He sent his Son to come and redeem humanity from destruction. It is important to understand certain biblical and theological truths that must necessarily undergird any church planting enterprise.

First, the church is built not by humans but by Jesus Christ himself (Matt 16:18, Eph 4:19-20). Scripture is evidently clear that all aspects of church planting are engineered and guided by Jesus Christ. As the head of the church (Eph 1:22), He instructs people, working through the agency of His Spirit, to go into the harvest fields (Matt 9:37-38, 10:6; John 15:16); He chooses workers (Luke 9:1-2, 10:1; Acts 13:2) and guides them into appropriate harvest fields (Matt 10:6; Acts 16:6-10).

Second, it is important to note and follow Jesus' example of missions. His model included preaching, teaching and healing in local communities to encourage people to enter into the kingdom of God (Matt 4:17, 23; 9:35), in the process drawing multitudes of disciples in those various communities. Later, Jesus would select and train some of his followers, who eventually he sent forth to engage in the same activities of preaching, teaching and healing (Matt 10:1; Mark 3:13-15; Luke 9:1, 2; 10:1). We see in Jesus' approach the processes of evangelism and the raising of leaders to continue with the missions. Even though the concept of church as the local assembly of believers does not seem to be explicitly seen in the days of Jesus, it can be argued that the body of disciples that followed him both physically and in the various villages and cities

constituted the church (Matt 4:25; 8:1; 14:13). This assertion is shared by J.D. Payne (2009:5) when he notes that “Before the birth of the Jerusalem church the essence of the church existed in the community of believers who followed Jesus before the ascension.” Consequently, it is right to assert that planting of churches is a needed tool to help in expanding God’s kingdom in the unreached people groups of the world. Churches must be planted to help with disciple making, and such disciples should be trained and equipped to do more church planting.

Third, the example of Jesus shows that the winning of lost humanity is accompanied by great personal sacrifice (Matt 10:9-10; Luke 9:57-62; Mark 10:28). This should demonstrate to all that Christian ministry, including church planting, should not be seen as an avenue for personal enrichment and prosperity. Rather, ministers of the gospel must be ready to deny themselves and follow Christ (Matt 16:24).

Furthermore, Jesus’ concept of ministry support must be understood by all church planters. Jesus himself did not engage in any form of monetary employment, but relied on his disciples to support him (Luke 8:1-3). He instructed his immediate disciples, whom he sent forth to evangelize, to expect a similar type of support (Matt 10:9-11; Luke 9:3-4; 10:4-7). However, in carrying out church planting, it is clear that the apostles later employed two forms of support. These included church-based support (2 Cor 8:1-8; Phil 4:10-18; 2 Thess 3:9) and self-support (Acts 18:3; 20:33-34; 2 Thess 3:7-8). Therefore, contemporary church planters could be supported either by their local churches or by themselves if they have the means. The latter can be described as tent-making ministry, unpaid-for ministry or lay ministry (this is the preferred terminology of the LCI).

Of equal importance should be the recognition of the emphasis on what Jesus expected his disciples to preach (their message). He made it clear that they ought to preach about the kingdom of heaven. This is made possible when ministers of the gospel stress the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross and its ability to bring lost humanity into God’s kingdom. The apostles complied with this (Acts 2: 21-24, 37-38; 4:33; Rom 1:16; 1 Cor 1:18; 2:2). These biblical emphases are clear indications that the excessive trumpeting of the prosperity message which is prevalent in many contemporary churches is clearly out of place.

It must also be understood that even though Jesus is building His church, He does this in conjunction with people (Mark 16:20; 1 Cor 3:6, 9; 2 Cor 6:1). As Christopher Wright (2010:24) rightly points out, “God has called into existence a people

to participate with God in the accomplishment of that mission”. Thus, church planters must seek God’s instructions and guidance in order to succeed in their enterprise, always bearing in mind that no meaningful fruits can be borne without Jesus Christ (John 15:1-5).

Through the Great Commission, Jesus mandated his early disciples, and by extension all Christians, to win the lost everywhere into His kingdom. There are three versions of the Great Commission, which all emphasize the same task of drawing all humanity into God’s kingdom.

*Matthew 28:19-20 - Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.*

*Mark 16:15 - And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*

*Acts 1:8 - But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and in Samaria, unto the uttermost parts of the earth.*

It is explicit from the above scriptures that Jesus Christ was charging His disciples to reach out to the entire world and not only to their immediate surroundings. It is the desire of God that “none perish but all come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9).

An important biblical truth that serves as a foundation for church planting is derived from the instruction of the Holy Spirit to the prophets and teachers of the Antioch church: “Separate for me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them”(Acts 13:2). In other words, there is a certain type of work that God expects every local church to carry out. With the benefit of hindsight from what Paul, Barnabas and their co-workers did following this instruction, it is clear that this work refers to preaching, teaching and creating local assemblies of believers in Christ, that is, planting churches. It is important, therefore, for every local church or denomination to engage itself in this work.

Judging from the actions of the early apostles and those of Paul and his associates, it is right to conjecture that they understood the creation of local Christian communities (churches) as the principal method of practically implementing the Great

Commission as instructed by Jesus Christ. Consequently, it will be useful at this juncture to highlight their church planting activities.

### **2.1.1 The Example of the Early Apostles and the Jerusalem Church**

Biblically, the expansion of the kingdom of God started under the dramatic influence of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost with a little congregation of about 120 people who were gathered in an upper room to pray and wait for the promise of the Lord (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:6-8; 2:1-7). Shortly after, three thousand people were added (Acts 2:41). Two key things must be noted here. Preaching and teaching were carried out by the apostles (evangelism), and the converts were then gathered together (local church), both of which facilitated the process of disciple-making (Acts 2:14-47). It can therefore be argued that churches ought to be planted as part of the overall disciple-making mandate of the Great Commission (Matt 28: 19-20).

Even though some significant level of growth had been achieved by this early apostolic church (Acts 2:41, 4:4, 5:14, 6:1) the Great Commission had not received the needed attention. This is because the growing church had at this time limited itself to the city of Jerusalem. It was forced to move into expansion only when it began to experience persecution. This persecution (Acts 6:9-15, 7:57-60, 8:1-4, 9:1-2) led to the scattering of the Jerusalem church into different locations. The persecuted church then became the proclaiming church as the dispersion spread the gospel to new areas (Acts 8:4-5; 11:19-21). Thus, it is important for churches to undertake church planting to facilitate the fulfilment of the Great Commission and not wait for any form of persecution to jolt them into action as was the case of the Jerusalem church. This assertion finds place in the theological understanding of the LCI, serving as one of the reasons for the church's persistent church planting as stressed by its founder, Heward-Mills (2005: 29-35).

### **2.1.2 The Example of Paul**

An analysis of biblical church planting will not be complete without mentioning the apostle Paul's church planting efforts, which epitomize a great attempt at fulfilling the Great Commission. Church planting gained massive impetus as a result of the missionary journeys of Paul and his co-labourers. Heeding the instruction and direction of the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:1-4), Paul and his co-labourers embarked on four missionary



journeys. Three important things happened during these missionary journeys. Preaching and teaching at the synagogues and other places were done (Acts 13:14-41, 42-44), local churches were planted, for example at Corinth, Galatia, Thessalonica, Ephesus, Philippi and Colossae (Acts 15:36; 16:6; 17:1; 18:1,23; 19:1; 20:17; 21:8) and leaders were appointed to run these churches (Acts 14:23). The strategy of preaching and teaching (soul winning), church planting (soul establishment) and raising local leaders is a powerful tool for the expansion of the kingdom of God. The LCI's church planting approach is rightly fashioned after this apostolic model (Heward-Mills, 2007:5).

In conclusion, it is safe to indicate that church planting is the biblical method for carrying out the expansion of the kingdom of God since it makes all the other components of the disciple-making process of the Great Commission possible—baptism, teaching obedience to Christ and demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ. Jesus is building His church through the Holy Spirit using human vessels. Therefore, it is important for all those involved in church planting to follow the biblical patterns as set forth by Jesus and the apostles.

## **2.2 THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR THE LCI CHURCH PLANTING MODEL**

The Church planting approach of LCI is premised on the following biblical theological foundations which are discussed in the following publications by the founder of the LCI, Heward-Mills: *Tell Them* (2008), *Church Planting* (2007), *Many Are Called* (2009), *Mega Church* (2008) and *Loyalty and Disloyalty* (2005).

### **2.2.1 The Great Commission must be Literally Fulfilled**

Jesus Christ intends that for the Great Commission to be fulfilled there is the need for certain factors to be employed. The teaching of the word of God was one of the tools Christ instructed his disciples to use in order to fulfil the Great Commission. “Go into all the world and preach the good news to everyone”(Mark 16:15, NIV). From this scripture, it is implicit that a great deal of attention must be given to the preaching of the word of God. When the word is preached, people are empowered and equipped, thus propelling them to fulfil the Great Commission. It is for this reason that Heward-Mills has made the preaching and teaching on the need to fulfil the Great Commission the central theme of his message. He believes that the fulfilment of the Great Commission

must become a reality. There is a strong belief among the leadership of the LCI that the Church of Jesus Christ must not ignore the Great Commission but must have a strongly passionate agenda to see its fulfilment. In order to encourage believers to rise up to fulfil the Great Commission, Heward-Mills (2008a:3) teaches on 120 reasons why Christians must become soul-winners in his book *Tell Them*, prominent among which are the following statements:

“Souls must be won because it is the greatest mandate and instruction given to us by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” All believers are expected to fulfil the call of soul winning, which is the principal reason for which people were created (Ephesians 2:10).

That is why Heward-Mills (2007:18) is of the opinion that the greatness of any given church is defined by its ability to send out its members to win souls, and not by its seating capacity. Soul winning is the heartbeat of Jesus, who came to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10). In the words of Heward-Mills(2008a:10), “it is important to avoid the mistake of carefully counting and polishing over and over our treasured coins instead of going to look for the lost coin, which is the believer”.

Lost humanity must be won aggressively into the kingdom of God at all cost. This was the mission of Jesus when He came into the world, “to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke19:10). This is a foundation for the soul winning effort of LCI. It is important for believers, church workers and church planters to see the massive harvest of souls around them. The vastness of the harvest lies virtually untouched, making it imperative for us to double our efforts of soul winning through evangelism and church planting. Heward-Mills (2001:9) believes that the ultimate goal of every minister is to win the lost to Christ. He writes:

Our ultimate goal is to reap the harvest. When we forget the main goal for which the church exists we begin to go into error. When I see a large crowd, what occurs to me is souls that can be won.

Jesus Christ made it clear that He wanted the church to go and preach to all nations so that they can be saved. The LCI believes that the church must galvanize all its energy and resources to win the lost at any cost. The church should not deviate from its principal and original assignment—soul winning. The church can do its first share in contributing to the social and material needs of the general community through the building of educational facilities, running of schools, hospitals and orphanages, but it must always remember that it has its primary role to play—to win souls. Social work,

important as it is, is still not the primary thing that the church is supposed to do. It is not her chief task. As Heward-Mills likes to put it, perhaps it is the secondary or tertiary task of the church.

Heward-Mills gives two reasons why he thinks that pastors should not struggle or fight for members but rather concentrate on the harvest. These keys when properly harnessed will greatly facilitate the planting of churches, and hence the fulfilment of the Great Commission. First is the key of massive organization, by which he believes that church planters and church workers should systematically mobilize their members to have intensive times of organized prayer, fasting and outreaches. Believers must not just come to church to warm the pews. They must be encouraged, trained, and equipped to go out to do soul winning. Church members must be actively and consciously mobilized to fast and pray for salvation and also to be involved in crusades, door to door witnessing, breakfast meetings, street evangelism and concerts. There are more souls waiting to be harvested and there are not enough buildings to contain these souls if they were reaped. Heward-Mills explains that when there is massive mobilization in any church, there is soul winning and growth. When church planters and pastors organize their people effectively to do soul winning, more and more members come streaming into the church.

Second, Heward-Mills identifies that the key of *Anagkazo* also helps in the fulfilment of the Great Commission. The modern society has become more and more secular and cynical. Most people do not have time to listen to the gospel message, let alone to believe or accept it. Others have so many excuses why the gospel message is irrelevant to them. In most western societies, the gospel message is hardly welcomed. The result is that many beautiful cathedrals which used to be full of Christian worshippers are now empty. This trend has expanded into other areas of the world like Africa. This notwithstanding, it is important for us to remember that the will of God is for His house to be full. This is clearly the message that the Lord Jesus Christ gave in the story of the invitation to the Great Supper in Luke 14:16-23. In this story, Heward-Mills explains that after the servant of the Lord had gone into the streets and lanes of the city and brought in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame, he told his lord, "It is done as you have commanded and yet there is room" (Luke 14:22). The response of the lord of the supper helps us to see a very important key for soul winning that will ensure that God's house is filled. In the aforementioned response, the lord says to his servant, "Compel them to come in".

The word “compel” is translated from the Greek word *anagkazo* which means to drive, to necessitate and to constrain by all means such as force, threats, persuasions and entreaties. By implication, we must use all means possible and legitimate to compel and make it necessary for the sinner to enter into the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. This principle of *anagkazo* is taught and used as a key soul-winning strategy for church planting in the LCI. In his book *Anagkazo: the Compelling Power* Heward-Mills(1998a:9)writes:

People are not going to be convinced or compelled to know God through our little church games. Our “Mickey Mouse” church programmes and bazaars will not go very far in today’s world. We must go out there and drive them to God.

Heward-Mills explains his assertion to mean that, because of the largely secular nature of the modern world, the traditional relaxed forms of evangelism will be unsuccessful. At best most believers just sit in church and give a lame invitation for an unbeliever to attend also. In this age, this doesnot work. There is the need to use the key of *Anagkazo* to go into the bushes, highways and gutters to win the lost. The Lord Jesus Christ wants His house, that is, the church, to be full. Without deploying the strategy of *Anagkazo* churches will not be planted, existing churches will be empty and there shall be no growth. As Heward-Mills says, a pastor without *anagkazo* will have an empty church. This principle of *anagkazo* is needed to plant and grow churches. It ensures that more people enter and remain in our churches than those who go out. The dynamics of a church is such that people go out of it all the time. It is imperative, therefore, for the church planter to keep bringing in more people to prevent the eventual depletion of the church, as has happened to most churches in the western world. Employing this key of *anagkazo* ensures that His house will be full. Practically applying this principle, church planters of the Lighthouse Chapel International denomination evangelize shamelessly on public transport, on the streets, in door to door witnessing, at breakfast meetings and dawn broadcasting. The latter is when the church planter proclaims the gospel message in a selected community at dawn, targeting the moment that people will be waking up from their sleep, ensuring that the first thing they hear is the message of salvation.

The researcher embraces all aspects of the LCI’s thinking with regards to the need for the Christian church to vigorously carry out this mandate of our Lord Jesus Christ.

### **2.2.2 Churches must be Planted to Make Disciples and Advance the Kingdom of God**

In his work *Church Planting* (2007) Heward-Mills discusses the subject of church planting as a principal tool for fulfilling the Great Commission. He argues that the kingdom of God needs to advance in reality and that a real advancement will happen “when we follow Christ’s instruction...to go into the world and to make disciples!” (Matt. 28:18-20). To Heward-Mills(2007:2,3),making disciples is made possible through the preaching and teaching of the Word of God, emphasizing that the most plausible means for this to happen is through gathering people. He defines a church as “a regular gathering of Christians for the purpose of teaching”.He explains that “the more gatherings and groups there are, the more the Great Commission is being fulfilled. The more groups that are taught, the more the Great Commission is being fulfilled. *These groups are the churches that are being planted by obedient servants of the Lord*”(emphasis mine).

He argues that evangelism alone cannot lead to the fulfilment of the Great Commission. Evangelism must be accompanied by the establishment of churches so that people can be gathered to be taught the Word of God. In his view, since church planting as indicated earlier facilitates the making of disciples, this work must be done everywhere in accordance with Jesus’ instruction (Matt 28:18-19; Acts 1:8), stressing that it is important not to limit the planting of churches only to a few places or to develop a few large congregations; “A church at every door and in every language must be the goal of every true servant of God” (2007:4).

Heward-Mills teaches that, for churches to be formed, Christians must engage in preaching, teaching and healing as was done by Jesus (Matt 4:23, 9:35). The apostles, in translating Jesus’ Great Commission, also engaged in these same methods as Jesus (Acts 2:14-40; 3:1-7; 4:4; 6:7; 13:14-41, 42-44). He explains that souls that were won were then gathered as churches (Acts 15:36; 16:6; 17:1, 2; 18: 23; 19:1; 20:17).

Heward-Mills teaches that the strategy of winning sinners through the preaching and teaching of the Word God (evangelism) coupled with gathering them in localized congregations on a regular basis (churches) to instil further spiritual maturity is the means by which they become disciples of Jesus Christ. Therefore, planting churches makes making disciples possible.

The LCI understands that making disciples also entails building healthy congregations. The church becomes healthy when its members grow inwardly (spiritual

growth) and outwardly (numerical and external growth). The process of discipleship requires a holistic approach in a given church and is made possible through evangelism, soul winning, baptism and church planting for the purposes of teaching and nurturing them to become mature members of the body of Christ (Matt 28:18-20; Acts 2:42- 47; Ephesians 4:11-16; 2 Tim 3:16; Hebrews 6:1-3). In the LCI, therefore, making disciples involves a whole range of processes including evangelism and soul winning, church planting, new converts' schools, cell group ministries, prayer groups, Bible study groups, music, women's and children's ministries, ministerial formation and social ministry. Through these avenues, sound Bible teaching and study (1 Tim 3:2; 2 Tim 4:2), personal devotion, prayer and fasting (Luke 11:2; Matt 6:16; 2 Tim 2:15; 1 Thess. 5:17), doctrines of baptism (Mark 16:16; Heb. 6:2), evangelism and soul winning (2 Tim 4:5), the Holy Spirit (John 14), development of the gifts (1 Cor 12:4-11) and the fruits of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23), and financial responsibility (2 Cor 8:1-7; 9:6-7; Mal 3:10) are emphasized to ensure healthy LCI churches (Heward-Mills, 2008d).

In keeping with the teachings of Jesus Christ and the apostles (Matt 25:41-45; Jas 1:27), the LCI through its social ministries caters for the poor, needy, blind, the sick and prisoners. This is achieved through its integrated agencies, including Remember the Poor, Lighthouse Mission Hospital, Lighthouse Christian Orphanage, Prison Ministry, Lighthouse Mission School and Compassion Centre for the Assistance of the Lame, the Blind, the Underprivileged, the Deaf and Dumb (C.C.A.L.B.U.D.D.) and the Lighthouse Medical Missions that are run during its mass evangelism programme, the Healing Jesus Crusade.

E. Bandoh (2012) has described and analysed the social ministry of the LCI. In this work he rightly attests to the contribution that the LCI's social ministry is making to its overall disciple-making enterprise.

Therefore, Jesus' instruction to make disciples finds expression in the LCI in evangelism, soul winning, church planting and social ministry. These are the avenues through which lost people are gathered into God's kingdom and are taught the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27), making them disciples.

Heward-Mills raises biblical arguments for planting churches to advance the Kingdom of God. The apostolic example clearly demonstrates that churches were planted to be part and parcel of the process of making disciples. The LCI's church planting efforts coupled with its extensive social ministry presents a veritable tool towards the church's mandate to expand God's kingdom.

The researcher's principal focus for this work, however, will be how the LCI has planted and is planting churches (with regard to numerical and external growth) to expand the kingdom of God. Thus, the writer is not seeking to cover the full spectrum of the LCI's Christian discipleship, but rather prioritizing the area of church planting as a vehicle for expanding the kingdom of God in Ghana and elsewhere.

### **2.2.3 Many are Called to do the Work of the Kingdom of God**

Heward-Mills elucidates this theological understanding in his book *Many Are Called* (2009). Jesus said that the harvest is plenteous but the labourers are few. He continued to state that there is the need for more labourers to be sent into the harvest field of lost humanity (Matthew 9:36-38). The LCI takes this desire of Jesus Christ very seriously and literally. The apostle Paul reinforced Jesus' concern for spreading the gospel message and the need for more workers to engage in this task. "How can they hear without someone preaching to them?" (Romans 10:14). To the LCI, the "someone" refers to all believers. The LCI strongly reinforces the priesthood of all believers (1 Pet 2:5, 9; Rev 1:6) and believes that most of its members are called to do the work of evangelism, church planting and missions. This is one of the prominent messages of Heward-Mills, the founder of the LCI, and is expounded in his works *Lay People and the Ministry* (2008c) and *Church Growth: It Is Possible!*(2010).The result of this relentless teaching is that, unlike most charismatic churches in Ghana and probably elsewhere, that employ only "called people" as ministers of the gospel, in the fold of the pastors, church workers, church planters and missionaries of LCI can be found people of all backgrounds—secular workers like doctors, lawyers, engineers, carpenters, masons, traders, businessmen as well as seminary-educated ministers. The LCI believes that church planters could be people with full-time seminary education, as well as those given hands-on practical ministry work training. This has given rise to two types of ministry workers in the LCI:lay ministers and full-time ministers. There is therefore a deliberate, systematic and conscious effort by the leadership of the LCI to recruit, train and equip all the members in the church for soul winning and church planting. This is biblical. God created us all to accomplish certain good works: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2: 10).

The LCI believes that there can be no better works to be done than those which were done by the Lord Jesus Christ: preaching, teaching and healing (Matthew 4:17,

4:23, 9:35). What He did must be our example; we are expected to be His followers (Ephesians 5:1). Therefore, every believer has the duty and obligation for evangelism and church planting. Heward-Mills (2009:4) postulates:

If you were God and you had six billion people to save, what would you do? Would you send one or two people to save them or would you send a lot of people? Of course, you would send many people into the fields of harvest. And that is exactly what God has done. *He has called many people!* Do not be deceived by the few pastors you see sitting on the front rows of churches. That always gives the impression that a few have been called, or that the majority of the congregation have not been called. Actually, it is the exact opposite. Many, and not just a few pastors, are called to the work of saving the world.

The researcher agrees with this position of the LCI that all believers must engage in the agenda of the Great Commission. Jesus' Commission in Matthew 28:19-20 and John 15:16 cannot be restricted to the twelve disciples that closely surrounded him; rather by extension the Commission concerns all believers. If church planting is an important integral part of making disciples, then it stands to reason by the sheer magnitude of the church's assignment that indeed *all hands must be on deck*—professional and unprofessional ministers.

#### **2.2.4 The Kingdom of God must be Actively, Relentlessly and Unceasingly Expanded**

Jesus Christ commissioned believers to go into the entire world making disciples and teaching all nations (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8). The early apostles and disciples carried the gospel message to many nations and planted numerous churches (Acts 15:36; 16:6; 17:1; 18:1,23; 19:1; 20:17; 21:8). Evangelism and soul winning will be inadequate to facilitate the fulfilment of the Great Commission. These must be combined with effective church planting to bring out the expansion of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. The LCI believes that churches must be planted, large churches must be built and the churches must be made to grow all the time. All efforts must be made to advance the kingdom of God. Churches must be planted everywhere.

Apart from the church being planted, thus bringing horizontal growth to the kingdom of God, strategies must also be devised and implemented to ensure that such churches continue to grow in their membership to become mega churches. A vision is the driving force for church growth. However, an ordinary vision will not be enough to propel a church into church growth. Heward-Mills explains that a shallow vision will



not bring about church growth. The type of vision that will actualize growth in the church is the one that consumes the pastor and the congregation and burns within their souls. This is what Heward-Mills describes as a *burning vision*. This vision motivates the church planter or pastor even in the midst of challenges to achieve growth. Heward-Mills (2010:2) explains: “The way a burning vision causes church growth is by inspiring and leading you on the difficult road to real church growth in a way that no human being can.”

A burning vision is the invisible engine of all church growth. Heward-Mills argues that if it only takes “desires and visions for churches to grow then every church would be a big church” (2010:2). The pastor who wants church growth must have a burning vision because it is that which makes church growth a reality. In the absence of a burning vision for a large church, there will not be tangible growth. A pastor with a vision will be humble to do what brings church growth through prayer. Again, burning vision also helps the pastor to relate well and seek the wisdom and strategies that promote growth.

It is evident that the early apostolic church had thousands and in fact multitudes of people. From a little congregation of 120 people in the upper room, the early church saw 3000 being added, then 5000, then multitudes (Acts 2:41; 4:4; 5:14). The LCI believes that the church must grow and become massive in terms of its membership. A vision for a mega church is therefore a very important goal for the LCI denomination. In his book *The Mega Church* (2008d:3-7) Heward-Mills expounds on why it is important to have a vision for a mega church. Key among his reasons are:

1. God promises that when the church starts it will become large. The church like any organism does not grow overnight but takes time to sprout. From the parable of the mustard seed (Matt 13:31-32) Christ teaches that growth is inherent in the church. This explains why the church planter must have hope and a strong vision for a large church. If the *mustard seed* can become a *big tree* then a church planter must expect and desire for his small church to become a large church.
2. There are plenty of winnable souls in the world because of the massive population size. Churches, pastors and church workers should not be deceived with the relatively few people that have filled our church halls. The harvest stands largely untouched (Matthew 9:37).
3. God wants His house to be filled, not half or even three quarters filled (Luke 14:23).

4. A megachurch means that more souls have been won into the kingdom of God.
5. A megachurch makes it possible for more labourers to be recruited, trained and equipped for the work of soul winning and church planting, thus facilitating the expansion of the kingdom of God. When a church is large, it has more income which can be used for the work of God.
6. The high income makes more spiritual goals become achievable. When a church is very large, with a large income it can support the needs of the general society in the areas of healthcare, education and alleviation of poverty.

The leadership of LCI, as part of the training for church planters, teaches them special strategies for church growth. This includes the principle of the multiplied senior pastor. Heward-Mills (2008d:185) teaches that the work of church planting and church growth is burdensome. It involves regular efforts in soul winning, establishing them in the church as well as praying, visiting, counselling and interacting with the members. The local church pastor cannot do it all by himself. If he is able to develop effective leaders around him, who will be capable to do the work of the ministry or the church work to the same extent as him, this will result in a greater work being done, just as Jesus multiplied himself in his twelve disciples, who later went about preaching, teaching and healing. As Heward-Mills (2008d: 185) reports,

I have discovered that if you could multiply the senior pastor by twelve, it would mean that you had twelve pastors at work. Logically, you could do twelve times as much work. I taught my assistant pastors to do whatever I do. If I meet people after church, they should also meet people after church. If I am able to counsel ten people and twelve other pastors are able to counsel ten people that makes it one hundred and thirty people who are being attended to.

Heward-Mills asserts that another principle of church growth is the principle of maximized Sunday usage. Traditionally, Sundays have been earmarked as days for resting and going to church. Most people who would not be available for other meetings during the week are present on Sundays and it is only prudent that Sunday is maximized. A lot can be achieved on Sunday: people can be visited, and counselling can be done unhindered. Instead of wishing for a day to effectively carry out your programmes and schedules, Sunday can be a perfect time. Jesus, the greatest church planter, even worked on the Jewish Sabbath, the equivalent of Sundays for Christians: “And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the Sabbath day. But Jesus answered them, My father

works hitherto, and I work” (John 5:16-17). Typically, in an LCI church, the pastors and the church workers work from 6am to midnight.

Another important principle for church growth is the principle of catering for “Group A” and “Group B” members. Church planters in LCI are taught to use the principle of retention evangelism to grow their churches. There are two groups of church members in every church. Group A members are dependable and consistent; they attend church twice or more a week. This group is usually involved in church life and small groups. Group B members, conversely, are the people who come to church once a week, or month and not part of small groups. Most churches are usually made up of Group B members. This group must not be sifted from the mainstream church or else the church will be left with nothing (2008d:190). Christ teaches that “labourers are few” (Matthew 9:36). From this we can deduce that there will always be the need for labourers. Group B members, therefore, can be encouraged, trained, taught and equipped to assume the positions of doing the work of the ministry. From this group, labourers can be raised to continue the work of church planting. In trying to build a mega church everybody is needed and so is the Group B category.

The principle of retention evangelism is also a key that enhances church growth. One of the key reasons why churches do not grow is because of the large open back door. Simply, this means that most churches are not able to retain the converts that come into the church as a result of soul winning activities. It is important therefore for effective strategies to be deployed with the aim of retaining a large percentage of new members who come into the church. Before the advent of vaccines and antibiotics, the world’s population grew only gradually, since thousands and millions of people succumbed to diseases like the plague, tuberculosis, chicken pox, smallpox and other bacterial and viral diseases. This trend, however, reversed dramatically with the production of effective antibiotics and vaccines resulting in less human death. This led to population explosion. Heward-Mills teaches that implementing retention strategies like following-up, visiting and interacting with new church members would ensure church growth.

Another church growth principle is what Heward-Mills describes as using lay ministry. Undoubtedly, great things can be achieved by lay people. Lay people essentially are people who “lack skills”. The word *layman* is derived from a Greek word *laikos* which means to “have no skills”, that is, not a professional. The lay person is an ordinary person who has not received any formal training for the ministry work. Lay

people all throughout the world have influenced history, politics, revolutions and the development and progress of churches. The pastor with the largest church in the world, Dr. Yonggi Cho, also confirms this fact when he says that “one of the foundational principles on which the Yoido Full Gospel Church is built is the principle of working through lay people. The place of lay people in the building of church growth is enormous” (*Successful Home Cell Groups*, 1981).

According to Heward-Mills (2010:19) “the lay ministry is a key to church growth. Lay people can do much more than just give money to the church”. Heward-Mills(2010:19)further asserts:

You must encourage your lay people to become something more than principled citizens of the country. You must encourage them to become soul winners for Jesus. You must want them to be shepherds of God’s flock. You must want them to fulfil the Great Commission.

Lay people will help to bring church growth. The ministry must not be the sole preserve of only a few specially “called” people. Some full-time pastors, out of sheer insecurity or a rather false belief that they only are called, do not release the ordinary church members into the work of the ministry. However, lay people can be encouraged to apply wisdom and sacrifice to help in the work of the ministry. Ordinary church people can be trained and equipped to pray, visit, counsel and interact with the members of the church. Furthermore, pastors of the church could multiply themselves by developing the leadership skills of the lay people. In this way, the burden of the ministry can be shared with them. The lay ministry is a very important constituent part of the LCI’s model of church planting and will be explored further in Chapter five of this thesis.

Heward-Mills believes that much growth and expansion can be achieved through the principle of establishing and running branch churches. The conglomeration of many small churches becomes a nucleating point for the advancement of church growth. Any pastor or church planter who wants church growth must not belittle the significance of branch churches. Heward-Mills (2010:167-170) describes two types of churches: the United Group of Branch Churches (UGBC) and the Independent Mission Branch Churches (IBMC). The former is the same church but in different locations, which performs its functions as a unit and it is headed by a team of pastors, whereas the latter is different churches in different locations, headed by independent pastors. The benefit of UGBCs is that this type has been confirmed to be more lasting than the IBMC. The united churches have principles that serve as a magnet to attract people to the church.

This certainly leads to church growth. Heward-Mills (2010:168) teaches that “you can achieve church growth by setting up a united group of branch churches (UGBC) and through it you can achieve the same numbers as you would with a single huge church”.

The researcher is of the view that the LCI’s church growth principles find place in the scriptures. It is important for church planters to pursue the growth of the Christian church. Individual churches must be made to grow, an indication that multitudes of lost humanity are entering into God’s kingdom. This was depicted in the New Testament church (Acts 2:41; 4:4; 5:14; 11:21).

However, numerical growth should not be considered as the only yardstick for the success of the church; the church must be made to grow spiritually also. Believers must be taught to cultivate the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22), to exercise the gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor 12:8-11), to walk in holiness, to be obedient to the teachings of Christ (Matt 5-7; 1 Pet 1:16) and to demonstrate the love of Christ both to themselves and to the needy, poor and sick of the world (Matt 25:34-40; 1 Cor 13:1-7; 1 Pet 1:22).

### **2.2.5 Loyalty as a Necessary Foundation**

The fourth major foundation for the church planting approach of LCI is its teaching on loyalty. Heward-Mills contends that the Word of God teaches that God’s servants are principally stewards of the spiritual graces, gifts and calling of God. One of the principal requirements for a steward of God is faithfulness according to the Word of God. “Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful” (1 Corinthians 4:1-2). The dictionary definition of the word *faithful* includes the meanings reliable, trusted, steady in allegiance, loyal and dependable. The Compact Oxford Dictionary’s (2005) definition of faithfulness includes, among others, remaining loyal. In other words, servants of God must exhibit fidelity, constancy, dependability, trustworthiness and loyalty. Church planters must be taught to be loyal to God, to His calling, to the leadership under which they work, as well as to their churches and members.

The LCI founder alleges that a very destructive canker that has affected the charismatic movement in Ghana since its inception is disloyalty. Disloyalty means unfaithfulness, rebellion and undependability. The manifestation of this problem has resulted in the countless church splits on the landscape of the charismatic church. Most

charismatic churches in Ghana have experienced bitter and destructive church splits as a result of church planters becoming disloyal and unfaithful to the vision and leadership of their mother denominations. This has resulted in great instability in the affected churches and has hindered their ability to grow and expand through church planting. Founders of churches have had to contend with this canker by either limiting or utterly avoiding branching. Branch pastors are easily distracted by the riches and material prosperity that is sometimes associated with church work. They become rebellious and disloyal to the vision of the parent church for church planting and the fulfilment of the Great Commission.

For effective church planting among charismatics, Heward-Mills therefore stresses the need for the new generation of church planters to start and remain faithful or loyal to the vision of the parent church. According to him, one of the ways to achieve this is to teach prospective church planters on the doctrine of loyalty, that is, being faithful. Heward-Mills maintains that the doctrine of loyalty is biblical, explaining that Jesus Christ teaches servants to be faithful to the enterprises of their masters. This is evident when He says:

And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own? (Luke 16:12)

And His lord said unto him, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Matthew 25:21).

This destructive church problem runs opposite to Jesus' desire for the church to be in Jerusalem, Judaea, and Samaria and everywhere in the world, since it has the tendency to limit church expansion. It is for this reason that the LCI has developed and teaches the principle of loyalty with the aim of instilling faithfulness in its pastors, missionaries, church planters and leadership.

Heward-Mills believes that church planters are called by God, and should therefore be loyal to this calling as exemplified by Jesus Christ. Christ as a man was loyal to God the Father (John 5:19, 30, 36). Christ sent His disciples with His authority (Matt 10:1-4; Luke 10:19). The disciples would succeed when they operated with and under this authority. The powers of darkness would be defeated when they were confronted with this authority, which the disciples as Christ's representatives had.

While doing the work that God has called them to do faithfully, it is important for church planters to understand that God also uses His delegated authority to inspire,

motivate and oversee His work (Eph 4:11-16; Acts 13:1-3, 15:36; Titus 1:5). God uses humans and institutions as vessels and expects such vessels to be respected and recognized. Heward-Mills teaches that we cannot claim to be loyal to God and not be loyal to those with His delegated authority, emphasizing that the scriptures abound with admonitions to respect, honour, receive, obey and recognize the delegated authorities that God Himself is using on earth to fulfil His will (Heb 13:17; Rom 13:1-2, 1 Cor 16:10,11 NIV). He explains the apostolic example. Paul and his companions (the sent ones) instructed the churches with the decisions that had been given to them by the church elders in Jerusalem (the sending agents). They did not change the message—that is loyalty (Acts 16:4). This example demonstrates that the church planters strove to follow the vision, teachings and doctrines of the apostles who had sent them (Acts 13:1-3; 15:1-33, 16:4). In other words, the planters were loyal or faithful to the vision of the apostles in Jerusalem. Later Paul himself gave this pattern to protégés (2 Tim 2:2; Tit 1:5). Such loyalty created an atmosphere of harmony between the sender and the sent, making the spread of the gospel achievable. Thus, it is important for prospective church planters to exhibit loyalty to both God and the human/institutional agencies He uses to propagate the gospel.

While accepting the doctrine of loyalty as scriptural, this researcher is of the view that it is of critical importance to note that the authority of church leaders is never absolute authority, but only delegated from the Head of the church of God, Jesus Himself (Eph 1:22; 5:23). As the Head of the Church, Christ chooses and sends workers out into the harvest fields (John 15:16; 20:21; Acts 9:15), empowers such people for that work through His Spirit (Acts 4:30-33; 1 Cor 12:8-11) and makes that work of soul winning and building His church fruitful (John 15:4, 5). He is the chief shepherd (John 10:11; 1 Pet 5:4) and the judge of the church (Rev 2, 3). All other church leaders who are under-shepherds carry only His delegated authority (Matt 10:1; Luke 10:19). The authority of church leaders must therefore be seen within the confines of such biblical truths. Consequently, such people must be followed or imitated, but only as long as they themselves remain loyal to the authority of Jesus (1 Cor 11:1; 2 Thess 3:6-9).

Heward-Mills explains that the charismatic churches ought to apply this doctrine of faithfulness in their church planting efforts. He believes that the doctrine of loyalty as espoused by Jesus Christ and the apostles must be taught to church planters to ensure continuous and smooth expansion of the kingdom of God, thus facilitating a realistic fulfilment of the Great Commission.

Following from the scripture that “it is required that stewards be found faithful” (1Cor 4:2), Heward-Mills teaches that loyalty is the principal qualification for every minister. He encourages churches and denominations intending to do church planting to develop ministers with this quality. Loyalty brings about an atmosphere of love, peace and tranquillity among the leadership of the church, church members and the branch churches. Through loyalty a denomination can build a large team of pastors who faithfully carry the vision of the parent denomination, and therefore can move into church planting. Heward-Mills (2008d:184) contends that “without loyalty, every network or denomination of churches constantly undergoes disintegration”. Even though the LCI has not been entirely immune to the problem of disloyalty leading to church splits, the teaching on loyalty has greatly minimized this problem with the result that it has been able to plant and run mission churches in more than sixty countries worldwide on all the five continents of the world.

Heward-Mills maintains that the successful church planting work that the LCI has done, without significant church splits, has been due to the fact that the churches are pastored by ministers who have been taught to be loyal to God, to the vision of the LCI and to its leadership.

With time Heward-Mills has extended the teaching on loyalty beyond the borders of the LCI. This is what has metamorphosed into the Loyalty Conference. At these conferences which take place nationally and internationally, pastors, church workers, leaders and founders are taught the concept of loyalty and its benefit for stabilizing churches and promoting church planting. He argues that the positive feedback after these conferences attests to the fact that the participating church leaders and founders have benefited immensely from the teaching on loyalty and disloyalty in terms of stability, church growth and church planting.

A rather instructive argument that surfaced especially in the 1980s and 1990s was whether the charismatic movement had not exhibited disloyalty to the mainline traditional mission churches in Ghana like the Presbyterian, Methodist and Catholic churches. This argument stems from the fact that most of the current leaders of the charismatic churches in Ghana as well as the initial members of their churches used to be members of the traditional mission churches. However, I am of the view that what happened was not a case of disloyalty. The undeniable genesis of the charismatic movement was a result of the strong desire of the early charismatic leaders and their members to pursue *charismata*. As a result these churches were referred to as *Sunsum*



*sore*, which is the local Ghanaian parlance for churches that turn to operate in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Asamoah-Gyadu (2004:46), himself a Methodist minister and theologian of the renowned Trinity Theological Seminary of Ghana observes:

Renewal in Ghanaian Pentecostalism also affirms the restoration of spiritual gifts not just in an ontological sense but also a functional reality. This is the area in which traditional mission church Christianity has been considered most deficient by Ghanaian indigenous Pentecostals... Indigenous Pentecostals expect that God, according to Joel, will prove the reality of His presence through the activity of his Spirit ...The “normalisation of charismatic gifts in Christian expression” was cited as one of the main contributions made by *Sunsum sore* to Christianity in Ghana.

Clearly, therefore, founders of the Ghanaian charismatic church went in the quest for the gifts of the Spirit and its manifestation in the lives of the believer, a practice that was nonexistent and not emphasized in the older established churches. There were no splits, neither were these early founders church planters of the orthodox churches. Therefore, the argument that the charismatic churches had rebelled against the established mission churches has no basis.

This biblical concept of loyalty which is a constituent part of the LCI’s model for church planting will be alluded to in subsequent chapters of this work.

### **2.2.6 The Ingredient of Christian Sacrifice**

Another important theological foundation for church planting in the LCI denomination is the concept of sacrifice. The leadership of the LCI believes that without Christian sacrifice, church work and especially church planting will not become a reality. The modern world is very secular-minded. Unfortunately, most Christians have great affection for earthly riches and materialism. Most Christians are not ready to deprive themselves of the comfort of life to serve God and give themselves to church planting in deprived communities. Heward-Mills explains that it is an undeniable truth that the very places where the majority of winnable souls are found (Africa, South America and Asia) lack the basic necessities of life—potable water, good roads, electricity and health care facilities. Therefore, it requires Christian sacrifice to bring the expansion of the kingdom of God to such communities. He insists that this is the message of the cross of Jesus Christ. The message of the cross is self-denial and deprivation in order to love and reach out to the sinner. This is made clear by Jesus Christ when He says, “If any man

will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.” Again, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it dies, it bringeth forth much fruit” (Matthew 16:24-25; John 12:24 respectively).

Heward-Mills (2007:129) believes that sacrifice is the missing ingredient for church planting. It is a master key that has the ability to transform an average ministry from barrenness to fruitfulness. The readiness to die is a missing ingredient in many good churches. Many of our churches will remain small until we have people who are ready to sacrifice. There comes a time when what is needed is sacrifice. Failure to sacrifice always results in barrenness.

Heward-Mills’ (2008a:99-115) convictions about Christian sacrifice are also rooted in the examples of the white missionaries who introduced the Christian religion to the then Gold Coast. The great sacrifices made by white missionaries in the fifteenth century to facilitate the fulfilment of the Great Commission in Ghana (then Gold Coast) and elsewhere have greatly sharpened the LCI’s desire to do church planting and missionary work. Attempts to begin Christian missionary activities in Ghana in the mid-1400s were somewhat unfruitful until the eighteenth century. This led to the influx of many missionary societies into Ghana to awaken what had become defunct. The Church of England Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) began this enterprise in 1752 but was largely unsuccessful. It was the nineteenth century that saw a much more successful effort with the arrival of the Basel Evangelical Missionary Society in 1828. The Wesleyan Christian Mission continued and then later it was advanced by the Bremen Mission. The efforts of these gallant men and women from Europe introduced the then people of the Gold Coast to Christianity, and gave rise to many Christian denominations like the Presbyterian, Anglican, Methodist and Catholic churches. Most missionary enterprises in Ghana were unsuccessful to some extent because of a myriad of factors, for example, the unfriendly climate, hostile attitudes by local people and difficult terrain. These factors really hampered the missionary movement enterprise. The Basel, Catholic, Wesleyan and Bremen missions all had their fair share of problems which almost rendered their enterprise futile. Even though almost all missionary enterprises were characterized by some trading, farming, arts and teaching, their core duty was evangelizing the pagan and local people of that time. In order to fulfil their mandate of evangelizing the local folks, European chaplains organized chapels in the castles to help propagate the gospel. From these castles were raised other local people

who were trained and later became chaplains to reach their own people. Notable among these people were Philip Quaake, Jacobus Elisa, Johannes Capitein, and John Kojo Amissah. Paulo Mohenu and Carl Reindorf (a mulatto and a historian) and many others were also produced by the missions outside the castles and contributed immensely to the grounding of Christianity in the Gold Coast. It is obvious that though the missionaries were engulfed with challenges, they persevered and their perseverance yielded fruits (Debrunner,1967).

It is clear, therefore, that, but for the great sacrifices of these white missionary societies, Ghanaians could have been in great darkness until now as far as Christianity is concerned. The effort of pious white missionaries who went through the sweltering tropical jungles to reach villages in the remote Gold Coast should not be lost on the present day Ghanaian Christian. This thought has had a consuming effect on the soul of Heward-Mills, and has over the years greatly inspired him into missionary work. Coincidentally, Heward-Mills has a Swiss heritage, since his mother comes from Basel in Switzerland. He believes that God has called him to continue the missionary exploits of the now largely defunct Basel Missionary Society in Ghana and elsewhere. This in no small measure accounts for the LCI's great involvement in missionary work.

This teaching on Christian sacrifice has released a large labour force in the LCI. Lawyers, doctors, successful businessmen, lecturers, ordinary workers, students and young graduates have abandoned the pursuit of earthly materialism and have rather embraced the cross of Jesus Christ and its message to go into the whole world to preach. Just as white missionaries sacrificed their lives to bring the gospel message to the then Gold Coast, the LCI trains its young men and women to sacrifice their lives and future to live in foreign lands for the purpose of church planting and propagating the gospel message. This has yielded great dividends. Church planting has been facilitated and the kingdom of God expanded in many virgin territories both inside and outside Ghana.

This chapter has reflected the researcher's own understanding of the biblical underpinnings for church planting. In addition, it has discussed the biblical theological foundations which serve as the mission theology of the LCI's church planting work. We will proceed to review some selected literature that engages the topic of church planting and missions in Chapter Three.

## CHAPTER THREE

### LITERATURE REVIEW OF SOME CHURCH PLANTING MODELS

#### 3.0 INTRODUCTION

The chronicle of church planting ventures cannot be spoken of without the input of Christian missions. Missions basically involved the sending out of people or groups of people for the propagation of the gospel through evangelization, usually in a foreign land. Primarily, missions helped to expand Christianity by building and planting churches to providing a spiritual home for new members.

In the distant past, most missionary undertakings were done solely by leaders of religious organizations, especially monasteries. After the Reformation, most Protestant churches began to be involved in it ardently. These people engaged themselves in proclaiming the gospel to the unreached people and hence the great awakening for other missionary enterprises, the end result being church planting.

In July 1974, The First International Congress on World Evangelization, a gathering of more than 2,700 church leaders from over 150 countries held in Lausanne, Switzerland, considered “mission” as a strategy to outline a sustainable church planting and world transforming movement. The work of mission was foundational in the Early Church and this theme is pervasive in the various New Testament books, in particular, in the Acts of the Apostles and Paul’s writings. These writings were focused on expanding Christianity from Jerusalem to the gentile world. Indeed, one of the proposals of Paul in carrying out his mission enterprise was church planting. *And some days after, Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the LORD, and see how they do* (Acts 15:36 KJV). This led to his rigorous travelling and training of people to build churches, raise leaders and most importantly care for his converts by planting churches. Historically, the activities of Paul and his co-workers sparked off the world-wide momentum of church planting.

A new form of church planting movement began around the mid-nineteenth century when Henry Venn and Rufus Anderson developed an indigenous mission policy, by which “they believed that young churches should be self-propagating, self-supporting, and self-governing from their inception” (Fanning, *Trends and Issues in Mission*, Paper 6). Donald McGavran is credited with coining the concept of “people movement to Christ”. He was an early proponent of the missionary work that concentrated on converting groups of people (“tribes, villages, ethnic groups”) rather

than individuals. Even though there are different schools of thoughts regarding the history of church planting, the work of Southern Baptist missionaries from America gave publicity to this term and helped to model it. Most scholars of church history and missiology have explained that church planting is an aspect of church growth. This is so because the proponents of the term “church planting” were motivated by the desire to see growth and therefore planted churches. For example, McNamara & Davis (2005:435,436) assert that:

Church Growth basically has to do with the way Churches grow. He explains that Churches grow through “transfer growth” (as members move from one church to another), “biological growth” (as members give birth to new children), and “conversion growth” (as lost people are won to the faith in Christ and incorporated into the local Church). He argues that many Churches rely solely on “transfer growth” for any upsurge in size when they should rather shift attention to “conversion growth” through evangelism and church planting.

Thus the terms “church planting” and “church growth” are sometimes used interchangeably. The former is the end result of the fulfilment of the Great Commission— when souls are won, churches must be planted to cater for them, hence church planting.

In order to grasp the term “church planting” and what it is all about, there is the need for some definitions to be spelt out in order to provide the necessary foundation for this chapter. Some of the widely held views among scholars as to what church planting is include the following:

Church planting is an approach to evangelism and it sets as its primary goal the establishment of new churches as the primary means of reaching a specific community and/or people group (Towns, 1981:7). According to Wagner (1990:11), “Church planting is the most effective evangelistic strategy under heaven”. Malphurs (2004:1) also describes church planting as a thorough faith endeavour that involves the process of beginning and growing new local churches. In addition, Smith (1984:15-19) explains church planting as the effort to evangelize humanity to Christ and assimilate them into reproducing Christian fellowships, whereas Van Rheenen(1996:229)defines it as the “initiation of reproductive fellowships that reflect the kingdom of God in the world”.

Thus, church planting could be described in different ways; what is common to them, though, is the realization that it is the essential instrument for the realisation of the Great Commission. A number of church planting models will be reviewed at this stage.

### **3.1 CHURCH PLANTING MODELS**

There are a number of church planting models. In this section I will review those of David Stroud (a U.K. based charismatic movement leader), Richard Foli (a Ghanaian Methodist theologian) and Ed Stetzer (Professor of Practical Theology and Director of USA Center for Church Planting). I will also review the mission theology of Michael W. Goheen (Geneva Professor of Worldview and Religious Studies at Trinity Western University).

#### **3.1.1 The Model of David Stroud**

David Stroud is the leader of the New Frontiers U.K. team. He is “deeply committed to building churches that are effective in evangelism, caring for the poor, shaping culture, planting churches and sending men and women to the nations” (Blurb, *Planting Churches, Changing Communities*, 2009). The New Frontiers is a family of churches that have chosen to work together under apostolic ministry. They are involved in church planting in Australasia, Africa, East and West Europe as well as North and Central Asia. They claim to have seven hundred churches in over sixty nations. In his book *Planting Churches, Changing Communities*, David Stroud outlines the model of church planting that is used by the New Frontiers. He divides this model into three sections. While sections one and two deal with the preparation phase and the qualities of the church planter respectively, section three of the model describes the planting phase.

#### **The Preparation Phase**

In this section Stroud discusses the importance of a church, the call of church planters and the preparation they must make before they step out. How to develop a vision and recruit a church planting team are the other issues that are discussed in this section.

##### **i. Importance of a church plant**

Stroud starts by analyzing the importance of church planting. He contends that church planting is not simply about getting a number of individuals saved; rather, it is about the advancement of “God’s community in the earth” (2009: xi). Through church planting God’s community is extended and this is what should engage the attention of the church planter instead of just seeking to multiply the headcount. David Stroud underlines some important reasons for church planting, including that the church is the hope of the world

and that it affords God's people the opportunity to play a greater role in changing nations as well as the fact that the dramatic growth of the world population requires more churches to be planted. Furthermore, Jesus clearly anticipated that evangelism and church planting would go together. Church planting is the best way for making disciples. Stroud explains that Jesus' instruction was not to simply win converts but to make disciples. These disciples are "made in the crucible of the local church". In trying to support this assertion with Jesus' saying in Matthew 18:19, Stroud writes that winning the lost naturally involves "baptizing them", which implies involvement in the local church. It is not clear to us whether Stroud is contending that "to baptize" new converts means to involve them in the local church. Scripturally the assertion that "baptizing them" means involving new converts in the local church seems far-fetched to us. The Greek word *baptizo* means *to immerse or dip in water*. John the Baptist baptized people in the Jordan River (Matt 3:6; Luke 3:21) and Jesus himself was baptized in the River Jordan. When Philip the evangelist won a new convert, the Ethiopian eunuch, he baptized him as soon as water was available (Acts 8:36-39). It seems to us therefore that Jesus was referring to baptizing new converts in water as an outward expression of their new found faith. Involving them in the local church is therefore one of the ways of discipleship. This difference notwithstanding, we are in full agreement with Stroud's reasons for church planting.

ii. The call of a church planter

Stroud observes that a church planter must have a *sense of call* before venturing into church planting. Apart from giving the church planter a personal source of confidence and faith for the growth of the church, this *sense of call* also gives the church planter faith that God will enable him to grow a new church. In his view, such a call can come in a number of ways; including a growing internal conviction which develops over time, clear supernatural experiences and prophetic words as was the case of Paul's call to Macedonia (Acts 16:1-10) as well as from the exhortation and direction of leaders in the church. Beside these, a *sense of call* should always involve the affirmation of those who will oversee the church planter. Concerning the call of a church planter, Stroud contends that it is good advice "to only work fulltime for the church if the sense of God's call is so strong, you can do nothing else". We wonder whether the writer's proposition means that a church planter has to be absolutely sure of God's call before venturing out. In our view, this approach towards the call of God seems rather restrictive and limiting. It is

scriptural that for most of the time, concerning the things of God, *we see through a glass darkly and we know in part* (1 Cor 13:12). In addition, the scriptural injunction is that the *just shall walk by faith* (Rom 1:17; Gal 3:11; Heb 10:38). Therefore, much as the call of God could be strong, it may be more prudent for a prospective church planter to follow a desire of God in the heart to work for him. Heward-Mills (2008c:75) notes:

Without the conviction of a call you cannot be a pastor. Many people do not even know what it means to have a divine call. They do not know whether they are called or not. I believe that one of the principal manifestations of a divine call is a supernatural desire and interest in the work of the ministry.

In other words, the supernatural desire to do God's work is often a manifestation of a divine call. Over the years, we have observed that most of the church planters of our denomination and other church workers have not experienced dramatic encounters such as visions, trances or the audible voice of God leading them to do the work of God. The vast majority of them have done and are still doing the work of God based essentially on a strong, inescapable and fulfilling desire in their hearts to serve in the kingdom of God. Eventually, this has with time transformed these persons into anointed and fruitful workers in God's vineyard—pastors, church planters, missionaries, musicians, apostles, bishops and prophets. This supernatural desire is biblical, as evident in 1 Timothy 3:1.

### iii. Preparation of a church planter

Citing Benjamin Franklin's words that "by failing to prepare you are preparing to fail" (2009: 21), Stroud underscores the great importance that must be attached to preparation for a church plant. He points out that leadership is more "caught than taught", by which he encourages a church planter to become a disciple of an experienced church planter in order to receive hands-on ministry training. We agree with this position of the author. The LCI uses what it calls the Informal Pastoral Training Programme (I.P.T.P), a hands-on discipleship, church planting and pastoral training approach to equip its prospective church planters. The researcher will describe this church planting methodology further in this study.

During the preparation, Stroud encourages a potential church planter to develop a number of skills, including being involved in evangelistic activities, being able to speak to a mid-sized group, and where possible participating in the meetings of the church elders to learn how issues about planting and running churches are discussed and implemented. One of the major skills the author proposes for acquisition is the ability to



lead a small group. He observes that “so many of the skills that you will develop whilst leading a small group are key to church planting” (2009: 25).

iv. Where to plant a church?

An important question that arises during the preparation phase for a church planter is the target location. Stroud explains that this decision is crucial since the effectiveness of the planter will not be the same in every community. Essentially, the church planter should look up to God for guidance about this issue and also receive useful guidance from church leaders. While waiting to come to the final decision concerning the location of the church plant, the planter should consider some important questions, including whether there is a clear apostolic strategy to follow. In the instance where the church planter belongs to a denomination, Stroud thinks that it will be needful for church planters to clear with the apostolic leadership what their current strategy is and how they can contribute to it. He states that the apostle Paul, for example, focused on major cities for his church planting efforts while expecting other church planters to start additional churches in the surrounding areas. Combining apostolic strategy with the direction of the Spirit will ensure success. We believe that this is a useful approach and a biblical one. In Acts 13:1-4 both the apostles and the Holy Spirit were involved in sending. The apostles on the direction of the Holy Spirit sent Paul and Barnabas into the missionary field. The mission board of LCI has a placement office which decides where a church must be planted. Whereas in some cases the decision is based entirely on where the church planter is convinced to go, in other cases the apostolic direction and need of the denomination serves as the determining factor.

Furthermore, Stroud stresses that the type of church plant must also be factored into consideration when choosing a location for a church plant. In his opinion, a church plant could be close to an existing church or it could take place at a greater distance from an existing mother church (“parachute” church planting), pinpointing the advantages of both types. The LCI has carried out both of these types of church planting and have found out that when the church is planted closer to another its overall development is slower than the parachute type. This is explained by the fact that most of the members feel more comfortable in the mother church where everything is already working as expected, as well as the fact that they will not have to expend their resources, energy and time on this new “struggling” enterprise. We therefore prefer

parachute church planting and wholly agree with David Stroud(2009:33)when he makes the following observations:

This sort of church planting can open up whole new areas or cities to the gospel. It has a higher level of risk than the first time, but also it has a much greater potential for the onward progress of the gospel and multiple other church planting opportunities.

v. Developing a vision

Stroud(2009:44) points out that “it is absolutely essential for any church planter to have a clear picture of what the church will look like before he begins”. A vision has many benefits to a church planter. Apart from releasing energy, passion, sacrifice and excitement, a vision presents “a map” that makes the taking of important decisions regarding the church planting enterprise much easier and quicker. Another benefit of a vision is that it enables people who would want to help the church planter to decide whether this is something into which they would want to channel their energies, resources and efforts to build.

Stroud(2009:45)stresses the point that the church planter must be ready “to answer the question, what is your vision? Or what is this church going to be like?” He believes that this is important because

you need to be able *to paint a clear picture of the future*(emphasis mine) because the small group in your living room have no other way of seeing what God’s future for them may hold.

We think that having a vision is good and appropriate. Without it the church planter will not succeed. The scripture is emphatic that “without a vision people perish” (Proverbs 29:18). Heward-Mills(2010:2)rightly observes that a church planter needs a burning vision to see results. What we are not sure of, though, is whether church planters can paint a clear picture of the future. They may have a good sense of what they would like to achieve but not necessarily a clear picture. They will need to trust God and walk in faith with the hope that “faithful is he who has called you and who also will do it” (1 Thessalonians 5:24), and also that Christ himself will “build his church” through church planters (Matt 16: 18).

## vi. Recruiting a church planting team

David Stroud stresses the need for the church planter to recruit and build a team before launching out. He believes that this often is the start of the church planting adventure. He lists several merits of launching out with a team. Prominent among them is that a church planting team enables the church planter to overcome more easily the hardest part of the church planting effort, which in his view is finding the first ten people. Thus the launching team serves this purpose. What he does not mention is the fact that the church planting effort could also be undertaken by one or two people. We find examples of this in the Bible: Philip goes to Samaria (Acts 8) and Jesus sends the disciples in twos (Luke 10). The LCI church planting model is patterned after “the twodisciple style”. Often two people, but sometimes one person, are sent out for the church planting activity.

David Stroud’s(2009:56)model ensures that there is a church planting team which he defines as “the initial group that you gather prior to moving or starting the actual church plant”. He thinks that this group could be as small as the planter and his family or as many as fifty people. He explains that the church planting team will be made up of people that the planter will need to fulfil key roles as well as people who understand his vision and want to support it. Also, because the church planter may not have all the necessary gifts and resources at the beginning of the church plant, but may have to do most things himself, Stroud(2009:57-58)thinks that “if you can find a few others to fill specialist roles, then that will save you a lot of hard work and precious time that could be spent on other things more suited to your own gifts and abilities”. While this assertion may have its own merits, the leadership of LCI has found this approach to have created problems.

### **The Qualities of a Church Planter**

The characteristics of church planters, their planning and the goals they set are analysed in this section. Also examined are the intricacies involved in training other leaders. In addition to these, Stroud dissects issues relating to time management, family, faith and prayer as other important qualities of a church planter.

#### i. Qualities of a Church planter

Having analyzed the important issues relating to call, preparation, vision and building of a team, Stroud then considers in the second section of his book the characteristics that a

potential church planter is required to grow and develop in order to be adequately prepared for the rather complex assignment of church planting.

David Stroud proposes further that a sense of personal security embedded in the conviction that God has called the church planter is useful and would provide strength to overcome the criticisms and disapproval of others relating to the decision to venture out in God's work. We subscribe to this view. As Heward-Mills(2008c:165)rightly notes "I believe that before you enter fulltime ministry you must have a definite call to give up your treasured secular job". He refers to this as "the special call togive up your Isaac".

ii. Planning and goal setting

According to David Stroud, the church planters must combine the divine directions God has given to them with proper planning and goal setting to ensure that they stay fruitful and energized as the time passes on. He stresses the fact that the combination of prophetic direction and planning is important and the two are not to be seen as opposing one another.

iii. Raising up other leaders

Surmising that "our future effectiveness will be shaped by the leaders we are able to raise up around us", Stroud(2009:114)discusses how to raise up such leaders. Principally, he argues that leadership is more "caught than taught". Apart from reading and studying books, listening to lectures and sermons as well as receiving exposure to different leadership styles, the author documents that the core of the training approach of the church planter should be that of working alongside another leader. This strategy affords a potential planter the invaluable opportunity to serve, observe, obtain practical hands-on skills as well as to gain the constructive feedback and encouragement of the leader.

### **The Planting Phase**

This section of Stroud's book is dedicated to the actual starting of a new church. Key ingredients that are involved in this process among others are the role of the apostolic ministry in the church planting process, the launch of the church plant, building a strong

community, developing an eldership team and strategies for self-support during the planting process.

i. The apostolic ministry and church planting

He makes the point that the church planter should seek partnership with what he calls the apostolic ministry of the planter's denomination. These people can make available to the potential church planter their years of expertise, practical advice, insight and oversight which will prove to be fundamental to the church planter's effort. He uses the New Testament approach to show that authority came from the apostle and his church planting team (Acts 14:23, 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-4). Church planters must therefore receive and benefit from apostolic ministry so that they will not be isolated. Principally, the apostolic ministry serves as a coach to church planters, rendering useful advice, and helping the planters surmount the challenges and issues that arise as the church progresses. We also consider this apostolic partnership as vital to the life of both the church planters and the church plant, and endorse the benefits that have been stated. However, we tend to believe that this partnership should not only be "relational" but of necessity also hierarchical and institutionalized. Much as the relationship should be loving and genuine, it is of utmost importance for the church planters to realize and accept that they are working under a clear institutionalized authority.

ii. The launch of the church plant

Stroud presents two models for launching a new church plant: the "ground up" and "top down" models. In the former model, the church plant initially gathers a small group to start Sunday services with, whereas with the "top-down" approach, a large team starts the service. He indicates that several advantages are associated with the "ground-up" approach.

The negative side of the "ground-up" model is the fact that people often are reluctant to come to church in a home, which is where such a model often begins. A church plant that starts with the "top-down" approach has its own merits. Significant among these is the fact that there is a church from day one giving it legitimacy. However, Stroud cautions that this approach could be problematic: the preparation for the launch could be short circuited and the element of building strong

relationships (which is inevitable with the process of gathering people over time) could become deficient.

The LCI church launch model is designed after the “ground-up” approach. We find it less expensive; it allows the church planter to be strongly committed to prayer, fasting and person to person evangelism, and, as Stroud rightly points out, it generates trust and loyalty whilst creating an ownership mentality among the members right from the onset. On the other hand, we envisage further problems with the “top-down” design. It encourages redistribution of Christians and defeats the vision of winning the lost.

### iii. Gathering People

Stroud teaches that the success of the church plant depends on the planters’ ability to draw people into the church. They must take all steps to meet as many people as possible both before and after the launch and even from then on. Non-Christians and other people interested in the new church all fall into this category. The gathering must not exclude backsliders, or Christians who have moved and are looking for a new church. The author stresses that by the term “gathering” (2009: 164) he is implying building relationships with all of these different types of people in order to draw them into the church plant.

David Stroud’s book gives some other very useful insights into church planting, many of which will receive further comment in Chapter Five.

#### **3.1.2 The Model of Ed Stetzer**

Ed Stetzer is director of Lifeway Research and Missiologist in Residence at Lifeway Christian Resources in Nashville, Tennessee. He presents his church planting model in his book *Planting Missional Churches*. Elmer L. Towns’ praise for this book adequately captures the soul and spirit of Stetzer’s (2006: iii) *Planting Missional Churches*:

Look carefully; he does not instruct us how to build “the church of yesterday”, nor does he instruct us how to plant “the church of yesterday”, nor does he instruct us how to build “the church of today” but Stetzer’s focus is on “the church of tomorrow” ... The author has given us practical steps in planting a church that will reach Generation Next.

### **3.1.2.1 Redeveloping a Missional Mindset for North America**

Stetzer notes that church planting is on the ascendency in North America, spearheaded by the Charismatic and Pentecostal groups as well as the Southern Baptist Convention with a rapidly increasing number of mega churches. Masses of disenfranchised, disconnected and spiritually disoriented people have since the 1980s been drawn and assimilated into these churches. He raises the concern that, in spite of the unprecedented levels of church planting, research indicates that attitudes inside the church are much the same as they are outside the church. He explains this situation by arguing that much of the North American church has become highly attraction-oriented, in the process losing its transformational capability. He thinks that there is the need for a balance—strong biblical foundations should be combined with attraction ministry. Besides, in view of the fact that population groups have migrated over the last decades into North America, combined with the fact that Christianity is no longer the American Religion, North America itself needs to be considered a mission field. The end of Christendom brings to the fore the fact that the gospel is an entity distinct from western culture, creating the necessity for the church to find new ways of sharing the gospel with this ever-changing population. Questions like “How can the churches relate to contemporary culture and contextualize the gospel in that setting?” must be addressed in order to overcome the challenge of bringing the gospel to western culture.

Stetzer(2006:19)believes that one of the key things to do to address this challenge is for the North American church to be not just mission-mindedbut missional. He defines “missional” to mean

actually doing mission right where you are. Missional means adopting the posture of a missionary, learning and adapting to the culture around you while remaining biblically sound.

This means that, instead of the church just having the attitude of caring about missions (missionary-minded) it must be on “mission”, meaning being intentional and deliberate about reaching others. A missional church is a co-worker in what God is doing in a culture and is eager to engage the truths of the gospel. This is what he thinks the North American church should become—missional. He observes that “we need to be about the business of applying the lens of mission to the field of North America. Christendom is dead and missionaries are needed” (2006: 20).

He underlines some obstacles to this missional thinking that arise because of the tendency for the church to maintain its norms and traditions instead of adapting the gospel message to the norms of the prevailingculture. There are two extremes in the

church. At one end, there is an excessive emphasis on maintaining church tradition. People with this view see the future of the church to be secured by revisiting effective past experiences. At the other extreme end is an emphasis on techniques, paradigms and methodologies rather than genuine biblical and missiological principles. Stetzer(2009:25) argues that there is the need for a healthy balance: the church must be biblically sound as well as culturally relevant, that is, missional. He concludes:

A church becomes missional when it remains faithful to the gospel and simultaneously seeks to contextualize the gospel (to the degree it can) so the gospel engages the hearers and transforms their worldview.

He pinpoints Paul's discourse with the Greeks at Mars Hill as recorded in Acts 17 as a clear example of this approach. In that encounter, Paul demonstrated his understanding of the Athenians' position on reality, spiritual interest and worldview, thus placing him in the appropriate cultural posture to enable him to deliver the gospel message to them. Stetzer reiterates that evangelism must be culturally appropriate, in which case it answers the actual questions posed by a given culture as against those that the church feels the culture should ask. He emphasizes that the world's questions in fact should help determine the evangelism methodologies and expressions of the indigenous church.

Ed Stetzer points out that the church must have the right missiological thinking, the lack of which makes the North American church support missionary work overseas while neglecting its responsibility towards its indigenous or local population. The proper understanding of the church's biblical identity and purpose would ensure that a missionary posture will be the normal expression of the church in all times and places. The church must awaken to the fact that mission is its fundamental identity. Stetzer(2006:29) attempts to find the root cause for the lack of missions in the North American church and alleges that the Reformation church neglected the evangelistic mission of the church. He maintains that, whereas the Reformers were engaged with geographic Christendom, their Catholic counterparts busied themselves with colonial expansion while Protestant mission became missions to Catholics. He demonstrates further that by de-emphasizing the apostolic nature of the church the Reformers and evangelicals contributed to the gradual loss of its mission-mindedness. He argues that "apostolic" is more than a position, it is a posture; since the word "apostle" connotes one sent with a message, the church must of necessity be an apostolic church. He conjectures that this mistake of the Reformers and evangelicals inadvertently lessened



the sending nature of the apostolic church, with the result that the church with time lost its missional focus and missional thinking.

Whilst we think that Stetzer's lamentations concerning the decline of the missionary zeal of the North American church is reasonable, we want to note that his theory for the genesis of this unfortunate state, especially the charge against the Reformers, is vigorously contested and rejected by other scholars. In his book *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shift in Theology of Mission* David Bosch (1991:243-7) advances the counterviews of scholars including Holl (1928:234-243), Holsten (1953:1-32) and Scherer (1987) against this accusation. To them, the theology of the Reformers had a missionary thrust. Luther must be regarded as "a creative and original missionary thinker", and we should allow ourselves to read the Bible "through the eyes of Martin Luther the missiologist" (Scherer, 1987:65,66). Even though Bosch agrees that there was little missionary outreach during the first two centuries after the Reformation, he stresses that sight must not be lost of the potent obstacles that created this situation, including the fact that the mission of the Reformers was essentially to reform the Church, the lack of immediate contact with non-Christian peoples and the constant presence of internal strife and endless dissensions that stole away the energies the Reformers could have expended on more external missionary work. The above mitigating factors notwithstanding, Bosch is of the view that missionary outreaches to the Lapps peoples of Europe by the "mainline" Reformers, as well as the extensive missionary activities of the Anabaptists, a strand of the Reformation, serve as adequate pointers to the conclusion that "to argue that the Reformers had no missionary vision... is to misunderstand the basic thrust of their theology and ministry" (Bosch, 1991:244).

I share the views of Bosch. I think that it is a misrepresentation to argue that the Reformers did not promote missionary work and evangelism. Indeed, the profound church planting activities of the Protestant churches in Ghana and elsewhere in Africa is an undeniable testimony to this fact (see Foli, 2006:14-36). After all, wisdom is justified by her children (Matt 11:19).

Stetzer further propounds the idea that Evangelicals must use the process of indigenization to present the unchanging gospel in an ever-changing cultural setting. Instead of trying to plant churches into cultures using preconceived ideas, strategies, methods and philosophies, church planters must seek to become incarnate within the culture in which they find themselves. This implies that the church planter must live in a given culture, understand it and adapt to it in order to be able to proclaim faithfully a

biblical gospel, making sure to avoid compromising the message. Stetzer(2006:30) aptly captures the concept of indigenization of the gospel in this way:

An indigenous church, young or old, in the East or in the West, is a church which, rooted in obedience to Christ, spontaneously uses forms of thought and modes of action natural and familiar in its own environment. Such a church arises in response to Christ's own call. The younger churches will be unmindful of the experiences and teachings which the older churches have recorded in their confessions and liturgy. But every younger church will seek further to bear witness to the same gospel with new tongues.

Stetzer's view on the missional and contextualization approach to church planting is agreeable with us. This approach is described by the LCI as the ambassadorial approach. We expect our church planters to live in and adapt to the cultures in which they seek to impact the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. They are expected to learn the ethnic language within a period of time, eat the local food and also to understand the tenets of the local traditions, all of which facilitate their effort to win such communities to Christ. This combination of the missional and indigenization concepts has been deployed for the LCI's worldwide church planting effort, and has enabled us to expand the kingdom of God in diverse cultures, communities and ethnic people groups around the world.

### **3.1.2.2 Involving Lay Leaders**

Stetzer addresses the concept of the engagement of lay leaders in church planting work, stressing the need for such people to be trained and properly equipped before launching the new church plant, such a team either arriving with the church planter or being trained locally from a pool of new believers from the community. He cites Stephen J. Ro, a church planter with Living Faith Community Church of Flushing, New York, to support his thinking:

Lay members use their gift to collectively work towards the vision and goals. They become outward focus and in turn help others to understand the gospel. Gift-use of lay people is vital to keeping people at a small church (2006:106).

Borrowing from Bob Logan's systems (*Beyond Church Growth*, 1989), Stetzer suggests that apart from the church planter, the essential lay leaders must include the worship leader, the pre-school children's minister, the assimilation coordinator, the evangelism network coordinator and the spiritual gift mobilizer. To this list, Stetzer himself adds the

need for a welcome coordinator and a financial organizer. He cautions that lay leaders must be carefully chosen and that the church planter must not rush this process.

In our opinion, the concept of involving lay people in church planting has not been adequately discussed by Stetzer. Important issues, among others, include the processes of selection and training, and the extent of the roles lay leaders can play; the challenges of the lay ministry need to be given a more comprehensive analysis. This researcher will deliberate on the lay ministry, a major component of the LCI church planting model, in Chapter 5 of this work.

### **3.1.2.3 Missional/Incarnational Churches**

Stetzer argues that “the missional church is incarnational not attractional, in its ecclesiology”. By this he means that, instead of church planters establishing places where unbelievers should go to experience the gospel, the missional church must rather locate its presence in the community and live in such a way to make Christ a reality to them; he explains that the ministry must be one of “come see Jesus” as against “come to a church service”. By living out the mission and portraying God’s love, kindness and goodness through their own examples in practical ways such as intentional serving, church planters seek for opportunities to spread the good news to the inhabitants of a given community. Thus instead of creating programs, strategies and ideas that are designed to attract people into a new church, which invariably results in transferring Christians from existing congregations, the missional/incarnational approach enables the church planter to reach out to real lost people. Stetzer (2006:165) observes:

Missional/Incarnational are two sides of the same coin, reflecting Christian community that moves both outward (Missional) and deeper (Incarnational) into culture.

He argues that the Evangelistic/Attractional (E/A) mode of church planting, the prevalent church planting mode of the western church for the past centuries, is ineffective in our current post–everything culture; this situation is attributed to the fact that the E/A church is “extractional” by nature. The latter means that converts are “extracted” from their cultures and traditions and embedded into a new Christian/church culture, making such churches impotent to reach across cultural barriers. Stetzer thinks that this approach is negative and unproductive for future church planting, supporting his assertion with Frost and Hirsch’s observation that:

It is absolutely vital for the gospel to be incarnated into thousands of sub-cultures that now exist in our complex, postmodern, tribalized, western contexts. It is vital that these multiform people and subcultures encounter Jesus within their own cultures and from within their own communities, for only there can they completely comprehend him (Frost & Hirsch, 2003:12).

This researcher is in complete consonance with Stetzer's postulations about the missional/incarnational approach of church planting. However, this approach is not a new idea, as Stetzer himself rightly points out when he writes that "right now much of missional/incarnational emphasis is practiced internationally". Indeed, this is the *modus operandi* for church planting among the historic mainline and Pentecostal denominations in Ghana. However, it is important to note that it is the failure of most charismatic churches in Ghana to be missional and incarnational, especially in the poverty-stricken communities, which include the vast majority of people in our country, that has adversely limited church planting. The church planting success story of the LCI on the contrary has been made possible through the wide-spread application of this approach.

#### **3.1.2.4 Model of Church Plants and Church Planters**

Intackling this aspect of church planting, Stetzer establishes that there are various biblical methods which are effective. He discusses three such models including the apostolic harvest church planter, the founding pastor and the team planting models.

##### **The Apostolic Harvest Church Planter**

Alleging that this is the commonest model in the New Testament and using the apostle Paul as a quintessential example, Stetzer elucidates that the apostolic harvest church planter moves to an area, plants a church, appoints leaders or elders for its direct oversight and then leaves to start another church. The cardinal characteristic of this model is that the apostolic church planter is essentially an itinerant person who keeps on moving on from one newlyplanted church to another. Stetzer cites Paul's church planting efforts in Acts 13 and 14 as clear examples of this model of church planting, and adds that, historically, this was the model of church planting that was used by the Methodist and the Baptist denominations in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in America, which resulted in the great multiplicity of these churches. People who lacked formal education but felt

called by the Lord were permitted to operate as lay preachers who worked with more experienced circuit leaders. Stetzer reasons that the apostolic harvest church planter model is still applicable in today's world, and that there has been a clear renewal of interest for this model in the recent past. Increasingly, people who desire to plant churches are becoming bivocational in order to be able to move around to plant churches. Even though the author thinks that Paul's exploits in church planting were greatly facilitated by his apostolic authority, coupled with the tremendous gifts of signs and wonders, he still maintains the view that such factors are either less evident or absent in this current age. In addition, factors such as modern technology and the availability of more pastors and others have allowed for the mobilization of people from distant areas and hence have lessened the need for frequent travels in larger cities to plant churches, thus enabling the work of church planting to be carried out unhindered. As a result of the above-mentioned arguments, the author contends that the apostolic harvest church planter model is not merely a theoretical idea in this current age but is actually doable. The LCI finds this model very useful.

Even though we have not limited ourselves only to this model, a lot of our churches have been planted this way using both fulltime and lay apostolic harvest church planters. An important difference that we would like to note is that our lay leaders are groomed to teach, preach and feed the members as well as offer leadership to them. One of the main differences from what Stetzer has described is that, unlike what happens in some of the examples he gives, where the lay leaders are groomed only to take care of the sheep but are unable to lead and feed them through preaching and teaching, the Lighthouse Chapel lay leader, by contrast, is trained and equipped to do both effectively.

### The Founding Pastor

This is the most common model in North America, according to Stetzer. After the planters have started their churches they continue to pastor it and remain long term pastors. Such planters are mostly formally educated. These planters, he explains, have pastor's hearts, that is, they tend, cater, exercise oversight over their members and effectively feed their members or converts not with constraints over a long period of time and therefore prefer to remain in the church on a long term basis, in time developing leaders to plant other churches, and using the leadership of Peter of the Jerusalem

Church and Rick Warren of the Saddleback Church as biblical and contemporary examples respectively.

This is also the commonest church planting model of the LCI. Its advantages include stability in leadership, stability in teaching and a great sense of security as far as the church members are concerned. Besides, it also leads to church growth, since it has been established empirically by Barna (*Marketing the Church*, 1988) that churches shepherded by a long-standing pastor experience greater growth than those with short-term pastorates.

#### Team Planting Model

According to Stetzer, a group of planters can move to a particular community or locality to develop a church. He alleges that Paul and his ministry team served as a good biblical example. He claims that the team concept is currently gaining a lot of attention, pointing out that its strengths include the provision of comradeship, division of gifts and a strong leadership base. The main challenge that has made this model less commonly used is its prohibitive financing, since often, the author notes, most or all of the initial team come on board as full-time staff. We think that even though the team planting model looks trendy, for frequent reasons including power struggles, unsustainability of co-leadership and inherent desire for one-man ministry, this model has been deeply problematic among charismatic church planters in Ghana. The LCI prefers to start its churches with one or a maximum of two planters, and this policy has proved greatly beneficial and productive. This is corroborated by Ed Stetzer when he notes, “I concluded that having two staff members initially makes the most effective church planting team” (p.75). Overall, Stetzer’s discussion on these three church planting models is very useful and instructive.

#### **3.1.2.5 Churches Planting Churches**

Stetzer propounds that churches must continue to plant other churches instead of just relaxing after one successful plant, since the multiplication of churches would ensure the forward march of God’s kingdom. He therefore encourages all churches to aspire to become sponsoring churches. The latter term refers to churches that continue to spawn other daughter churches. The reasons he appropriates for church planting by existing churches are expounded by Becker and Williams (1999:11-15). These include:

1. To evangelize the unchurched. Established churches can make a greater impact for the advancement of God's Kingdom by developing new daughter churches; this strategy serves as an effective evangelistic tool.
2. To develop new leaders. When new churches are established the necessity arises for the development of new leaders who then go on to serve in the new church plant and also receive further training to establish newer ones.
3. To grow the kingdom. Church leaders must aspire to fulfil the higher vision of expanding the kingdom of God instead of feeling comfortable in one successful local church. God's larger purpose is achieved through the multiplication of churches.
4. To transmit a lasting legacy. As more churches are established by different generations, a spiritual legacy eventually is passed on, which energizes the benefactors to also strive to plant other churches, all these making the expansion or progress of the kingdom of God possible.
5. To grow the denomination. Individual denominations can grow as more churches are planted.
6. To meet ethnic and language group needs. Churches must be planted among cultural groups that have migrated to North America, thus making it unnecessary for missionaries to travel around the world to fulfil the same purpose.
7. To glorify God. The presence of a church is an indication of the power of God in a given community.

These points, when properly harnessed and attended to, will result in the multiplication of churches through sponsoring, and thus there will be an avalanche of churches to affect the growing populations of the world.

Concluding, Stetzer laments that North America has multitudes of pastors and churches that have failed or are unwilling to pay the necessary price to sponsor church planting, and urges a reversal of this trend. He prescribes a systematic approach which must be followed for an existing church to become a sponsoring church. First, the vision for starting new churches must be cast by the planter from the pulpit, which would send a powerful signal to the whole congregation that the pastor puts church planting at the pinnacle of all the church's aspirations. Besides, this vision must be assimilated and promoted by the congregants themselves in order to ensure its eventual survival. Apart from vision casting, a church planting leadership team must be set up and empowered to carry out the birthing of new churches. A final component, as the church prepares to produce other churches, is the need for the sponsoring church to identify a church

planter pastor—a process which must be carefully carried out by assessing the prospective planter with regard to factors such as theological beliefs, experience in ministry, behavioural capabilities and supervisory accountability. With the above prerequisites firmly established, the author recommends to churches who desire to become sponsoring churches Jack Redford's (1978) nine sequential steps for planting a daughter church(2006: 320-322).

This aspect of Stetzer's work is very exciting to this researcher since it borders on the heart of my research project. The LCI, a charismatic denomination, is indeed a sponsoring church, having spawned successfully more than a thousand churches in sixty countries around the world to date. We will explore in much detail issues such as the church planting vision casting, observation of doctrinal congruency in a denominational setting, supervisory institutions, financing and concrete strategies for birthing new congregations in Chapter Five of this thesis.

We have found Ed Stetzer's work pointed, valuable and instructive and intend to use several other topics he has discussed but which have not been captured in this review for this research project.

### **3.1.3 The Model of Richard Foli**

#### Introduction

In his foreword to Richard Foli's book *Christianity In Ghana:A Comparative Church Growth Study* (2006:v), Prof. Elom Dovlo comments that "...a well conducted research by the author on church membership trends and Church Growth in Ghana". The book is divided into three main parts with each part containing several chapters. Part One essentially discusses the history of the church in Ghana from its inception to the current period, carefully analysing the origins of the main denominations and strands—the historic mainline churches, the Pentecostal churches, the Independent "Spiritual" Churches and the Independent Charismatic Churches. In part Two of this work, Foli analyses the issue of church growth in the Ghanaian church milieu. He discusses and compares membership and attendance trends of the different denominations and their church planting efforts, highlighting the reasons why some have grown and others remained either static or declined. Of particular interest to this researcher are some aspects of the sixth chapter of the second part which discusses the number of churches that have been planted by the different denominations of the church in Ghana. We will



also review Part Three of this work which is dedicated to the future of the church in Ghana, where the author discusses the methodology for church planting in unreached people groups as well as the factors that have hindered the growth and expansion of the Ghanaian church. Foli's model for church planting in Ghana will also be analysed.

### **3.1.3.2 Conclusions on Church Planting Surveys**

Relying on the Ghana Evangelism Committee (GEC) National Survey Reports of 1988, 1993 and 1998, Foli (2006:208-213) makes the following observations:

1. The Methodist Church in Ghana had the greatest number of churches nationwide amongst the mainline churches that belong to the "Christian Council". The Presbyterian Church came second. Foli explains that the increases for the Methodist Church were clearly due to the intensified efforts of church planting using the "5 in 95" programme. Church circuits were requested to plant five new churches each in 1995. The Presbyterian Church on the other hand relied on heightened church planting through its Bible Study and Prayer Group (BSPG) and the Northern Outreach Programme (NOP). In addition, the Presbyterian Church introduced the "2-1-2" programme which included the motivation for "every local church planting two churches in every year until 2000 AD".
2. With regards to churches that belong to the Ghana Pentecostal Council, the Church of Pentecost had more than half of the total number of churches belonging to this association of churches. Foli indicates that this church is committed to extension growth, crediting the church growth success to its witness movement and the women's movement.
3. Generally, the Independent "Spiritual" Churches saw low rates of growth.
4. Over the period of the survey, Foli concluded that the charismatic churches saw a 48% growth in the number of churches. He observes that "the Lighthouse Chapel International (LCI), the International Central Gospel Church (ICGC) and Word Miracle Church International (WMCI) are making great efforts in church planting" (2006:216).

Foli concludes his observations about the growth trends in the Ghanaian church as follows. The church in Ghana has seen growth since its inception; most denominations have seen growth in terms of both membership and number of churches. He conjectures that the main reason for this growth is church planting, and that denominations that have seen little growth, or that are static or declining have done either little or no church

planting over the years. While this researcher wholly agrees with Foli's conclusions, there are limitations with this aspect of his work. The methodologies of the church planting efforts of the various denominations were not deeply elucidated, making it impossible to know how the results were achieved.

### **3.1.3.3 Hindrances to Church Planting in Ghana**

Foli examines four major factors that have inhibited the growth and expansion of the church in Ghana, including nominalism, institutionalism, ethnocentrism and involvement in lodges. He defines nominalism as an inclusive term for such symptoms described by church leaders as powerless religion, formal faith and intellectualized Christianity. He argues that most contemporary missiologists and church leaders cite this phenomenon as the greatest problem facing churches today, buttressing his point with the words of H.G. Buehler (1973:17-18):

Nominality refers to someone who is: A religiously indifferent person who perfunctorily performs the formalistic rituals of the Christian faith. In his ambivalent state of mind he superficially issues a powerless religious performance on a few fixed church occasions. With his double mindedness, halfhearted allegiance he is one of the fringe members of the church who has more in common with the world than with Christ.

Foli postulates that church growth becomes retarded as members lose the excitement of a Christ-centered life. Such church members do not attend church regularly and allow the appetites of the flesh to pull against their spiritual nature, often culminating in their Christian values being replaced by secular ones. He laments that "indeed we cannot expect any positive contribution to the numerical, spiritual and functional growth of the church from those of the numbers who are the fringe members of the church who have more in common with the world than with Christ" (2006: 234). He insists that nominalism must be overcome, suggesting among other ways to do this, and that there must be a conscious effort to redirect the focus of most departments in the church to make them growth-oriented.

We are in complete agreement with these views of Foli. The picture of active Christians who once used to sing praise, worship and lead others to Christ but who later become just nominal is commonplace. Heward-Mills(1998b:11)describes this condition as backsliding and observes:

If a vibrant Charismatic Christian leader becomes just a principled individual in society he must understand that he has backslidden although many people may consider him a good person, in the sight of God he's fallen from the highest state that he used to be in—leading people to the Lord, exhorting them, sharing the word, laying hands on people and so on.

Like Foli, Heward-Mills believes that one of the ways to energize church members is to focus their attention continuously on the Great Commission and to send them out (2007:4). Foli elucidates the concept of institutionalism as a growth inhibitor in the church with an illustration by Reeves and Jenson(1984:48):

One author recalls a pastor, whom he was consulting, relating the story of his experience in one denominational church. He had been called to this church as a young pastor to stimulate new life in the church; or so he thought. However, as he began to lead a number of people to Christ and started to bring them into the church, there was some concern by some of the deacons of this church. During one meeting, the head deacon leaned over to the pastor and said, "You must stop bringing these new people into our church. We have been happy with this church for years and we don't want it changed!" The new converts were predominantly younger and some of them were rather unconventional in appearance. This was very disturbing to the older deacons. They simply wanted to maintain the status quo. They were not interested in growth. Later, the pastor baptized seven people one evening whom he had personally led to Christ. The deacons became so enraged, they fired him. That's institutionalism.

Foli gives several reasons to explain the presence of institutionalism in churches, including the fact that spontaneity is gradually replaced by structure, resulting in the members of a church becoming more concerned with the way in which things are done in an organized manner to maintain established traditions, thus shifting the focus of the church to things of secondary importance. Self-imposed legislative standards, faith tending to evolve into creeds which are ritually recited, and maintenance and concern for edifices taking precedence over mobilization and concern for the lost are also prevalent growth inhibiting effects of institutionalism. Emphasizing that institutionalism kills initiative, drive and innovation, Foli concludes that this has accounted for the slower growth rate of the more established churches like the Roman Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian and Methodist churches. Foli propounds that the growth of the Ghanaian church has also been hindered by ethnocentrism, a phenomenon he also calls tribalism. He borrows Aboagye Mensah's(1993:130([17]) definition of ethnocentrism as follows:

Ethnocentrism is an intellectual, emotional, and cultural attitude of a particular group of people who regard the identities and values of other groups of people as false, inferior or immoral as compared to their own.

He explains that the ethnocentric person regards whatever belongs to his particular group as superior to those of all other groups, feeling and believing that the values and norms of his ethnic group or tribe should be accepted as the standard for measuring other people. The author contends that principal among the root causes of ethnocentrism is past ethnic grudges, itself emerging from different causes including the slave raids and trade in the Gold Coast. For example, the latter, which occurred in the north of the Gold Coast, serves as the source of grudges among Ghanaian northerners and also between northerners and southerners. Apart from this, stereotyping or generalized misconceptions of other ethnic groups that often occur during socialization are also reasons for ethnocentrism. Foli carefully emphasizes the distinction between ethnocentrism and ethnicity, concluding that the latter is important to the growth of the church in Ghana if it is positively used through integration. Explaining this concept further, Foli states that ethnicity defines a people in the totality of life, and that this identity is recognized by both the group members and those outside the group; he points out that, unlike ethnocentrism, which is principally discriminatory, ethnicity provides a number of benefits to its members, including identity, support, security and a sense of belonging, as well as guaranteed acceptance, support and self-esteem. The following conclusion captures why Foli (2006:246) believes that the church in Ghana should shy away from ethnocentrism and rather encourage and embrace ethnicity:

The difference between ethnocentrism and ethnicity, therefore, is that whereas ethnocentrism is used in the sense of tribalism where the strong loyalty one has for one's tribe or ethnic group results in members regarding outsiders as inferior, ethnicity is essentially a social identification which guarantees solidarity among their members. In other words, ethnocentrism has negative consequences whereas ethnicity could be exploited for positive results.

Foli relies on Sulley-Saa's research work on the Presbyterian Church of Ghana to highlight some of the indicators of the existence of tribalism (ethnocentrism). He includes the practice of electing people from particular ethnic clans, the domination of smaller ethnic groups by larger ones, partisan recruitment of church officers, prejudices and ethnic rivalries, appointment of church officers, and dissatisfaction with language usage. All of the above constitute key hindrances to church growth(Sulley-Saa, 2000). The continued negative influence of ethnocentrism continues to hinder church growth in

Ghana; Foli affirms that this phenomenon contradicts the Christian faith, which obliges Christians to consider people of other ethnic groups as belonging to the same family as themselves. He laments that not only does it prevent the utilization of the potential of church members who belong to “suppressed” ethnic groups, but even worse, it serves as a signpost to members of such groups outside the church that they are not welcome.

The fourth key hindrance to church growth that Foli cites is the involvement of church members in lodges (secret societies). He traces the origins of such modern fraternities to the knighthoods which were established as a military profession in Europe around the tenth century. With time, a religious element was introduced into the system. The author insists that the participation of Christians in the lodges has the potential to impede the total growth of the church, since in his opinion their beliefs and practices are alien to the Christian faith, thus the church’s involvement in them will negatively affect its internal/spiritual growth; the latter, he argues, provides the environment for quantitative growth. He states that the mainline historic churches in Ghana over the years have attempted unsuccessfully to legislate on the involvement of their members in the lodges. He adds that the Pentecostal and charismatic churches describe the lodges as unchristian and shun them completely. He concludes that

this study has revealed that the Pentecostal and charismatic churches which abhor the lodges have seen remarkable growth. On the other hand, growth is rather feeble in churches that are permissive as far as involvement in lodges is concerned(2006: 253-254).

This researcher agrees with the analysis and conclusions of Foli regarding the issues of institutionalism, ethnocentrism, nominalism and involvement in lodges as impediments to the growth of the church in Ghana.

However, in the main it is the contention of this researcher that these issues relate more to the mainline historic churches. With regard to the charismatic churches, factors that hinder growth, among others, include a *laissez faire* attitude toward Christianity, planting churches mostly in the richer parts of the country to ensure financial gain and security, and frequent church splits. These issues have not been analysed by Foli.

### 3.1.3.4 The Challenge of Unreached Peoples

Foli bemoans the fact that after more than 170 years of Christian missions, and notwithstanding the fact that over 62 percent of Ghana's population claim to be Christians, there is still a significant number of unreached peoples who have not had any meaningful contact with the gospel of Jesus Christ. He relies on the Lausanne strategy working group's definition of "unreached" as "a people group within which there is no indigenous community of believing Christians able to evangelize this group" (R. Campbell, National Consultation Resource Book, GEC, p.45).

He explains that the term refers to a significant group of people without a church that can reach its own people with the gospel. He postulates that for the church in Ghana to experience total growth, it must overcome the challenge of unreached peoples throughout the country; such people groups are classified by the author as neglected, unnoticed and forgotten mission fields.

Foli includes the unreached peoples of the three northern regions of Ghana, made up of 40 or more distinct people groups living in 41 percent of Ghana's land area and numbering over three million of Ghana's population at the time of his work in the neglected mission field. Even though the church has done some work in these areas, there is an obvious and great imbalance in the spiritual, manpower and material resources of the church to these areas compared to southern Ghana. He quotes the Ghana Evangelism Committee (1990) report to buttress his assertion: "only 4 percent of churches, 3 percent of full-time church workers and only 2 percent of church finances serve the northern and alien peoples" (*THE TASK* published by GEC).

Foli explains that the unnoticed mission field includes peoples of northern and West Africa tribal regions in the seven sub-regions of Ghana. He observes that even though this group constitutes 18 percent of Ghana's population, and even though they live in a geographical area served by 20,800 churches, only an insignificant number of churches have made any attempts to reach them with the gospel of Jesus Christ; he singles out the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches for commendation in this regard. I wholly agree with his conclusion that "a more systematic approach by the various denominations to reach these northern and alien people groups will contribute to the growth of the church" (2006: 270). The 14,000 or more unchurched towns and villages in Ghana are categorized by Foli as the forgotten mission fields, the majority of which are found in the seven southern Ghana regions. The inhabitants of these areas are mostly

illiterate and are slaves to traditional religious beliefs and practices. Foli attributes the paucity of Christian churches in these communities to the unfortunate general tendency of church leadership to be preoccupied with their immediate environment, in the process “forgetting” such people.

### **3.1.3.5 How to Start a New Church Plant**

Foli(2006: 279)observes that “one task is paramount for the welfare and good of mankind, and that is effective evangelization resulting in the multiplication of churches”. He believes that persistent and focused effort should be made to saturate Ghana with vibrant and self-propagating churches in order to fulfil the Great Commission of Jesus Christ. He quotes Dr. Win Arn(1977, Vol. 3, p. 430)to support his thinking:

The goal of the Great Commission ... is the establishment of a cell (Church) of committed Christians in every community, every neighbourhood, every class and condition of people where every-one can hear and see demonstrated the Gospel from his own intimates, in his own tongue, and has a reasonable opportunity to become a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Foli maintains that efforts must be put in to take the gospel to all peoples and peoplegroups in the country, thereby giving each person a real opportunity to accept or reject the claims of Jesus Christ; the actualization of this is made possible when churches work at the goal of establishing at least one cell or congregation of committed Christians in every village, town or city and among every tribe and condition of people. He argues that many prominent missiologists and researchers agree with his assertion, citing the following observations of Donald McGavran(1967, Vol. III, p. 225)as an example:

...giving opportunity to all men to appropriate salvation can truly be done by establishing millions of congregations of practicing Christians, ideally one in every small community of men.

Foli emphasizes that a plan of action or a guide is needed to start churches in many unchurched communities in Ghana, and suggests the adoption of Melvin L. Hodges’ eight basic steps for church planting, postulated in his book *A Guide to Planting and Development*, as a model that has been proven here in Ghana.

### **3.1.3.6 Foli's Strategies for Church Planting in Ghana**

Foli suggests different approaches for reaching his three identifiable and unique mission fields in Ghana.

#### **i. How to Reach the Forgotten Mission Field**

Foli argues convincingly that Melvin L. Hodges' eight basic steps for church planting, which have over the years proven to be successful in Ghana, should be adopted by prospective church planters to reach the forgotten mission fields in Ghana. These steps are discussed below.

1. Impact a vision and build a commitment to church planting in your church.  
Church leaders must teach and discuss biblical church planting, and develop a mentality for church planting which is targeted at their lay leaders and general membership.
2. Pray and plan for church planting. Even though planning for church planting is very crucial for its eventual success, prayer must be encouraged and embarked upon for God's power to be released to facilitate the church planting effort.
3. Mobilize helpers. Identify leaders and members in your church who have love for lost souls and the potential for church planting ministry, and recruit them to help you.
4. Identify possible localities. Several possible locations should be identified and surveyed by the leader and his helpers. Factors like the number of people living in an area, languages spoken there, the presence or absence of similar churches as well as other churches will help in the decision making as to where the church must be planted.
5. Decide on an appropriate method. An evangelistic method which is most appropriate for the target group and also for the manpower and material resources should be used. Such evangelistic strategies could include house to house visitations, open air preaching, film shows, prayer cells in homes and fraternizing with fellow tribesmen.
6. Find a meeting place. The church could be started in a home, a classroom, under a tree, or in a temporary shelter, making sure it is conveniently located and it is as attractive and as comfortable as possible. Church planters are cautioned not to burden their new members financially in order to acquire a church building since this is bound to discourage and repel them from the new church plant.



7. Begin the meetings. Remembering that worship, teaching and fellowship are the essence of the Christian life; meetings are encouraged to be started as soon as a few people have been gathered. Instead of waiting for a “preacher”, a gifted Bible study leader should be deployed to start the meetings using an already well designed teaching outline.
8. Find and train leaders. It is imperative to identify and train a leader from the area who will continue with the church work as soon as possible, such people having the qualities of being able to teach and train others.

Even though Foli’s eight steps for planting a new church are valid, we do not think that an in-depth analysis of them has been made. Perhaps this limitation is explained by the fact that the focus of the author’s work was in the area of comparing church growth trends. There is room for expanding them, and we intend to do this in Chapter Five of this thesis.

#### ii. How to Reach the Neglected Mission field

In attempting to provide a remedy for reaching the mission fields in Ghana, Foli identifies what the church must do. To begin with, he outlines that the neglected mission field consists mainly of unreached people groups of northern Ghana, lacking “an indigenous community of believing Christians able to evangelize their group” without receiving assistance from others. Alluding to researchers in the field of missions, Foli retorts that the strategy of aggressive evangelism and church planting must be employed, bearing in mind the attitudes, behaviours and values of their culture when reaching lost souls for Christ. This fact is captured in the thought of the Ghana Evangelism Committee’s publication “The Task” (issues 12-15):

The growth and multiplication of communities of believers in every class of people, every ethnic group and every class of people, and every geographical locality is God’s simple strategy for an evangelized Ghana (2006:272).

Foli explains that people groups can best be reached by understanding their world, life and thought, culture and value system and introducing Christ to them in that context. Another strategy proposed to cater for the neglected mission fields is the “people group thinking” approach. This approach seeks to encourage fellowship with one’s own people but not to encourage tribal churches or exclusion of people from different tribes. This approach has been proven to be very viable and aids churches to grow in a swift manner. John Robb(1989:13)designates this notion of missiologists when he articulates,

People group thinking is an approach to ministry. It refocuses that process by which those engaged in evangelism and/or social service first become conscious of the diversity of people groups in their society. They then design and carry out ministry efforts that take into account the uniqueness of the particular group or groups with which they have chosen to work.

Proposing the “people group thinking” approach in imminent missionary efforts by the church in Northern Ghana, Foli (2006:274) underscores the following points:

People groups should not only allow people to be comfortable while possessing their own exclusive identity but must also appreciate others. People groups who are comfortable usually are relaxed and happy when discussing their problems amongst their own people. In addition, people groups tend to focus more on planning than on programming. Planning helps to better understand the people and their relevant needs and this will afford the church to draft the necessary programmes tailored to meet their needs.

Finally, people groups unveil new ambitions for missionary undertakings in the sense that not only are converts made but enduring fellowships are created within these groups to reach out to their own people.

### iii. How to Reach the Unnoticed Mission Field

Foli is emphatic that the Ghanaian church has not been able to make any meaningful outreach to this unique mission field, citing reasons that include failure to recognize the magnitude of this mission field, or their responsibility towards them; the mistake of profiling all northern and alien people groups from the north as Muslims whereas in actual fact they are diversified; and the preoccupation of the church in the south primarily with themselves and thereby shunning this category of people because of their lower social status. Beside these, irrelevant and culturally unacceptable methods have been used in instances where some feeble efforts of church planting have been made in this field. Foli reveals that one way of making church planting possible to this unnoticed field is the idea of mono-ethnic churches. Lawrence Larewanu(2006: 276), Urban Mission Director for the GEC, himself a northerner, illustrates the thinking of Foli in this way:

The typical Northerner leaves his homeland for the south to break from poverty caused by impoverished farmlands and traditions militating against progress. He comes to the city of the south with little or no education to gain a good job. He therefore

has to “perch” on a brother or kinsman till he finds work. This is usually some menial job such as houseboy, labourer, watchman, cook, steward or fufu pounding. He resents being looked down upon by southerners, and seeks little contact with them outside working hours. He sees churches as a “southerners’ affair” and wants no part in it. On the positive side he is freed of many traditional restrictions, which makes him more open to new ideas. There is therefore an opportunity of presenting the Christian faith.

Foli explains that the “unnoticed” people groups in the urban south are usually a receptive mission field, and therefore proposes steps to planting churches among the northern people groups in the urban south. Before he begins to list his steps, he first quotes a testimony by Lawrence Larewanu (2006:277):

Worldwide it has been proven that mono-ethnic churches grow fastest. In conjunction with the Assemblies of God Church, the Baptist Church and the Evangelical Churches of Ghana, Ghana Evangelical Committee has in the past few months pioneered the establishment of four churches for Kasenas, Nankanis, Frafras and Bulsas. The church members see these churches as their own and they keep inviting their own brothers, sisters, relatives and kinsmen to these meetings.

Foli suggests a number of methods and strategies for planting churches in the urban south among northern people groups.

### **3.2 THEOLOGY OF MISSIONS – MICHAEL W. GOHEEN**

In his book *A Light to the Nations: the Missional Church and the Biblical Story* (2011) Goheen discusses the theology of missions. His major purpose for this work is to “analyse the missional identity of the church by tracing its role in the biblical story” (Goheen, 2001: ix). In addition, his intention is to provide a sustained biblical, theological and exegetical contribution on the missional nature of the church, in the process highlighting the Old Testament perspectives on this subject, a veritable gap he alleges has been left in the smorgasbord of writings concerning missional ecclesiology.

#### **3.2.1 The Church’s Identity and Role**

In establishing the importance of the church, Goheen notes that our world has been beset with centuries of utter confusion, wars, injustice, strife, pain and the like. Consequently, many have longed for a world devoid of all these – a new world. He states that the great advances in science, technology, education, liberal politics, free

markets and economics of the eighteenth century failed to fulfil the dreams of a better world. He argues that the real answer for this new world of global peace, justice and new humanity lies with the church. The church has been raised through the death and resurrection of Christ, and empowered by the Spirit to live in communities to bring God's new world to them. Concerning the latter view, the author writes:

The words and actions, the very lives and communal lives of Jesus' followers, are to say: "We are the preview of a new day, a new world. Because one day the world really will live as one. Won't you come and join us? (2011:3).

Goheen cannot be faulted here. A burdened and confused world can only find direction and solace in Jesus Christ (Matt 11:28-30), and His church is the agency for this provision.

### **3.2.2 Ecclesiology and the Missional Identity**

Goheen contends that the church is missional, a terminology that describes its essence and identity. He asserts that the usage of this terminology over the past centuries primarily to mean sending people to take the gospel to faraway lands where it had not been heard, usually from the West, is now obsolete. He thinks that this older understanding of "mission" does not sit properly in the 21<sup>st</sup> century world; he cites, among other reasons, the dramatic growth of the Third World church and a corresponding palpable decline of the church in the West. Rather, Goheen(2011:5) argues that "mission" should remind the church that she must be true to God's work while ministering in a given culture without getting corrupted by it. He observes,

Only when the church is a faithful embodiment of the kingdom as part of the surrounding culture yet over against its idolatry will its life and words bear compelling and appealing testimony to the good news that in Jesus Christ a new world has come and is coming.

He notes that the missional identity of the 21<sup>st</sup> century church has in recent times been emphasized acutely for a number of very important reasons.

1. It reminds the church that it should direct its energies and resources to the world around it, instead of seeking to exist for itself. Historically, this has been the unfortunate state of the church.

2. The growing recognition and acceptance that the western church has been deeply corrupted by the culture around it; “missional” therefore reminds the church of its identity and purpose.
3. There is a call to the church to abandon its selfish preoccupation and cultural idolatry in order to refocus on its essential role of creating a new Christ-centered world in the communities.

For the church to be effectively missional, there is the need for it to develop a self-understanding in terms of its identity and biblical role. Ecclesiology is crucial because, as Goheen conjectures, “When we, the church, are confused about who we are and whose we are, we can become anything and anyone’s” (2011:5, quoting John Stackhouse). He argues that instead of limiting itself to church order, sacraments, ministry and discipline, ecclesiology, the study of the church, must more importantly concern itself with identity and self-understanding; this prerequisite would enable the church to then understand what it is called to do and how this calling could be properly undertaken. The author concludes that

if the church is to recover its God-given identity and role in the world, it needs to be intentional about recalling the biblical stories and its images (2011:6).

He explains this to mean that the church should go back to find its role in the biblical story and allow this story to shape its image, instead of the current situation where the western church has allowed the story of its pervading culture to shape its image.

### **3.2.3 How the Western Church Lost its Missional Identity and Role**

Looking back at the history of the western church, Goheen traces its transition from the early Christians through the period of Christendom to the post-Enlightenment times, showing that in the process the image of the church became affected by such factors as cultural captivity, Descartes’ new vision and consumerism. The early Christian church lived among unbelieving communities, from whose cultures they understood themselves to be different and portrayed an alternative community characterized by strict adherence to the biblical teaching. By not succumbing to the prevailing culture, their exemplary lives shaped by scripture were imitated by catechumens, thereby becoming an attractive community in the midst of the Roman Empire. In the words of the writer,

The lives of the believing community, nursed and shaped by the biblical story, enabled them to live as resident aliens, as lights in

a dark world. In the cultural context of the Roman Empire, “their contrary values” led to a “contrary image of community” that was attractive (2011:8).

This early church did not capitulate to the public doctrine of the Roman Empire, nor to its amorous, immoral, greedy and despair-oriented lifestyles. Goheen reveals that the nature of the church changed dramatically with the creation of Christendom – the union of the church and state (Roman Empire). With this shift, the church’s self-understanding was inexorably affected. The church gradually lost its sense of being a distinct community embodying an alternative story, allowing its identity to be determined by the story of the surrounding culture instead of God’s story. This way, married to the state, the missional identity of the church waned, losing its ability to exist as light in the midst of a dark culture. By this time, Goheen(2011:9)observes,

the church became preoccupied with its own welfare and maintenance; the pastoral dimension and inner life of the institution came to define the church’s identity.

This position is agreeable with us. However, what has diluted the missional potency of the Ghanaian church, particularly amongst the charismatics, is not the cooperation between the church and the state. The overwhelming factor is the extreme emphasis on the teaching of prosperity and the overall wellbeing of Christians here on earth. This has relegated the preaching of the cross to the background, in the process shifting the focus of the church from its principal assignment – fulfilling the Great Commission. Heward-Mills laments(2011a:172),

The focus of Christianity today is money, prosperity, establishment, safety and self-preservation. The goals of most Christians are to get more money, houses, cars, and security. Even pastors measure their success by the amount of money they have, and by the size of offerings in their churches ... The message of prosperity has become the message of the church.

Another canker that brought a further negative deterioration to the missional state of the church was the emergence of the Enlightenment by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The Enlightenment was embodied in the power of personal reasoning and the ability of natural sciences to explain the seen and unseen world, something it seems Christianity had failed to do. In other words, scientific facts which were deemed to be the truth were preferred to “vague” religious knowledge and beliefs. In this regard, Goheen(2011:12)rightly observes,

Since the gospel is not amenable to prove by the scientific method, its message has largely been relegated to the

netherworld of mere private values, subjective opinions, and personal preferences. Though any individual may find the gospel privately engaging, its universal truth claim cannot be taken seriously and ought to have no place in shaping the public life of a nation.

Unfortunately, the Western church has yielded meekly to this Enlightenment view, effectively dealing the death blow to its God-given call to be the “light and salt” to a nation and indeed to all nations (Matt 5:13-16). Goheen argues that the church cannot and should not accept this position. It must extricate itself from this worldview and re-attach itself to the source of its true identity and role—the biblical story.

Another negative influence which has diluted the missional identity and role of the post-Enlightenment church is consumerism. Goheen explains that consumerism, which he claims is the most “powerful religious movement at work in the West today”, is the protégé of the combined forces of western economics and globalization. In other words, the church, like most other things in the world, has become a consumer item. Instead of being missional among a community possessed by a consumerist spirit, the church has rather settled as a purveyor of religious goods and services.

Therefore the church must start all over again. To become missional, it must return to Jesus and to his message. The mission-minded Jesus spoke to the Jews about the coming of God’s kingdom, something they had been anticipating for hundreds of years. In this regard, Goheen looks back to the Old Testament in which God gathered Israel to renew and restore her as the proper beginning of the church. He concludes that “in this process, it will be clear that a missional identity and role have always been in God’s plan for his people” (2011:21).

The analysis of Goheen on the church’s role and identity could not be more remarkable, insightful and cogent. Indeed, it is probable that the charismatic movement has lost much of its missional identity. Although not all the factors stated by Goheen will mirror what pertains in Ghana, consumerism in the church stands out as a veritable example of what the charismatic church in Ghana has become. In his book *Christianity in Ghana Today*, Alfred Koduah(2004:131) observes,“the proliferation of churches, with its attendant money-making business-like pastors is exposing the true motive of the founders”. Other Ghanaian writers also echo this sentiment; see for example,Asamoah-Gyadu (2005). I could not but agree with Goheen’s(2011:20) assertions that

they are sent to live among the nations and to invite all peoples to join the community of God’s people. The result is a body made up of people from every tribe and nation living in every

country of the world, something very new in the redemptive history.

This, I think, can be achieved effectively through sustained church planting. In general, the Ghanaian charismatic church seems unfortunately to have limited this enterprise to the richer areas of southern Ghana as aptly alluded to by Koduah (2004).

If the charismatic church in Ghana would properly understand its missional identity in the context of the biblical story and is ready to sacrifice, it could engage in a more aggressive church planting to ensure the fulfilment of God's mission in Ghana.

### **3.2.4 God Forms Israel as a Missional People**

Goheen believes that a proper understanding of the church must have its genesis in the Old Testament, since its missional nature is grounded in the call of Israel; he cites the observations of Hans Küng (1976:162) to cement this argument.

Goheen indicates that there is the need to properly understand the terminology "missional" as it applies to the Old Testament. The writer explains that the missional identity of Israel is defined principally in two ways, an exercise he thinks has been done laconically by Christopher Wright (2006:17). First, Israel has been given a role to execute in God's redemptive plan, and second, this role enjoins her to live among the nations according to God's way; both of these were essentially to achieve one purpose, "that the nations might come to praise and know the true living God" (2011:26). In other words, Israel is expected to live among the nations and demonstrate, by practising God's Torah, His original creational intention and end-time goal for mankind. Israel therefore serves as the starting point of God's renewal and restoration project as well as the vessel through which salvation would emanate to the nations for God's praise and glory.

Goheen teaches that Genesis 12:2-3 encapsulates the plan God was going to execute to renew His fallen creation. God chose Abraham to make him into a great nation and use this nation to bless all the other peoples on the earth. The author (30) cites André Rétif and Paul Lamarche (1966:22) to expound on this theory:

It is particularly significant that the story of Abraham was thus from the beginning directed towards universal salvation. It was to give its true meaning to the call of Abraham and the choice of Israel, which can only be understood as part of the complete plan intended by Yahweh: the salvation of all.



According to Goheen, there is a “two-fold” agenda from God’s promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3: Abraham is first of all a recipient of God’s blessing and then its mediator (“covenant”, Alexander & Baker, eds, 2003:145). Additionally, this Abrahamic promise is envisioned for mission; God chose Abraham and his people to know his salvation and then extend this salvation to the other nations of the world, these two aspects demonstrating the missional purpose of Israel’s election.

In dissecting the book of Exodus as a way of helping the missional understanding of the identity and role of Israel, Goheen(2011:34)surmises that God rescued his people, covenanted with them and indwelt them in order to actualize the promise that He had made to Abraham. God has a paramount objective for this move:

To be redeemed is to be liberated to render full allegiance to God alone. God releases His people from an adulterous way of life to live as a contrast community. If Israel was to live in God’s blessing and invite others into it, it had to be set free from the service of other gods that had bound it. Only then could it embody God’s original recreational design and the eschatological goal of a restored humanity. Redemption releases Israel to fulfil its Abrahamic role and identity.

This exposition by Goheen on the missional role of Israel is insightful and helpful. Indeed, the modern church would have to understand Israel’s role and identity, in our view not only as a subject matter but more importantly to help the church not to fail in its own missional assignment. We think that the need for the church to be a light to the nations is even more acute today. The Great Commission must be uncompromisingly pursued, executed and fulfilled. That was God’s mission and it remains His mission. Planting churches as sources of this light is therefore imperative.

### **3.2.5 Jesus Gathers an Eschatological People to Take up their Missional Calling**

Under this section, Goheen analyses the significance that the coming of Jesus plays in God’s original plan of gathering Israel to be a light to the nations. Jesus, through his redemptive work on earth, ended up gathering a core of renewed people of Israel—an eschatological people from whose activities the other nations would be restored and renewed. This new gathering had become necessary because Israel had failed to be the distinctive people God had intended her to be, having succumbed to the adultery and perversion of the surrounding nations, with the result that she was judged by God and scattered. The coming of God’s kingdom, the hope that had been etched in the minds of Israel as promised by the Old Testament prophets, however, had not materialized. This

was achieved only when God sent Jesus to the earth, indicating that “He (God) brings the kingdom to Israel in the person of Jesus. With the coming of Jesus, the promise of God’s eschatological people begins” (2011:76).

Goheen throws even more light on this rather important assertion with the observations of Gerhard Lohfink(1982:123):

That God has chosen and sanctified his people in order to make it a contrast-society in the midst of the other nations was for Jesus the self-evident background of all his actions. In Jesus, we see God’s “eschatological action” to restore or even re-establish his people, in order to carry out definitely and irrevocably his plan of having a holy people in the midst of the nations.

The stage was set, therefore, for Jesus to gather a community and usher in the kingdom of God. Goheen stresses that unlike previous times, when various groups had been formed in Israel to serve as a faction among others, Jesus’ definition and understanding of the kingdom was to gather, restore and sanctify Israel to execute her missional calling.

As already mentioned, Goheen teaches that Jesus’ essential assignment was to gather Israel and restore her to take up its missional role to the nations. Strangely though, instead of reaching out to peoples of all nations as He had indicated in His teachings (Matt 8:11), in practice, Jesus limited his mission and that of his disciples to the Jews (Matt 10:5-6; 15:24). Jesus had come to introduce the kingdom of God to all peoples, but in keeping with Old Testament prophecy and God’s original plan for the renewal and restoration of his creation, by which he had chosen Israel to be the light of the nations, Jesus had to first gather and restore Israel, who would then reach out to the non-Jewish nations to become part of the covenant family of God. This, according to the author, explains Jesus’ approach to his mission. Goheen(2011:81)further elucidates:

The announcement of the kingdom means that the eschatological gathering of God’s people is beginning so that Israel might become a sign of salvation for the nations. Jesus’ work of gathering begins as he invites Israel to turn from its failure and embrace the kingdom of God and so to take up its role.

This gathering of the nations of the world, by God’s eschatological people, Israel, is the reason why the kingdom of God according to Jesus is “already-here and yet not-here”. Goheen(2011:83)affirms,

The gathering of the nations into the kingdom of God is a characteristic activity of the *eschaton*, the last days. As Jesus’s

ministry begins, so does the *eschaton*, and those whom Jesus gathers to him join him in gathering yet others into the salvation of the kingdom of God.

Concluding, the author intimates that Israel thus gathered was subsequently given through the teachings of Jesus new ways of living which were intended to enable and empower it to become an effective witness to the other nations. These included a radical allegiance to Jesus himself, a distinctive way of life, receiving the gift of the kingdom and suffering for the sake of propagating the gospel.

This assertion is agreeable with me. It is important for the church not to limit itself to gathering people into God's kingdom but also to equip them to continue God's mission of restoring the world to Himself (Eph 4:11-12).

### **3.2.6 The Missional Church in the New Testament Story**

Goheen discusses the story of the missional church in the first century in this section of his work, using Luke's writings in the book of Acts as the foundation for his exegesis. He thinks that the subject "mission" must be properly understood for the purposes of missional ecclesiology.

He alleges that mission begins not in Acts, but way back at the beginning of the biblical story. He explains that Luke demonstrates the connection between the mission of Jesus and the mission of his followers or disciples in several ways. Activities such as prayer, the coming of the Spirit, the inaugural speech about mission and the concept of being set free are common in the early chapters of Luke and Acts, leading to Goheen's conclusion that "the theological point of this literary pattern in Acts is to highlight how the mission of Jesus continues through his people" (2011:123). Therefore, even though the church's mission could be executed in creative ways in new cultural settings, the author agrees with the comments of Lesslie Newbigin (1987:1):

Jesus sent his disciples out on their mission with the words "As the Father sent me, so I send you" (John 20:21). This must determine the way we think about and carry out the mission; it must be founded and modeled on his. We are not authorized to do it in any other way.

Goheen teaches that to understand what it means to be a missional church, a crucial understanding of Jesus' words in Acts 1:7-8 is paramount: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be witnesses in Jerusalem, and in Judaea

and Samaria and to the ends of the world.” Jesus makes it clear that the final coming of the kingdom is not yet; there is the need to use this time to gather in the eschatological harvest, something he had begun in the Gospels and now wants his disciples to continue with. The idea of Jesus’ disciples becoming witnesses (Acts 1:8; Isa 43:1-2), Goheen cautions, must be properly understood. First, the witness is not to be limited to the apostles themselves. Jesus intended for this small group of people to be the nucleus of the upcoming missionary church. In other words, witness would begin with them but will become the duty of the whole church. Furthermore, the call to be witnesses was not meant to be just an additional assignment for the church but rather it was to define its very existence. The author cites Suzanne De Diétrich(1954:278, *Interpretation* 8) as observing that

this witnessing function of the church is not a secondary task; it is her *raison d’être*, her essential vocation; the missionary task belongs to the *esse* of the church.

Finally, the call to be witnesses is not only a call to individual Christians but in its complete reality a call to the whole community of believers—the church of Jesus Christ. Ecclesiologically, Goheen(2011:130) observes,

the church begins as restored Israel, a transformed community with a mission to its own people. Before the nations can be drawn into God’s covenant, Israel must be purged and restored to its missional calling.

Goheen comes to the conclusion, therefore, that the missional church of God is both centripetal and centrifugal. Centripetally, God’s people Israel are restored, renewed and transformed and therefore become once again an attractive contrast society which will be able to draw outsiders to itself. Then, this new community is sent out to the other cultures of the world; this is the new centrifugal dimension of the church’s eschatological nature.

Goheen’s reasoning cannot be faulted. Jesus’ command to the church is to “go into the world with the gospel and make disciples”(Matt 28:19; Mk 16:15). However, it seems that most of the church is “sitting down”. Most of the congregants of our churches are self-preserving and self-serving; they are not amenable to the idea of going to reach the unsaved world. Indeed, the church must gather disciples (centripetal) and then release them into the harvest field of lost souls of humanity (centrifugal).

Goheen shows the dramatic effect this had on the surrounding non-believing communities in Jerusalem with the words of Luke, “the Lord added to their number

daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2:47). The author discusses the exploits of the church in Antioch, explaining that it had come to serve something new in God’s mission. The church in Antioch differed from that of Jerusalem in many significant ways. First, it was made up of both Jews and gentiles, rendering it the first multi-ethnic church. But most importantly, as demonstrated in Acts 13:1-3, it became the church which first began to look beyond its borders to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The missionary activity of the Antioch church was not accidental but the result of sustained teaching by its leaders (Paul and Barnabas) to understand their identity and their role. In addition, the church learnt to operate in two modes: organic and sending. In the organic mode, the church grew to understand its role and identity and the need for it to witness to others, whereas being in the sending mode, a complementary condition to the former, ensured that individual members of the church went to other places and to other cultures to spread the faith.

Goheen postulates that the Antioch church brought a new dimension to the understanding of the concept of mission. He explains that as a church, it was a mission—it grew, embodied the people and shared the good news with them locally. At the same time it was missional—it looked beyond its horizon and took steps to send the gospel to places where it had not been heard. Goheen concludes that the “missional mode or ‘missions’ would be central to every missional congregation”. He points (p. 150) to the observations of Martin Hengel(1983:64)to underlie this important assertion:

The history and theology of earliest Christians are “mission history” and mission theology. A church and theology which forgets or denies the missionary sending of believers as messengers of salvation in the world threatened by disaster surrenders its very foundation and in so doing surrenders itself.

Finally, the Antioch church’s importance in championing missionary work also lies in the purpose and strategy of the person who mostly led it, that is, Paul. His strategy was clear. He established missional communities and encouraged such churches to become missional themselves. This strategy is therefore important to any congregation that wants to carry out God’s plan of drawing all nations to Himself.

In conclusion, Goheen highlights the important role of the Jerusalem Council of the early missional church. Fundamentally, by accepting that gentiles could become part of the Christian community while *remaining gentile* (emphasis mine) it irrevocably opened the flood gates for the missional communities to engage other cultures with the gospel of Jesus Christ. God’s people could now live as citizens not only with the

kingdom of God, but also with the cultures of the world. This way, they could draw peoples of different cultures into the kingdom of God while avoiding being contaminated with the adverse sides of such cultures.

It is our view that Goheen's analyses and discussions on Jesus' gathering of the eschatological group to continue His mission (which mission was indeed embarked upon in the book of Acts) are very commendable. My view is indeed captured by Suzanne De Diétrich's observations that are quoted earlier (1954: 278, *Interpretation* 8). What Goheen did not give to us, though, is how this end-time gathering of the nations could be carried out practically. In our opinion, the best way to execute God's agenda of being a light to the nations of the world is through church planting. This is what the LCI denomination has given itself to and this is what has motivated this research.

This chapter of the thesis has enabled this researcher to gain a useful insight into the ideas of key thinkers in the field of church planting, including David Stroud, Ed Stetzer, Richard Foli and Michael Goheen. Useful lessons have been gleaned from reviewing their works. A fundamental principle stands out: there is the need for the church to be missional, especially through church planting to ensure the fulfilment of the Great Commission, and actualize God's desire for His church to be a light to the nations. The church of Jesus Christ must not deviate from this. It must not only gather people into its fold, but should teach and train them to become active participants in the mission of God. Furthermore, this enterprise can be undertaken through different methodologies, but the goal remains the same.

The effective national and worldwide churchplanting ministries of the Lighthouse Chapel International have not been analysed or discussed in previous academic studies. Chapter Four of this work will provide information on this denomination, in particular on this aspect of its work. Then in Chapter Five its model for churchplanting will be considered.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **4.0 HISTORY OF THE LIGHTHOUSE CHAPEL INTERNATIONAL**

This chapter provides a historical background of the Lighthouse Chapel International and describes how it has been organizationally structured to facilitate church planting. Given that much of the history of the LCI has not been academically documented, I will rely on information from the founder's books, published theses and books and various unpublished documents from the church's archives, and interviews with key ministers who were involved in some of the processes.

#### **4.1 DAG HEWARD-MILLS, FOUNDER OF LCI**

The history of the LCI cannot be adequately discussed without examining the life, contributions and ministry of its founder. Being a first generation denomination, the church's life and development have largely been shaped by the inputs, insights, directives and vision of the founder.

##### **4.1.1 Birth, Education and Early Spiritual Formation**

Paul Gifford (2004:25) provides a reasonably good albeit brief introduction to Bishop Dag Heward-Mills in his book *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing African Economy*:

Bishop Heward-Mills, son of a Ghanaian father and Swiss mother, trained as a doctor and his church grew out of his fellowship of medical professionals around Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital. He left medical practice for full-time ministry in January 1991. His Lighthouse Cathedral is situated near the hospital, in inner Accra, but in the late 1990s the characteristic yellow sign boards advertising Lighthouse Chapel branches began to appear all around the city. Most of his pastors are part time—he has only ten paid employees (on 25 December, 2000).

Although Heward-Mills grew up in a Christian home and was made to attend church regularly with his parents at the Holy Trinity Parish of the Anglican Church in Accra, this did not lead to his conversion as a born-again Christian. Heward-Mills alleges that in the Anglican tradition in which he grew up, mission was based on formal education

through which children were taught the rudiments of prayer and ritual without emphasis on personal conversion (Audio Camp Message “Give Thyself Wholly”, 2004).

The latter spiritual transformation occurred at the age of twelve at secondary school through his association with Scripture Union (Heward-Mills, 2009:134-5). The SU, a parachurch Christian fellowship which is found in most Ghanaian high schools and tertiary institutions, primarily tutors its members on prayer, the study of the Bible and its application for Christian living and personal salvation, a clear theological distinction from what Heward-Mills had experienced in his parents’ church. In the Gold Coast (the pre-independence name of Ghana) by the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the foreign Christian missions, including the Basel, Methodist, Bremen and Roman Catholic churches, had established hundreds of mission schools and churches in southern Ghana to Christianize the nation. However, by the 1950s, continuing idol worship by congregants and increasing secularism of the youth eroded the sound biblical teachings on salvation and Christian living, weakening the spiritual foundations; the churches needed reminding of the clear gospel message brought by the early missionary pioneers. The SU was born to help the nation “know the distinction between a merely outward profession of Christianity on the one hand, and personal friendship with Jesus Christ on the other” (Barker and Boadi-Siaw, 2003: 8-13).

The mission strategy employed by the SU was to focus on the youth in Senior High Schools. It limited its mission theology to encouraging them to know Christ through regular Bible reading, prayer and evangelism (Koduah, 2004:329). The significance of this mission theology approach was that it ensured that the youth discovered the difference between experiential and nominal Christianity, making it possible for personal conversion, and also exposing them to such biblical pneumatic phenomena as glossalia and the other gifts of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4, 1 Cor 12:4-11), something that could not be easily experienced within the spiritual environment of Heward-Mills’ parent church. The spiritual influence of the Scripture Union (SU) in Ghana is appropriately captured by Asamoah-Gyadu (2005:103):

The tremendous influence of the SU in Ghanaian Christianity is evident in how the movement’s name and affiliation with it became conterminous with conservative evangelicalism. SU fellowships from the 1960s became the main non-denominational Christian organization operating in Ghana’s post- primary educational institutions. In the secondary schools, they were known as SU. In the tertiary institutions they were known as Ghana Fellowship for Evangelical Students



(GHAFES) and belonged to the global International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES).

It is an established fact that a considerable number of contemporary Ghanaian church leaders of the Pentecostal-charismatic denominations in Ghana had their spiritual roots and upbringing in the SU, as is alluded to by Barker and Boadi-Siaw (2005:161):

Most of the more recent Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches are led by men and women who were nurtured in the SU and who are happy to give SU the credit for bringing them to Christ and giving them their early teachings ... people like Alfred Nyamekye (House of Faith), Mensah Otabil (International Central Gospel Church), Dag Heward-Mills (Lighthouse Chapel International) ... and Richard Siaw (International Charismatic Church).

Barker and Boadi-Siaw in their discourse on the SU also quote Heward-Mills (2005:161) reminiscing about how he became a born-again Christian and about the subsequent impact of the SU on his life:

At Achimota School I was invited to go to the SU. Mr. Quist-Therson used to come to the meeting every Sunday, and he began to answer some of my questions. That was the first time I understood the Bible—everything came alive. I had a Bible that my godmother gave me when I was baptised, but since then I had never looked at it. Somebody in the SU taught me how to have my quiet time, to read my Bible, to fast, and all that. I definitely got born again through the SU, and from then on the SU was everything to me.

These statements by Asamoah-Gyadu, Barker and Boadi-Siaw as well as Heward-Mills himself clearly demonstrate that the SU played a significant role in shaping Heward-Mills' spiritual destiny and that of other contemporary charismatic church leaders. It seems reasonable, however, also to postulate that in Heward-Mills' case his early parental promptings for church attendance may have introduced him to Christianity.

Even though the future charismatic leaders mentioned by Barker and Boadi-Siaw were exposed to these theological orientations of the SU, this researcher has not come across any clear direct linkage to their calling to engage in church planting. To the undiscerning, it does not appear that the SU had a more than foundational impact on these leaders that have been mentioned by Barker and Boadi-Siaw. Some evidence rather suggests that these leaders had further spiritual developments with other Christian fellowships and received the call of God to serve Him along the way. This latter assertion is alluded to by Larbi (*Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*) when he states, for example, about Mensa Otabil, a protégé of the SU, and a

contemporary prominent charismatic church planter, that “he, however, indicates that the major influences he experienced came from the AG [Assemblies of God Church], the Tema fellowship and the Powerhouse Fellowship” (2001:336, explanation mine).

This notwithstanding, it is probable that there seems to be an indirect and subtle influence of the SU experience on the eventual launching out of these leaders into missions. The SU clearly did not form churches, but rather “taught responsible church membership right from the start. Consequently, SU members mostly continued to worship and serve in the churches they had come from” (Barker and Boadi-Siaw, 2003: 148).

However, the born-again experience such people had gone through, coupled with the fact that the historic mainline western mission churches to which they belonged did not encourage the expression of such pneumatic experiences, “drove” them out to form churches to pursue, acquire and express charismata. I concur with Asamoah-Gyadu’s(2005:17)postulation which buttresses this claim:

However, in the process of indigenous assimilation of Christianity, African Christians found unsatisfactory the tendency of traditional western missions to explain away the mighty works of God found in the Bible ...inability of western theologies to respond to their deep-seated yearnings for protection and for the vitalizing experience of the Spirit underscored in the Bible....

Expounding further in an attempt to explain the genesis of the churches birthed by these charismatic leaders, Asamoah-Gyadu (2005:17)declares that “in response, the independent indigenous Pentecostal churches initiated what some observers interpret as a “second Christianization”. I note that charismatic churches fall under this classification by the author.

It is most likely, therefore, that even though the mission theology of the SU did not directly involve church planting, the spiritual influence it exerted at least rendered these future charismatic church leaders “uncomfortable” in the older historic western mission churches, a situation which catalyzed their exit to pursue what they perceived to be the call of God for their lives through church planting and in the process to develop their own missiological ideologies.

## 4.2 EARLY CHRISTIAN MINISTRY WORK

The originator of the LCI learned the rudiments of Christian ministry through his participation and subsequent leadership role in the SU, where he was involved in soul winning, following up converts, as well as singing and playing musical instruments. When he gained admission to the University of Ghana in 1982 to read medicine, Heward-Mills continued to be involved in ministry work. At the university, he started a branch of Calvary Road Incorporated (CRI) which comprised a group of young vibrant Christians who evangelised through music and drama (Heward-Mills, 2008c: 9-10). Like the SU, the mission theology of the CRI was limited to Bible study, prayer and evangelism, especially of the youth in senior high schools and tertiary institutions, through music and drama. Asamoah-Gyadu (2005:107) rightly describes CRI as one of the evangelistic youth musical teams and ministries which started in the early 1970s. He explains that these groups “innovatively modernized Christian music and helped to chart a new course for Ghanaian Christian worship”. I agree with Asamoah-Gyadu (2005:108) regarding the contributions of CRI to Ghanaian Christianity:

If there is validity in Cox’s belief that the root of both jazz and Pentecostalism are to be found in Africa(HarveyCox, 1996:148), then the evangelistic style of the music teams of the 1970s and 80s represented a great and ingenious recovery for Ghanaian Christianity.

This innovative musical format (the advocates of *The Cape Town Commitment* 2010: 25 consider the arts as “a valid and valuable component of our call to discipleship”) brought about new ways of worship which were associated with excitement and joy, ingredients that were appealing to the masses of the youth, as opposed to the more predominant and lethargic forms of worship by the mainline historic churches and the classical Pentecostals. It is this musical format and worship which prevails among Ghanaian charismatics today, clearly demonstrating the contributions that groups like the CRI made towards the origination of the Ghanaian charismatic movement.

Heward-Mills(2011b:166)contends that the continued existence of the University of Ghana branch of the CRI that he established is evidence that this period of his ministry was successful. The evangelistic emphasis and zeal of CRI helped to shape and cement his love for evangelism. However, Heward-Mills eventually left CRI to start the Lighthouse Chapel International because of some fundamental disagreements with the overall mission of the organization; the latter assertion will be elucidated in the next section of this chapter.

Further influences on the spiritual development and ministry of Heward-Mills(2011b: 104)came from the teachings of other church leaders outside Ghana, particularly those of Kenneth Hagin of Kenneth Hagin Ministries, Tulsa, Oklahoma. In several of his writings, Heward-Mills mentions spiritual impartation from Kenneth Hagin, whom he considers one of the spiritual fathers who trained him in ministry. For example, Heward-Mills(2008c:137) has written about receiving an anointing whilst listening to a Kenneth Hagin sermon on tape in 1988 and credits all the blessings of his life as having come through the anointing he received from Hagin (Heward-Mills, 2008b: 84-85). Other ministers of the gospel that Heward-Mills asserts have inspired him are David Yonggi Cho (of the Yoido Full Gospel Central Church, Seoul, South Korea), Reinhard Bonnke (Christ for All Nations Ministries), Benny Hinn (Benny Hinn Ministries) and John Wesley (the founder of the Methodist Church) (Heward-Mills, 2012: 16-17, 19).

The effects of these men on the LCI's founder's thoughts, ministry development and work are varied. Kenneth Hagin's audio messages and books (for example, *Exceedingly Growing Faith*, 1973) and Fred Price's preaching and teaching style influenced the founder's understanding of the concept of biblical faith and homiletics respectively. Whereas Heward-Mills gleaned the passion for soul-winning and practical mass evangelism practices from Reinhard Bonnke's audiovisual teachings and books (for example, *Living A Life of Fire*, 2010), he claims that he gained clear insights into the healing ministry, a significant characteristic of his Healing Jesus Crusades from following the teachings of Benny Hinn, primarily through his audiovisual sermons and books, and particularly through a videotape sermon preached at Rhema Bible Church, Johannesburg, South Africa (*Seven Steps to the Anointing*, 1990). Heward-Mills explains that contributions from the ministry of Yonggi Cho have come from Cho's church growth principles, including prayer, small subdivisions and the use of monitoring systems like charts to help handle large numbers of church members. It is reasonable to postulate that the variegated ideas of these men have together augmented the missiological and theological philosophies of Heward-Mills' multifaceted ministry. Faith, passion for soul-winning and the manifestation of biblical healing and miraculous phenomena (Matthew 10:7-8) are commonly associated with his worldwide mass evangelistic outreach, the Healing Jesus Crusade. The fact that he employs the church growth principles of "busselization" (small subdivisions, cells which are known in the LCI as bussells) and massive organized congregational prayers, point to the indelible niche that Yonggi Cho's teachings have created in his mindset. The Wesleyan influence

on Heward-Mills' missiological approach is manifested in his worldwide itinerant pastoral training conferences, evangelism and church planting, as well as vestiges of the governance structure of the Methodist Church such as pastoral assessment conferences and dioceses in the LCI's own church governance. The combined influences of Heward-Mills' mentors have had a highly significant influence on his life and ministry. They have served as the unmistakable bedrock for the formation, growth and the development of the LCI and its church expansion exploits.

#### **4.3 CALL TO MINISTRY, ESTABLISHMENT OF LCI, EARLY CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES**

Heward-Mills (2008a:90) intimates that he experienced the first stirrings of the call of God in 1985 and describes how he eventually decided to obey this calling in 1987 as follows:

At 5 o'clock in the morning on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 1987 I decided to obey the call of God on my life. It was in the early hours of the first day of that New Year when I decided to take up the mantle and become a pastor. I knew that I had been called and I decided to obey to become a pastor.

During this period, Heward-Mills had relocated to the Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital to continue his medical studies; where he established another branch of the CRI([www.daghewardmills.org/about-us/history](http://www.daghewardmills.org/about-us/history)). He contends that he did not have any dramatic spiritual experiences with regards to his calling, but rather followed his desire to serve the Lord, and the conviction of the small voice of God in his heart. Besides, he believed that he had no choice to do anything else with his life except to preach the gospel. The scriptural base of this conviction is I Corinthians 14:1 and I Timothy 3:1, which sanction the presence of a desire for ministry as a positive intention. Heward-Mills(2009:8)teaches his followers to be open to this type of calling by God. Even though some LCI pastors have experienced dramatic supernatural events in relation to their calling, the majority of LCI pastors have followed the founder's example in making the decision to become pastors.

Between 1985 and 1987 Heward-Mills and some other medical students started regular prayer meetings at night in preparation towards a church ministry, being strongly convinced that the Spirit of God was leading him to start a church. He notified the leadership of CRI of this aspiration. The latter refused to support his desire to transform the branch of CRI that he was leading at the Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital,

Accra, into a church, as this was against the organization's policy. Heward-Mills, however, believed that there was more to evangelizing the youth through music and drama. In reference to the above-mentioned policy, Asamoah-Gyadu noted that "at the time, the leadership of Calvary Road Inc. insisted that their constitution did not permit them to associate with a church" (2005:118, footnote).

The CRI, like the SU, encouraged their converts to either continue to worship in their mother churches or find appropriate churches of their choice to join, leaving the continuous spiritual development of their converts to the converts themselves. Heward-Mills and some other CRI leaders at this stage had strong convictions to form churches, believing that it was in conformity with their desire to not only see the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) fulfilled, but also provide churches as "spiritual homes" to their converts for discipleship (Matt 28:20) in order to foster their complete spiritual development. This assertion is endorsed correctly by the *Cape Town Commitment* (2010:38) when it indicates the need for intensified efforts through Bible teaching to make disciples and nurture new believers, and to ensure that those of them whom God may call will acquire the biblical criteria of maturity and servanthood. However, the leadership of the CRI maintained the importance of the continuity of their organization as a music/drama evangelistic approach to missions. This schism proved to be an inexorable theological difference for Heward-Mills, so he departed from the CRI.

Heward-Mills' theological position is very convincing in this matter. This view is predicated on the scriptural examples of Jesus' apostles who translated His command to spread the gospel everywhere by planting churches (Acts 2-5, 11, 13-14); these biblical texts vindicate the posture of Heward-Mills and his companions. Evangelism is incomplete unless it is combined with church planting to garner the most profits from the soul-winning efforts. The *Cape Town Commitment* (2010:47) appropriately observes that the New Testament shows the close partnership between the work of evangelism and church planting. Many missiologists and church growth exponents agree with these positions. Wagner (1991:11), for instance, observes that "Church planting is the most effective evangelistic strategy under heaven", and Smith (2000:202) explains church planting as the effort to evangelise humanity to Christ and *assimilate them into reproducing Christian fellowships* (emphasis mine).

The inherent weakness in the CRI's theology of mission is revealed by the fact that the organization could not continue to sustain the status quo, eventually reversed its

non-church association/church planting policy and metamorphosed into several charismatic churches. I share Asamoah-Gyadu's assertion that this theological mission approach of the CRI seems eventually to have frustrated more of its leaders, including Ebenezer Markwei, who had been its president for eleven years, with the result that they followed the path of Heward-Mills to establish churches (2005:118).

It would be correct to conclude that the LCI's church expansion effort has a direct link to these early theological beliefs of Heward-Mills to participate in the realisation of the Great Commission. Heward-Mills resigned from CRI to start the Lighthouse Chapel International in 1988. The church was started with five people (2007:166). Two of these five original church members have been instrumental in the progress and development of the denomination to date: Adelaide Baiden, who later became the wife of Heward-Mills and oversees an enormous Women's Ministry, and Emmanuel Abednego T. Sackey, who became Heward-Mills' main assistant. Of his association with the latter in particular, Heward-Mills(2008a:123) maintains that

As far back as I can remember, I have always had a vision to win souls for Christ. During my early days at the university, I met a law student called E.A.T. Sackey. He happened to be a classmate and a friend of my wife, so naturally we became good friends. I soon discovered that he and I had similar interests like soul winning. I believe that is what drew us together in ministry. I recently discovered some of the letters he wrote to me when we were both students in the university in 1988. At that time, I was a medical student and he was a law student, but neither medicine nor law could drown our divine call and desire to win more people to Christ. I am glad that we are both in the ministry today.

The main evangelistic tool in the early days of the church was preaching at dawn at the hostels of medical, nursing and other students of the Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital. New converts were visited, counselled and prayed for and invited to join the newly formed church. With time, the five-member congregation that started in a classroom of the School of Hygiene of the Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital, Accra, grew in numbers and strength, with the bulk of the congregation being made up of young medical, nursing and other allied health students. This core group of initial members of the LCI essentially defined the professional profile of the church's members; to date, the LCI is often referred to by some people as the "church of medical doctors" because the church has continued to attract health professionals, with several medical doctors and nurses also responding to the call to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. This phenomenon has impacted positively on the social ministry of the church. Having so many health

professionals in the congregation has made it possible for the church to engage large groups of medical personnel to undertake medical missions to the underprivileged, especially during the Healing Jesus Crusades (HJC) which is one of the church's evangelistic programmes. Originally known as the Korle-Bu Christian Centre, the church's name was changed to The Lighthouse, then The Lighthouse Chapel International to reflect its desire to reach many more people for Christ, in concert with the biblical injunctions for worldwide evangelism (Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47) and removing at the same time the limitation of Heward-Mills' ministry to the confines of the hospital environs. It was important for the fledging church to harvest not only the surrounding sheep but also to follow in the steps of Jesus when he said "and other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (John 10:16).

From 1985 to the end of 1990, Heward-Mills led the church as a lay pastor. During this period, he practised as a doctor at the Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital and also had a transport, sand and stone supplies private business to sustain himself in ministry (Bandoh, 2012: 55). This ministry style later birthed the Lay Ministry initiative, which is one of the defining features of the LCI denomination.

The lay ministry is known to some as the tent ministry, and is premised on the fact that not only is it possible to combine secular work with the ministry but that they are clear biblical examples that should be emulated for effective church expansion. The apostle Paul is the foremost New Testament example of this type of church planter (Acts 18:3-4; 20:32-36). Heward-Mills believes that the laity can be trained and equipped to make great contributions towards church planting, and this policy has led to not less than seventy percent of the LCI's church planters being committed to bivocational ministries. In 1990 Gifford correctly documented that most of the LCI pastors were part-time, a situation which pertains to date. Not only does the lay ministry allow for church expansion at drastically reduced cost but also facilitates their proliferation at a great rate, making it one of the key strategic components of the LCI's church expansion model. The concept of the involvement of laity in missions as a major component of the LCI's church expansion model has been explored in more detail in Chapter Two of this thesis.

The fledgling church had significant setbacks, including disloyalty to Heward-Mills' leadership by his closest associate and some key members. In the words of Heward-Mills (2005:30), "I remember early in the ministry, a spirit of disloyalty entered



my church”. This took the form of incessant criticism of his preaching style and doubt of his ministerial calling, since he was a medical student and lacked formal theological training. Heward-Mills does not give any hint about the existence of theological differences with his key associate, but given that the church seemed to be doing well at this stage, this researcher would want to hypothesize that the attitude of the key associate and others could have been an outward expression of an intrinsic doubt concerning the future security of the church, since to them it was reasonable that the “blind could not lead the blind” (Luke 6:39). It is also reasonable to conjecture that this early experience of disloyalty became an important factor in the eventual development of one of the key theological and missiological beliefs of Heward-Mills, namely, that loyalty is an indispensable ingredient for missions, especially in the context of denominationalism. Heward-Mills (2005:31) himself observes, “some may ask why I teach so much on the subject of loyalty. This is because I have experienced the devastating impact disloyalty can have on the ministry”.

Eventually he parted ways with his key associate, who was then replaced by E.A.T. Sackey. Other challenges he faced in the early days of the church included persecution from medical students, as described by Toss Mills-Odoi(2008:141):

The church came under persecution from medical students who claimed that they were being disturbed by these prayers. A delegation of the medical students went to the Dean of the Medical School and requested that the church be closed down or relocated from the School of Hygiene. The Dean of the Medical School contacted the Principal of the School of Hygiene on this matter. However, the Principal saw nothing wrong with the church meeting there and allowed the church to continue to have their meetings at the venue.

Later, however, hospital administrators of the Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital became increasingly uncooperative, possibly because of the increasing social nuisance characterized by excessive noise from the loud singing, clapping and prayers as well as the mere presence of an increasing large army of intruders in the limited confines of the Teaching Hospital; all of this might have affected the smooth execution of both academic work and healthcare delivery. This stance of the administrators made it difficult for the church to have a consistent meeting place, forcing the church venue to be changed frequently.

There was also opposition to Heward-Mills’ calling by some established ministers of the charismatic denominations, based primarily on their doubts that a medical student without adequate pastoral and theological training could lead a church.

Heward Mills (2007: 133, 164), in describing hostilities against his ministry in the early days of the church's life, said:

When I started out in ministry, I was utterly and totally rejected by the ministers of my day ... Other pastors claimed I was not called by God and I had no business starting a church. They felt I was a medical student who should concentrate on his schooling... When I began in the ministry I was despised and opposed! I had no help from any of the bigger churches of my day. Some of them ridiculed me while others even opposed me. There was no help or approval from any man of God.

I do not subscribe to the reasons adduced by the ministerial opponents of Heward-Mills to his ministry. First, there is enough evidence to demonstrate that a majority of the leaders of the charismatic churches frowned on the need for formal pastoral and theological training, therefore basing the entirety of their ministries on what they perceived to be an inner conviction of the call of God as well as "revelation knowledge". Larbi (2001: 446) critiques this posturing of the Neo-Pentecostals when he asserts:

Pentecostals traditionally have frowned on higher education because of the humble beginnings of the early leaders. The age-long battle on the relationship between higher education and the Christian ministry continues to be waged by African Pentecostals. Pentecostal leaders have traditionally held that higher level education, especially advanced theological education, "kills" the spirit. Whereas this frame of understanding has changed in the West, it is still strong in Africa. When it comes to theological education at the higher level, Pentecostal leaders continue to harbour a very low opinion ... In the effort of some of the leaders to legitimise old-fashioned views on education, some Neo-Pentecostals have tried in their study of epistemology to coin what appears to be a new vocabulary: "revelation knowledge" (knowledge from above) as opposed to sense knowledge (empirical knowledge).

Larbi's description of the prevailing norm regarding theological education among Pentecostals of the early stock is correct. It is an affirmation of Heward-Mills' lack of theological education as a Pentecostal and his refusal to allow his status as a medical student to cast a doubt on his ministerial initiatives. The scriptural injunction allows and in fact instructs Christians "to walk by faith and to live by faith" (2 Cor 5:7; Rom 1:17; Gal 3:11), meaning that faith or one's belief is paramount for any Christian venture. It can be concluded from the above analysis, therefore, that Heward-Mills operated within the pervading charismatic theology of mission at the time.

It is instructive to observe that these theological orientations of Heward-Mills, including the participation of the laity in missions, and the availability of desire for the work of God as a plausible sign of calling into missions, have become key components of his missiological understanding. It is also clear that the current trend over the last decade or so of the acquisition of formal theological education by many charismatic leaders, and the establishment of prominent Bible schools (Koduah, 2004:127) is an indication of a shift from their earlier philosophy of ministry.

Despite the challenges, the church grew steadily and outgrew the capacity of all the available temporary meeting places at the Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital. This, in addition to persistent efforts by the authorities of the Medical School to prevent the church from holding its services at the Medical School premises, led to the decision in 1993 to purchase a dilapidated cinema hall in Korle Gonno, one of the poorest slums of Accra. The choice of this property was occasioned by its ready availability and proximity to the church's meeting place, and also the willingness of the property owner to accept payment for it over a period of time. Although the original purchase price for the building was 37,500,000 cedis (equivalent to a little over 100,000 US dollars) it was later reduced to 35,000,000 (verbal communication with E.A.T. Sackey, 2012). The events that ultimately precipitated the move to acquire a church building have also been described by Toss Mills-Odoi (2008:143):

In 1991, pressure from the Medical School authorities began to mount. They wanted the church to leave the canteen. The pressure was spearheaded by the then Executive Secretary of the Medical School, who placed restriction on the activities of the church and levied a fee of 5,000 cedis a month as rent for the use of the place ...A search began to look for an alternative meeting place and an old cinema, Ophir Cinema at Korle-Gonno, was located.

The church managed to transform this old structure into an ultra-modern church complex, which eventually became the first international headquarters of the LCI denomination, facilitating the stability, growth and security of the church and providing the necessary ambience for the initiation of the church's expansion to other places. This positive impact propelled the construction and ownership of permanent church halls into one of the key strategic components of the LCI's model, which has advanced the great gains in church expansion through church planting.

Towards the end of 1990 Heward-Mills felt the Lord leading him to abandon all secular pursuits in order to enter into full-time ministry, which decision he took on

January 1, 1991. The call into full-time ministry was received with difficulty, anxiety, apprehension and fear. Heward-Mills (2007: 79) describes these sentiments severally as “it was not an easy decision for me”, and “what if the church didn’t work”. In spite of these emotions, he was determined to fulfil his calling as a full-time minister because he was convinced that preaching the gospel was the only alternative he had for his life, and that “I feel that if I do anything apart from preach His word, God will destroy me”. He depended on financial support from his mother and sister to enable him to continue in the early years of full-time ministry (Heward-Mills, 2011c:108).

#### **4.4 GROWTH AND MISSIONS**

Between 1988 and the end of 1991 the LCI was a single church. The church expansion work started gradually in 1992. In the initial phase of this development, branch churches were started primarily by the founder himself in places where he felt the leadings of the Spirit of God to do so, as was the case with the first branches established in London and Zurich in 1993 and 1994, respectively. Other branches were started in response to requests from some earlier members of the church who had travelled abroad, as was the case in 1992 for establishing a branch in Geneva (verbal communication with Heward-Mills, 2012). As elaborated in Chapter Two of this thesis, Heward-Mills’ theological convictions for the expansion of his church were premised on Jesus’ injunction to Christians to “go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature”(Mark 16:15; Matt 28:18-20). Heward-Mills (2005:1-6) interprets this literally, to mean that all efforts must be mobilised to plant churches worldwide since “there is no way you can teach people unless you regularly gather them”, and that “a regular gathering of Christians for the purpose of teaching is called a church”; in addition, “the more gatherings there are, the more the Great Commission is being fulfilled”. Besides, Heward-Mills believes that because of the vastness of the world and the distribution of people, the Great Commission will be facilitated by forming churches in different locations instead of having a few “megachurches” in a few locations. He is convinced that the church must emulate the example of the Antioch church (Acts 11; 13:1-4) that initiated missions into many virgin territories.

These assertions are significant because Christ came to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10), and church planting is an inalienable catalyst for this to be perpetuated, as was clearly demonstrated by the missionary efforts of the early apostles and also the Christianization of much of Ghana and other African countries by the white missionary

societies of the mid-fifteenth to late nineteenth centuries. It is therefore of utmost importance for the charismatic churches to overcome all the real and perceived factors, including the pursuance of materialism and consumerism, that have been assigned (correctly in my opinion) as reasons by some Ghanaian theologians, including Alfred Koduah, for the limitation of their significant expansion (2004:131).

Even though the evidence seems to show that most of the charismatic leaders interviewed for this research accept and believe the Great Commission as their motivation for church planting (87.5% cited the Great Commission as their primary motivation for engaging in church planting), in reality, the majority of their churches have become, as Asamoah-Gyadu rightly observes (2004:31), “mostly urban-centered congregations”, which, as Koduah(2004: 130) laments, are limited mainly to Southern Ghana.

Between 1993 and 2000 the church planting effort gained massive impetus and momentum, resulting in the proliferation of the LCI missions in all regional capitals of Ghana. Starting from 1993, the Executive Board, then the governing authority of the church, decided to start branch churches in the city of Accra, later extending this vision to all the regional capitals and densely populated towns of Ghana. The hallmark of this church planting drive was the use of mostly trained laity to plant and pastor the church’s branches. Within this same period there were attempts to start missionary work in some African countries, including Sierra Leone, Liberia, Central African Republic and The Gambia, with very limited success. The lack of success was due largely to the absence of a well-developed mission understanding and strategy at the time, which resulted in the use of poorly trained and equipped missionaries, and also frequent political instability in some of those countries (unpublished archival records, LCI Missions Office). Mission then was understood to mean merely sending people to start churches with little regard to such critical foundational issues as who should be sent, which groups were to be targeted, and what administrative and theological support systems are needed for effective mission work.

A major thrust towards international missions began in 1997 when the Executive Board under the inspiration of the founder felt that the LCI had to redouble its efforts to fulfil Jesus’ Great Commission. The Missions Office was therefore formed and Pastor Jacob Godwyll was appointed as the first missions’ director. According to a communication by Jacob Godwyll,

We started seriously laying the foundations for missions work, including formulating strategies, recruiting and training future missionaries through the Informal Pastoral Training Programme (IPTP) and praying fervently. We also offered the needed administrative support that related to sending, financing and oversight of the sprouting missions (verbal communication, 2012).

The theological training for missions now focused on personal faith to fulfil the missionary calling, knowledge of God through regular Bible study and prayer, practical guidelines for starting a church, Christian sacrifice, the necessity to remain loyal to the calling of God and the LCI leadership, building effective missional relationships with the local people of the mission field, and church administration and management. Theologically, it was important for these future workers in the vineyard of God to be knowledgeable in the scriptures (2 Tim 2:15), to be ready to sacrifice in order to be fruitful (John 12:24), and to remain faithful to the end (1 Cor 4:2; Rev 2:10). Judging from the fact that the second major attempt at international mission succeeded, it is logical to suggest that the changes that were introduced to reinforce the training of the church planters were useful, giving credence to the observation by *The Cape Town Commitment* that “the mission of theological education is to strengthen and accompany the mission of the church” (2010:47).

The first international missionary, Chris Andoh, was sent to Kampala, Uganda in June 1999; this venture was facilitated by a Ghanaian Catholic banker living in Kampala who was familiar with the work of LCI and requested for a branch of the church to be started in Kampala, offering readily to host the missionary that would be sent. Subsequently, other missionaries were sent to other African nations including Swaziland, Kenya, Nigeria, Cameroon, Mozambique, Senegal and The Gambia. Most of these initial missions were successful, paving the way for expansion in subsequent years. Concurrently, the expansion work in Ghana proceeded with much accomplishment (unpublished archival records, LCI Missions Office), because of a better understanding of missions following the correction of some of the earlier foundational mistakes, and the availability of a large army of lay people for church planting all across the country.

All missionaries at that time were fully sponsored by the Missions Office and received full financial support for as long as they needed to cater for remuneration and church development and maintenance expenditures. Initially this was done irrespective of whether the mission was thriving or otherwise. A drastic paradigm shift to this policy occurred at a camp meeting dubbed “The Maturity Camp” with all missionaries in May

2009. It had been observed that some missionaries had not performed creditably over the years and had just become a financial drain to the missionary financial support system. This necessitated the introduction of a new system of support which was linked to the performance of the missionary and the mission. Consequently, during this camp meeting, the Mature Non-Dependent Support system was adopted (unpublished “Maturity Camp” notes, May 2009).

Under this system, initial financing was to cater for such expenditure as transport to the mission field, accommodation and basic equipment, after which further financial support towards the acquisition or construction of permanent church halls and other development for the mission would be made based on what the missionary/mission had accomplished. The theological basis for this new support system is premised on the biblical demand for servants to whom talents have been given to be profitable, or to succeed (Matt 25:14-30). Jesus instructed Christians to go and produce much abiding fruit (John 15:16), adding that “he that hath, to him shall be given and he shall have more” (Matt 25:29; Luke 19:26). Therefore, currently the LCI’s policy is to make available more support to flourishing missions. This strategy has led to more successful missions, since the missionaries have a heightened focus on their work.

However, this researcher believes that this approach is not completely appropriate for the sustained advancement of Christian missions. Many factors determine the success of a mission, including the level of openness to the gospel message, and poverty in a given missionary field. In such locations, for example, Northern Ghana, and indeed much of Sub-Saharan Africa, the mission may not flourish quickly; it may fail, even though the missionary may be very determined or focused. Therefore, it is counterproductive to limit support to non-flourishing missions; rather they could be treated as “special missions” and given sustained support. In fact, this researcher found the latter suggestion to be the approach of some of the non-LCI charismatic churches interviewed for this thesis. For example, the International Central Gospel Church, one of the major charismatic networks surveyed for this research, has the practice of sustaining support if the audit of a non-performing new plant reveals that the reasons for such an occurrence are due more to harsh economic conditions rather than the ineptitude of the church planter (ICGC Mission Policy Document).

During a camp meeting from 22-25 August 2000 held at the University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, Ghana, the LCI’s founder unveiled a new vision for

church planting designated “1000 Micro Churches” (unpublished “1000 Micro Churches” Camp notes, August 2000). The vision was to establish within the next decade 1000 churches with a minimum membership of thirty congregants. To actualize this vision, many innovative ideas were implemented, including the setting up of the Denominational Office to administrate the LCI churches as one network. The branches were grouped into dioceses and some senior pastors were appointed as their overseers (unpublished archival records, LCI Denominational Office).

The motivation for this new vision was the need for the establishment of more churches; this would lead to more soul winning in many more locations. Having been firmly established in Jerusalem (Accra and its environs) and Judaea (large cities of Ghana) the time had come for the LCI to expand even furthermore to Samaria (rural Ghana and Africa) and to the rest of the world with the gospel (Acts 1:8). However, unsupervised expansion had the potential danger of creating chaos as a result of a misunderstanding of the church’s expansion principles or non-compliance with them. When the early church initiated missions it constituted the Jerusalem council with key apostles, for example, Peter and James, to provide the necessary overall guidance (Acts 9:14-15, 15:1-30). Thus, the creation of dioceses and the Denominational Office for effective oversight of the sprouting missions was guided by such biblical examples.

From the time the founder established the first church branches in Europe in the early 1990s, more branches were planted both in the UK and other European countries, including The Netherlands, Austria, Italy and Germany, using lay missionaries. From the late 1990s to the early 2000s, Heward-Mills held several camp meetings in the UK to train members for full-time missionary work. During those camps Heward-Mills expounded his mission of theology to the participants. Examples of these camps were *Others* (2004), *All Out* (2002), *Double Mega Missionary Church* (1999), *Pastors of Thousands*(2001)and *Missions and Missionaries* (2004). Prominent doctrines, including Christian sacrifice (Matt 16:24; John 12:24), obedience to the call of God (Jonah 1-3; John 21:15-17), emulation of Jesus’ example to abandon personal worldly ambition and aspirations for the sake of evangelizing other peoples and nations (John 3:16; Phil 2:5-8) were taught with much fervour and conviction, triggering many attendees to respond to serve in international missions.

This spiritual investment has borne enormous fruits; many of those who attended these camps responded to the call of God and became missionaries in diverse places, including the Caribbean islands, South America, Australia and Africa. A similar



strategy was adopted to train church planters to start expansion work on the North American continent (verbal communication with Richard Aryee, 2012).

In 2005 another monumental decision for church expansion through church planting, this time in rural Ghana, was taken by the Executive Board. In a communication, Heward-Mills related the origins of these decisions, saying, “whilst waiting on the Lord in Elmina (a coastal town in the Central Region of Ghana where the famous St. George slave trade castle is located), the Lord asked me to start churches in the districts, smaller towns and villages of Ghana” (verbal communication, 2012). This church planting project was named “Ghana Missions”. Prospective missionaries were initially recruited mostly from the tertiary institutions and trained for this work; from 2008 graduates from the Anagkazo Bible Seminary were also sent into this venture. Preaching at the “Annual Homecoming Convention” (an annual gathering of LCI congregants from around the world in the first week of November 2010) the LCI founder promulgated yet another Church expansion vision – “10,000 Churches” (Ten Thousand Churches, 2010), a target which is aggressively being pursued around the world. At this conference, the founder reiterated the need for the proliferation of more LCI churches towards the achievement of the overall mission goal of 25,000, the 10,000 target being the immediate goal. The theological emphasis had not changed, except that he cautioned against complacency, stressing the need to add urgency to the task since more people needed to be reached with the gospel. Also the prevalence of mitigating factors like wars, political tensions and instability around the globe necessitated the need to preach the gospel “while it is day, for the night is coming when no one can work” (John 9:4).

Three important factors that helped propel the LCI’s church planting efforts within this period were 1) the employment of full-time administrative staff, 2) initiation of church building projects or their acquisition, and 3) the strengthening of the full-time Bible Seminary. The full-time Bible Seminary had been established in 1997 to complement the informal processes of training church leaders and workers. According to a communication by Rev. Yoku Amonoo-Neizer, the first Principal of the Lighthouse Bible School, with regards to its origins and aims,

The Bible School was started as a result of the Presiding Bishop’s desire to institute a more formalized training in the ministry with examined modules. The aim of the school was to equip students for the ministry. In addition to basic theology and practical ministry modules the course also included an introduction to law and medicine. The focus was primarily ministry oriented but there was an understanding that

ministers needed to complement gaps in their education wherever possible. To that end it was primarily directed at candidates without a degree, but not exclusively. The course was a one year part-time course offered in the basement of the Korle Gonno cathedral on a Saturday morning. There were in excess of 50 students enrolled on the course when it started (verbal communication, 2012).

The establishment of the Bible School was a clear indication of a change in Heward-Mills' earlier downplaying of the need for formal theological training, and a pointer to his deepening understanding of missions.

Between 1997 and 2004 the contributions of graduates from the Bible School were relatively insignificant for various reasons, including a high dropout rate, poorly selected students and the relatively short duration of training. These problems were addressed by the church by introducing a more rigorous four year full-time residential programme that started February 2005. Additionally, better qualified academic and administrative staff members were recruited, and a full scholarship funding scheme provided. These changes yielded fruit and since 2008 graduates from the Bible School have planted many churches in Ghana. The school over the years has attracted members from the LCI international missions who also contribute to the church planting efforts in their home countries when they graduate from the school (verbal communication with Eddy Addy, 2012).

Also since 2008 several churches have requested the LCI to mentor them into church planting by sending their prospective church planters to be trained. Such products have also undertaken church expansion work for their respective mother churches after graduation. Such prominent charismatic churches as Charismatic Evangelistic Ministries and Action Chapel International have been some of the beneficiaries of the church's training programme.

Several theological factors that were introduced to reinforce the Bible School training ensured the latter successes of its products. Since a bishop could not be a novice (1 Tim 3:6), a more rigorous assessment was carried out to ensure that prospective students had experienced personal conversion. Besides, the training now emphasized the inculcation of strong moral and general discipline (1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:7) and the systematic assessment of the church planter's calling. It was this theological consideration that led to the introduction of a more comprehensive system of assessment during the entire training period, known as the Apostolic Assessment of Callings and Convictions, assessing academic work, moral and general discipline, ministerial call and

readiness to fulfil it. Furthermore, emulating Jesus' mentoring style of being "with the disciples" before sending (Mark 3:13-15), the school placed great emphasis on the attachment of its students to experienced church planters, called Disciple Making Ministers, for both theoretical and field experience in church planting. All of these significant additions and restructuring have ensured the procreation of much better equipped church planters from the Bible School. However, despite all these improvements, it has been observed that, given the same support and prevailing conditions, some of the church planters from the school still fail on the field. The reasons for this are nebulous and call for further research by the church.

As the church continued to flourish it encountered several challenges. For example, a socio-political upheaval in the late 1990s was a major challenge that had the potential to break the will of the leadership of the denomination as well as to endanger its very existence. The upheavals resulted from disagreements with the Korle Gonno community (where the church was located) with regard to issues such as where to position an electricity transformer, use of legally acquired community land to construct a car park and the provision of community public toilets at no cost to the community as part of the church's social responsibility. These seemingly minor disagreements escalated in May 1998 when some residents of the community attacked the church and its offices using explosives. Bandoh (2012: 61) documents that "it was discovered the next day that Dag Heward-Mills' office had been bombed and burnt during the night".

The harassment and persecution of the church continued to escalate and culminated in major physical violence where church members were attacked during an ordination service on May 31, 1998. These events were described by Louisa Mills-Odoi (2008:95) in her thesis:

The church had its third ordination service on May 31, 1998 at the cathedral. The Cathedral without walls was now vulnerable to attacks. The church was attacked during the ordination service by a mob led by the Sakumono Traditional people. They claimed that the church was violating a ban on drumming. Several people were injured, blood was shed and others fell unconscious.

Even though there is an annual month-long ban in May on drumming and noise-making in Ghana's capital, Accra, as a prelude to the celebration of the annual Homowo festival, the major festival of the Ga people (Emmanuel Ansah, 2012:39), the church claimed that it did not violate any ban and perceived the attacks as persecutions that had emanated from the animosities that had been created as a result of misunderstanding of

its social responsibility to the community as demonstrated by Bando above. The researcher was a witness to the disturbances and supports the church's claims, since he was a member of the group of ministers who were being ordained during that solemn ceremony. Unwarranted ecclesiastical persecutions should be seen in the light of the biblical teaching that suffering constitutes part of the call for evangelization (Phil 1: 29). The exponents of the *Cape Town Commitment* (2010: 32, 33) echo these sentiments. They justly encourage that "suffering may be necessary in our missionary engagement as witnesses to Christ", adding that "being willing to suffer is an acid test for the genuineness of our mission". Thus, it is not far-fetched to conclude that the unpleasant occurrences the LCI experienced were a necessary part of its missional journey.

These unfortunate events precipitated the decision of the leadership of the LCI to relocate its international headquarters one more time. Since January 2006 the church has been operating from its new ultra-modern church complex named The Qodesh in Accra.

This section of Chapter Four has explained how the LCI evolved from a single church, employing a combination of administrative, theological and missiological principles, into a potent church-planting denomination for the expansion of the Kingdom of God.

#### **4.5 STATEMENT OF FAITH, VISION AND MISSION OF THE LIGHTHOUSE CHAPEL INTERNATIONAL**

The LCI's statements of faith, vision and mission have evolved during its relatively short time of existence. From the onset it was meant to be a single congregation; there was no intention for expansion, as was reflected in its initial name, Korle-Bu Christian Center. With time, however, a more national and indeed worldwide ministry was envisaged. This necessitated a corporate vision and mission as well as a statement of faith to crystallize the essential beliefs of the church. E.A.T. Sackey has reminisced on the philosophies that led to the genesis of the church's beliefs and what it wanted to achieve:

We had the desire to believe in Christ our saviour, and were convinced that only faith in Him and the blood He shed on the cross could save mankind. If we could bring this biblical message to many more people around the globe, becoming a Lighthouse, then we thought that the mission of our lives would have been fulfilled. Somewhere in 1992 the Executive Board attempted to capture these ideas. A statement which served as an embodiment of our faith, vision and mission was presented at

the first Synod in November 1995 in Accra. Since those days little has changed, except in the area of our mission, which has moved from the initial single church to a short term goal of 10,000 then eventually 25,000 if the Lord grants us the grace (verbal communication with E.A.T. Sackey, 2012).

According to the LCI's constitution, first formulated in the 1990s, and with its very latest modification done during a recent General Council Conference (a meeting of all Bishops and General Superintendents) in October 2012, the LCI's statement of faith, vision and mission is as follows:

God Almighty is the one and only true God; He is three-in-one, Father, Son and Holy Spirit and creator of all nature. The Church also believes in the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, and in His redemptive work through the shedding of His blood on the cross; and that faith in this results in the salvation of a sinner, leading to the attainment of eternal life.

The vision of the LCI is to provide a solid foundation in Christian faith and Bible-based instruction to equip its membership to not only live for Christ as Christians but also to preach and teach the gospel while abiding by the laws of the country where the Church is located.

The mission of Lighthouse Chapel International includes the following(LCI Church Constitution, 2012):

- a. To establish 25,000 churches worldwide
- b. To train Christians to work for God, especially in the areas of church planting and missions
- c. To plant churches in 150 countries
- d. To make available all resources for the advancement of the gospel and the fulfilment of the Great Commission
- e. To go to heaven and to hear Jesus say, "Well done, good and faithful servant"(Matthew 25:21)

These statements of the LCI's vision and mission are in conformity with its founder's and leaders' desire to fulfil the Great Commission (Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8). The stated goals of mobilizing the full complement of resources to spawn 25,000 churches in 150 countries is a clear indication of the church's attempt to reach as many people as possible in different locations around the world, thus actualizing Jesus' injunction "to become witnesses to me both in Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria and to the uttermost part of the earth". Heward-Mills (2005: 12, 13) is of the clear conviction that the mindset of church planters should be that "wisdom is to be mindful of heaven and conscious of approaching eternity"; he emphasizes that the expectation of eternal commendations by Jesus for soul-winning on earth must serve as a great incentive for church planters. This

theological context is the foundation for the LCI's founder's tireless teachings on working for God especially by planting churches, a doctrine that is the foremost component of the church's model for missionary work, and that will be demonstrated further in Chapter Five.

## **4.6 CHURCH GOVERNANCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

The evolution of the LCI's governing structures and principles over the years is discussed in this section.

### **4.6.1 Early Church Governance**

From its inception till the end of 2005 the highest decision-making body was the Executive Board, membership of which constituted the founder, his two key assistants and his wife, the head of the Women's Ministry. The Executive Board had primary responsibility for the day-to-day running of the church organization. Some members of the laity provided some administrative support in the areas of finances and general administration. Between 1995 and 2001 a few more qualified full-time administrative staff were recruited to manage the Missions, Denomination and Finance Offices. An important addition to the governance structure, aimed at assisting the Executive Board at this stage, was the formation of the Pastoral Board, made up of all pastors and missionaries and the Annual Synod. The Pastoral Board had oversight over the affairs of the individual churches, while the Annual Synod was an annual pastors' conference for self-assessment and decision-making for the then burgeoning denomination. The Annual Synod laid the foundations of the Shuffling Conference which continues to date (unpublished archival records, LCI Denominational Office).

### **4.6.2 Current Church Governance**

These governance structures persisted until they were completely overhauled at a historic Church Government and Succession Conference held in September 2005 at the Volta Hotel in Akosombo. The following four monumental decisions that were to change the fortunes of the LCI denomination were made at the end of this conference:

- Establishment of the Worldwide Shuffling Conference (to replace the Annual Synod) to execute among others

the assessment of pastors and governance of the denomination

- The establishment of the Stallion Council, composed of selected seasoned administrators to support the work of the Shuffling Conference
- The adoption of key church governance and church planting principles as taught by John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Church (creation of more dioceses, travelling to do more church planting and also for oversight)
- The original Executive Board was to adopt a more consultative role (Proceedings of the Government and Succession Conference, 2005 - unpublished archival records, LCI Denominational Office).

With the increasing growth of the denomination as an international network of churches, since 2006 more overseers have been appointed, including the consecration of several bishops to foster effective development and supervision. In addition, apostles and prophets were also consecrated to help embark on more church planting and strengthen pastoral care respectively. Thus, having departed from its Executive Board style of governance since its inception, the LCI operates an episcopal system of church governance, which was adopted from the governance style of the Methodist Church in Ghana. This researcher believes that such governance ensures that apostolic leadership not only sends (Acts 13:1-4) but also strengthens the developing missions (Acts 14:22, 15:36) and, when required, directly mediates theological and missiological misunderstandings that may come up as the expansion work progresses (Acts 15:1-30). The LCI denomination has been structured to ensure the highest and most effective spiritual and administrative oversight, which also engenders efficient church planting. The key elements involved are described below.

#### **4.6.2.1 The Bishops' Council**

This is the highest decision-making body of the denomination. Its membership is constituted of all consecrated bishops, apostles and prophets in the LCI. The chairman of this council, who also serves as the Presiding Bishop, the overall denominational leader, is chosen through a voting system by members of the Council, and runs this office for a total of five years. The primary responsibility of the Bishops' Council is to provide oversight of the worldwide denomination's vision and mission. Each member of the Bishops' Council has the responsibility to oversee a specific sector of the denomination, such as missions, training of pastors and leaders, financing and general

administration. In a cascading manner, decisions of the Bishops' Council are carried out by the following:

- i. The General Council. This council is made up of all general superintendents of the LCI. These are senior ministers with established centres of governance that oversee councils of the denomination, the former referring to a group of churches that have been delineated for administrative reasons. Their essential role is to implement the decisions of the Bishops' Council in their region of jurisdiction.
- ii. The Mission Overseers. These are more experienced and accomplished church planters, who are given the added responsibility to administrate a number of churches, which are collectively described as a diocese.
- iii. Permanent Mission Church. The individual churches in the LCI denomination which are led by full-time church planters are referred to as Permanent Mission Churches (PMCs). They are managed in accordance with denominational doctrines and principles. The policy of the denomination is to maintain to a large extent church planters at their post on a long term basis in order to foster effective development of the church.

#### **4.6.2.2 The Stallion Council**

This council is the umbrella organization for all the different administrative departments of the LCI, each of which is headed by well-trained administrators, most of whom are also ministers of the gospel. The departments that constitute this council are outlined below:

- i. The Denominational Office (DO) monitors the administration of LCI churches and missions.
- ii. The Income/Expense Management Office (IEMO) ensures that financial procedures are appropriately followed to guarantee that the financial integrity of the missionary and the mission is not compromised.
- iii. The Account Monitoring Office (AMO) ensures that annual financial statements as required by the laws of a particular country are prepared by all LCI missions.
- iv. The Paraphernalia Office (PO) monitors compliance with the LCI regulations with respect to furnishings and equipment. The aim is to ensure denominational uniformity.



- v. The Development and Legal Office (DLO) is responsible for the acquisition or development of all LCI assets, ensuring that all necessary laws are adhered to, not only to prevent litigation against the church but also secure the integrity of the denomination.
- vi. Unity and Spiritual Development Office (USDO). Through regular assessment, this office ensures that the healthy spiritual development of LCI church planters and their missions and congregations is maintained. It guarantees the observance and maintenance of denominational statements of faith, doctrines and principles.
- vii. Care and Crisis Office (CCO). This very important office handles issues that deal with the welfare of all LCI church planters and adjunct workers. It ensures that necessary provisions for well-being and comfort are provided. It renders immediate help to all staff in times of tragedy, bereavement and other personal, family or church crisis.
- viii. The Loyalty Office (LO) ensures that the doctrine of loyalty is taught and practised by all levels of leadership of the LCI denomination.
- ix. The Proton World Missionary Society (PWMS) is the umbrella department that is responsible for the initial recruitment, placement and support for church planting work worldwide.

Effective coordination among the administrators of the different offices has resulted in an efficient management and monitoring of the complex nature of the worldwide LCI denomination.

#### **4.7 IMPORTANT STATISTICS AND MILESTONES**

Although the records of important happenings and decisions in the LCI are available, they have not been collected and stored in a systematic and retrievable system, but rather kept in secure archival storage. Some of the various departments mentioned above have a store of unpublished material that contains some useful information regarding statistical records of membership and church branches. The figures and records that follow have been obtained from these sources and provide reasonably accurate information about the LCI.

Between 1990 and 2005 the church had 794 branches with 619 pastors worldwide. By June 2008, the number of branches had increased to 815 in 52 countries spread across five continents (*LifeWay* magazine, June 2008). This number increased within one year to 1,014 branches with 726 pastors and 523 lay ministers, so that by November

2009 the total number of branches had reached 1,155 whilst the total membership of LCI was over 20,000. The records indicate that 708 of these branches are in Ghana alone with the rest in Africa, Europe, North and South America as well as in Australia (unpublished archival records, LCI Denominational/Missions Offices).

Other key statistics and milestones obtained from the Denominational Office of this relatively young charismatic denomination are listed below as at December 2012.

Total number of churches worldwide	1278
Total number of churches in Ghana	903
Total number of churches in Africa (excluding Ghana)	150
Total number of churches in Europe	140
Total number of churches in North America and Canada	62
Total number of churches in South America	6
Total number of churches in the Caribbean	7
Total number of churches in Australasia	7
Total number of churches in Asia	3
Missionaries in Ghana	744
Missionaries worldwide	1254
Countries with LCI branches	61
Building projects	261
Lay missionaries	910
Full-time missionaries	344

First new church plant undertaken in Geneva in 1992

First International headquarters built in Accra in 1993

Commencement of full time seminary (Anagkazo Bible Training Seminary) in 1997

Commencement of Work of Ministry Conferences in 2004

This data on the church demonstrates not only the national and international nature of its church planting effort but also its ability to train significant numbers of its members, especially the laity, for this work. The statistics are also formidable evidence of the significant progress the LCI is making towards its overall mission of advancing God's kingdom worldwide through church planting. These observed landmarks will serve as benchmarks for evaluating in Chapter Six the effectiveness of the LCI's model.

#### **4.8 CHRISTIAN LITERATURE, PARACHURCH AND SOCIAL MINISTRY OF LCI**

The full complement of the LCI's ministry includes worldwide evangelism, authoring of Christian literature for promoting church planting and church work in general, training conferences for church planters, pastors and ministers, and social ministry intended to bring relief to the needy, sick and the underprivileged.

#### 4.8.1 Christian Literature

The authorship and publication of Christian literature by Heward-Mills commenced with the launch of his first ten books in the conference room of the Golden Tulip Hotel, Accra on May 16, 1997, including *Beauty, Duality, Born Again, Frugality, Forgiveness Made Easy, Strange Woman, Prodigality, All about Fornication* and *They Went to Hell* (DgTP, 1997). The initial books were printed using local and foreign publishing houses. Paul Gifford (2004:36) records:

Most of the pastors we will consider have written several books, most published in their personal publishing house. Heward-Mills, whose bookshop is the most elaborate, has a publishing empire; in April 2002, thirty-four of his own titles were on sale, most of them handsomely printed in London.

In further advancement of his Christian literature ministry, a retail outlet, the Vision Bookshop, was set up in September 2001, followed by a printing house, The Parchment House, with the late Mrs. Cynthia Sackey as its first manager in 2003 (verbal communication with Amelia Aidoo, 2012).

Reasoning that God specifically instructed him to write Christian literature in order to become more fruitful, Heward-Mills has focused most of his writings on matters relating to ministerial development and working for God as opposed to general Christian living, including personal material prosperity and other such worldly pursuits. This emphasis, he claims, is undergirded by his desire to motivate many Christians not to become comfortable in their personal conversions but to dedicate their lives to expanding the kingdom of God. He is of the opinion that Christians must be guided by Jesus' teaching not to accumulate earthly wealth (Matt 6:19), but rather to pursue His vision for the harvesting of lost humanity so that they could receive durable heavenly rewards (Matt 6:20, 10:38; John 17:18) (verbal communication, 2012). I have relied liberally on several of these major works, including *Loyalty and Disloyalty* (2005), *The Mega Church* (2008), *Lay People and the Ministry* (2008), *Church Growth: It is Possible* (2010), *Tell Them* (2008) and *Many Are Called* (2009), as primary sources in this study as indicated in the bibliography.

The contribution being made into the religious milieu of worldwide Christianity by Heward-Mills' Christian literature ministry is captured appropriately on the church's official website in the following words:

As part of the discipleship training program, millions of copies of Dag Heward-Mills' literature have been published...millions

of books have been printed and freely “seeded” in the nations around the world. His books are well known to convert ordinary Christians into fearless ministers of the gospel.

The vast majority of Heward-Mills’ publications have been received favourably by the LCI pastors and other ministers around the world. In his foreword to Heward-Mills’ church growth book *Church Growth: It is Possible* (2010:vii), Yonggi Cho rightly attests:

Dr. Heward-Mills writes many articles for our Church Growth Magazine, which reveals his literary talents, his deep knowledge of the Word of God, and his many applications of church growth. His tremendous ministry demonstrates every aspect of practical church growth throughout the world. Dr. Heward-Mills has a rare talent in being able to articulate the many areas of expertise he has gained in his own life and his Lighthouse Chapel International Ministries.

However, others have critiqued some of his writings. For instance, during a sermon at his ISI Conference in Accra in July 2010 (“Building the Church”, audio message) and in his book *Those Who Leave You* (2011:5) he highlighted negative commentary he had received from certain pastors with regards to his most prominent work on *Loyalty and Disloyalty*. They argued that the most compelling way leaders could earn the loyalties of subordinates is through the demonstration of their good character and not through teaching (Heward-Mills, 2011:5).

This researcher differs from the views of Heward-Mills’ critics. While their view that leaders should demonstrate impeccable moral standards cannot be faulted theologically (1 Tim 3:1-12; Titus 1:5-9, 2:7-8), there is no doubt that the concept of loyalty or faithfulness is an indissoluble biblical doctrine (Luke 16:9-12; 1 Cor 4:2), and since faith comes by hearing the word of God (Roman 10:17) it is imperative for the character of people to be moulded through the agency of systematic biblical teachings; this approach does not preclude the need for moral uprightness in leaders.

Although most pastors of the LCI denomination use the founder’s many publications as resources for their personal ministerial development and doctrinal teachings, Heward-Mills himself stresses the need for his pastors to strive to acquire personal conviction for their lives and ministry through regular and effective Bible study, prayer and the leading of the Holy Spirit, pointing them to the example of the Berean Christians (Acts 17:10, 11).

The tremendous influence of Heward-Mills' literature ministry is encapsulated in the fact that not only have they helped his followers to understand his theology of mission and their personal ministerial callings and aspirations for missionary work, but also the centrality of their message, the emphasis on working for God, has attracted and convinced large numbers of these followers to spend their lives engaged in church planting in Ghana and elsewhere.

#### **4.8.2 Parachurch and Social Ministry Activities**

The key parachurch activity of the LCI is the Healing Jesus Crusade (HJC), a national and international evangelistic initiative. After pastoring the Lighthouse Chapel Cathedral for several years, Heward-Mills perceived that God had called him to go beyond the church to minister to a wider audience. Starting in a tent in 2003, with a total attendance of 600 people at the AME Zion school park at Dansoman, a suburb of Accra, the HJC has taken the gospel of salvation of Jesus Christ to many villages, towns and cities in Ghana and other parts of Africa with over three million people making decisions for Christ during these crusades. The sole vision of these crusades is to win the lost at all cost ([www.daghewardmills.org/evangelist](http://www.daghewardmills.org/evangelist), accessed 23 Dec 2012). The crusades are combined with the provision of medical services by the church's volunteer healthcare professionals to the under privileged. Toss Mills-Odoi (2008:133) explained the rationale for this approach:

The Healing Jesus Crusade ministry believes that Christians care, because it is the nature of Christ within them to care. So the social activities of the ministry are not used as "spiritual bribery" to encourage a response to Christ. The apostle John wrote "if anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?" (1 John 3:17).

Other social ministry activities of LCI include an orphanage, Remember-the-Poor, Prison Ministry and the Compassion Centre for the Assistance of the Lam, the Blind, the Underprivileged, the Deaf and Dumb (CCALBUDD). The fundamental purpose of all these social activities is to bring relief to the needy, sick and the underprivileged in the communities through the provision of food, medicines, clothing and medical aids and equipment (Bandoh, 2012:79, 80).

Toss Albert Mills-Odoi (2008:118) states that the salvific theology of Heward-Mills now embraces both evangelism and social action. Elucidating the church's

motivation for implementing these social programmes, he quotes Heward-Mills as saying, “An integral part of preaching a complete message of salvation has to be accompanied by a display of the same kind of love Jesus demonstrated.” This integral mission is laudable and falls within the accepted norms of other mission-minded agencies. For instance, the proponents of *The Cape Town Commitment* (2010:21) hold the view that integral mission presents a package of gospel proclamation accompanied by a practical demonstration of the love of Christ depicted through social involvement, concluding that, “if we ignore the world, we betray the Word of God which sends us out to serve the world. If we ignore the Word of God, we have nothing to bring to the world.”

This researcher shares these views on the importance of a comprehensive missional approach. At the end of our Christian mission on earth, we should not falter when we are summoned before the Lord Jesus Christ and He demands the extent of our stewardship with regards to how we demonstrated His love practically to a needy world (Matt 25:35-45).

In conclusion, although the LCI has been around for a relatively short time, the above appraisal of the church’s history shows remarkable and laudable progress. The LCI has indeed grown to become a successful charismatic denomination which is making a positive impact on the religious landscape of Ghana. Its contribution to worldwide evangelism through its church planting efforts is significant. It is also worth noting that the organizational structure, coupled with the effective combination and coordination of both pastoral and administrative sectors, has helped in no small measure in this worldwide expansion. The LCI’s governance, leadership and principles of church growth and planting have evolved in the face of several challenges, and a fair share of failures. Its systems are constantly subjected to review to accommodate the challenges of contemporary church work and to provide the ingredients that the church thinks are necessary to guarantee the achievement of its set goals. The growing impact of the LCI denomination is quite evident on the Ghanaian scene, as captured by Prof. David Kpobi, one of the foremost Ghanaian missiologists:

Anyone who has followed the work of the LCI will attest to the fact that it is currently one of the churches with the most significant impact on the Christian scene in Ghana. With its policy of aggressive evangelism and a conscious intent at church growth and expansion, the LCI, under the charismatic leadership of its founder, Bishop Heward-Mills, has easily become the preferred church for many young Christians in Ghana today.

They appear to be succeeding through sheer commitment to the literal fulfilment of the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-20 (comment made at a seminar on *The Pentecostal-Charismatic Impact in Ghanaian Christianity*, Legon, December, 2012).

The following statement by Dr. Yonggi Cho about Heward-Mills (2012: vii) and the church he founded is also quite instructive:

Dag Heward-Mills has a rare talent in being able to articulate the many areas of expertise that he has gained in his own life and his Lighthouse Chapel International Ministries in countless cities around the world. He is the founder and bishop of these Lighthouse Chapels which are growing up in every location around the globe.

Such momentous statements from these influential missiologists and church planters are credible attestations to the significant role the LCI is playing in expanding the kingdom of God in Ghana and indeed internationally.

Having explored the historical, organizational, theological and missiological backgrounds and understandings of the LCI in this chapter, the next chapter of this thesis will discuss the different components that are being employed to execute the church's expansion programme, all of which are constituted into a unique model.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE LCI MODEL FOR CHURCH PLANTING

The Lighthouse Chapel International's model for church planting is comprehensively described in this chapter to help establish the context for our analysis in the next chapter.

#### 5.0 DEVELOPMENT OF THE MODEL

The years 1988 to 1991 could be described as the formative years of the LCI. After formulating a policy to expand the Church within and outside Ghana through church planting in 1992, the founder undertook the first church plant in Geneva, Switzerland. The launch into church planting, aimed principally at fostering active participation in the realisation of the Great Commission, necessitated development of a centralized strategy to accomplish this vision. Over the years a multi-level model, known as the Anagkazo Church Planting Strategy, has been systematically developed by Heward-Mills, and implemented by LCI church planters worldwide (verbal communication with E.A.T. Sackey, 2012).

*Anagkazo* is a Greek word meaning to compel, to necessitate, or to entreat (Luke 14:23). The context in which this word is used by Jesus in Luke 14:23 gives clear indication of the urgent need for the church to adopt innovative and firm strategies to *compel* and make it necessary for lost souls to enter into the kingdom, given that the world is increasingly cynical to the message of the gospel (1998a:1-3). The LCI church planting model was hence inspired by this revelation by Jesus. The result has been that within a relatively short period of implementing the model, the LCI has successfully undertaken church planting both nationally and internationally. The key components of the model include:

- i. Doing ministry work to fulfil the Great Commission as the central doctrinal theme of the founder of the LCI
- ii. Identification and selection of LCI church planters
- iii. The training of potential LCI church planters
- iv. The involvement of lay people in church planting
- v. Heward-Mills' doctrine of loyalty as a key prerequisite for church planting
- vi. The construction of permanent church halls for effective church planting



- vii. The processes of sending, supporting, sustaining, expanding and monitoring of the LCI missions
- viii. Key principles for starting a new LCI church plant

## **5.1 HOW THE LCI MODEL WORKS**

I will now elucidate on the various components of the LCI model in this section.

### **5.1.1 Planting churches to fulfil the Great Commission as the central doctrinal theme of the founder of the LCI**

The most important component of the LCI's model is the great emphasis by the church's founder on doing ministry work, in particular, church planting and missions. Over the years, the founder has tirelessly, passionately and energetically underscored the utmost necessity of doing the work of the ministry to both congregants and the leadership of the LCI denomination. This theme, expressed in a mosaic of formats, constitutes the dominant feature of the founder's doctrines (2007:7-22).

One of the tools Christ instructed his disciples to use to fulfil the Great Commission was the teaching of God's word. When people are taught the word, they are empowered and equipped, thus propelling them to fulfil the Great Commission. Consequently, Heward-Mills has made teaching on the need to fulfil the Great Commission the central theme of his message. Heward-Mills argues that the church must understand that the Great Commission is not mere rhetoric by Jesus. The LCI membership has been conscientized not to be satisfied with personal salvation; each member or leader must contribute to fulfilling God's call for soul-winning. In his book *Tell Them*, Heward-Mills (2008a:3) urges believers to rise up to fulfil the Great Commission, by giving 120 reasons why Christians must become soul-winners.

Souls must be won because it is the greatest mandate and instruction given to us by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Soul winning is the heartbeat of Jesus, who came "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). This is the foundation for the soul-winning effort of LCI, which draws attention to the need for all believers to be conscious of the massive harvest of souls around them. Heward-Mills believes that the church must galvanise all its energy and resources to win the lost at any cost. The mindset of Christians and church workers must be to plant churches in cities, villages, virgin territories and in all nations of the world. The church should be modelled after the

Antioch church, which grew massively and sent out people for church planting (Acts 13:1-5). Heward-Mills (2007:5-6, 37-40) explains that when there is massive mobilization for soul winning in any church, souls are won and churches grow.

There is therefore deliberate and systematic effort by the LCI leadership to recruit, train and equip all church members for soul winning and church planting. This has given rise to two types of ministry workers in the LCI: lay (bivocational) ministers and full-time ministers (2008c:7-9).

This sustained emphasis on serving in the ministry, whether full-time or part-time, coupled with other important factors including teaching on sacrifice and loyalty, continuously propels both the leadership and laity of the church to become “witnesses unto me [Jesus] both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth” (Acts 1:8). Throngs of ordinary congregants have become church planters, missionaries, pastors, church workers and cell leaders. There is an ever-present horde of LCI members, including the educated, uneducated, professionals, businessmen, and students, ready to get involved in the work of the ministry (2008c:13). Indeed, the biblical injunction in Romans 10:17 has been fulfilled in the LCI: “so then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”.

Thus, it is clear that Heward-Mills’ central theme of church expansion through church planting is an inextricable component of the LCI church planting model.

### **5.1.2 Key Strategies for the Identification and Selection of LCI Church Planters**

The LCI has evolved effective mechanisms for recruiting and training potential church planters as described below.

#### **5.1.2.1 Sources of Potential Church Planters**

There are five major pools from which potential church planters are selected.

##### **1. General Laity Pool**

As mentioned earlier, the Church’s philosophy is that all members are called to serve God. With this foundation, the Church leadership at all levels encourages the congregants to engage in ministry work. Each LCI branch operates the system of subdivision into smaller groups within the church. Some of these groups are: Cells, Prayer, Music, Evangelism and Special Outreach targeting groups like businessmen (2008d: 190-191). Over time pastors are able to identify members with great desire and potential for ministry work as evidenced by zeal, availability to serve, willingness to sacrifice,

and the ability to teach, preach and care for other Church members (2008c:85-90). Such people are recruited into the Church's Shepherds Training School, a series of specially designed training programmes, which culminates in being sent out for church planting (unpublished LCI Church Planters' Training Policy Manual).

## 2. Tertiary Education Level Undergraduate Pool

In 1993, the leadership of LCI decided to establish satellite churches on the campuses of the major tertiary institutions in Ghana. There was a three-fold purpose for this: 1) provision of fellowship for LCI members, 2) soul winning and 3) the creation of an avenue for the development of church planters and church workers. In the course of their studies, the undergraduates are encouraged to undertake evangelism and start fellowships which eventually metamorphose into new church plants on the respective campuses. The students are given opportunity to carry out the work of starting, growing and running the campus churches according to guidelines laid down by LCI. In the process, some of these students identify the call of God on their lives. Upon graduation, many of such students are ready to engage in church planting and missionary work. Using this approach, the LCI has successfully trained and released hundreds of graduates as church planters and missionaries both in Ghana and internationally (verbal communication with Jake Godwyll, 2012).

## 3. EconomicMigrants Pool

The expression "economic migrants" refers to the hordes of educated, uneducated, professional, unprofessional, unskilled and highly skilled Ghanaians who relocate to North America or Europe with the hope of improving their economic situation (that is, in search of greener pastures). The LCI strategically enrolls, trains, and equips such congregants who have a demonstrated call of God, but a desire to emigrate, or have already emigrated, to undertake church planting. Over the years, hundreds of churches have been planted by this category of people worldwide (verbal communication with Richard Aryee, 2012).

## 4. CampMeetings Inspired Pool

The founder of the LCI holds campmeetings at major regional centres of the denomination each year. Teaching camp meetings are special conferences at which the key tenets, principles and philosophies of church planting and missionary work are extensively taught to both leaders and laity of the church. This exercise is also undertaken regularly by the apostolic leadership of the Church, the latter referring to the

bishops, apostles, prophets and general superintendents of the denomination. Hundreds of camp attendees have recognized their desire for missionary and church planting work during and after these camps. Through camps, a large number of potential church planters have been unearthed and subsequently have become successful and effective ministers (2010:117).

#### 5. Full-time Seminary Pool

These include LCI members who believe they have the calling for full-time ministry work. Those in this category are admitted into the LCI full-time seminary where they receive training over a period of four years and then are sent out to start new churches either in Ghana or abroad ([www.dagewardmills.org/absf](http://www.dagewardmills.org/absf)).

This approach of recruitment ensures the availability of potential church planters, a situation that facilitates relentless church expansion through church planting.

#### **5.1.3 Key Strategies for the Training of Potential LCI Church Planters**

A structured, multi-dimensional training programme has been established in the LCI for potential church planters. This training programme is guided by the following philosophies (unpublished LCI Church Planters' Training Curriculum and Policy Manual):

- i. The belief that many are called to work for God and therefore all ordinary church members who are engaged in various professions, but have the desire to do God's work, should be accorded opportunity to do so.
- ii. Practical hands-on approach.
- iii. Acquisition of biblical and theological knowledge.
- iv. Mandatory field experience and practical skills acquisition.
- v. Understanding of the doctrine of loyalty and disloyalty.

The two programmes for training lay and full-time church planters are essentially the same except that the full-time programme is a regimented residential programme. For clarity, I will describe the training of lay and full-time church planters separately.

## Training of Potential Lay Church Planters

A potential lay church planter is someone who wants to combine secular work with the work of church planting without being paid for it. Since such people may lack the opportunity to be enrolled for a full-time training course, they are admitted into a specially designed programme known as the Anagkazo Bible School (ABS). The first stage of the ABS is a two-part Church Workers Training Programme (CWTP) which takes at least two years to complete. During the first part of the CWTP the trainees, referred to as shepherds, deepen their understanding of basic Christian doctrines such as salvation, faith, Holy Ghost baptism, water baptism, the importance of the word of God, apologetics and evangelism. Specially developed in-house manuals serve as resource materials.

The focus of the second part of the CWTP is equipping the trainees with knowledge and skills for prayer, teaching, preaching, visiting and interacting with church members to help them become established in the church. After completing Part 2 the trainees become apprentices ready to serve in various capacities in the local church.

The practical component of the CWTP requires the learners to start and lead small sub-division groups including cells, prayer, music, hospital, prison, orphanage visits, evangelism and businessmen's fellowship in the local church. Each CWTP trainee is expected to engage in four major activities, which embody the work of the ministry at this level. These include prayer (P), visitation (V), counselling (C) and interaction (I). The acronym P V C I is used to encapsulate the work of a shepherd at this level:

(P) Prayer: Shepherds are expected to pray at least one hour daily for the members they lead in their groups. This requirement also helps trainees develop a prayer life as a foundation for future ministry.

(V) Visitation: Shepherds are required to visit their members regularly. Home visits provide shepherds opportunity to fellowship and encourage their members and this serves as a very powerful motivation for both new and old church members.

(I) Interaction: Trainees are instructed to mingle with their members, especially after church services, a strategy known as "deep sea fishing". They must make efforts to acquaint themselves with personal details of their members, including their names, home addresses, workplaces, marital status, and any special problems they might have. This strategy is very useful in transforming the members of the Church into committed members of Christ's body.

CWTP trainees are supervised by local pastors and other senior ministers of the denomination and are assessed through periodic written examinations and a final interview with experienced LCI church planters or disciple-making ministers (DMM) leading to the enrolment of some of the potential lay church planters into an Advanced Church Planting Training Programme (ACPTP). To qualify for admission, a trainee should have been deemed to have satisfied the following qualities:

1. Availability of a divine call as manifested in a keen interest and desire for the work of the ministry. A trainee must have and exhibit a desire to do the work of God. The LCI believes that the presence of this quality is an indication of the divine call of God on a person.

2. A willing commitment. It is not enough for a trainee to have a desire for the things of God. He or she must also demonstrate a commitment to the fulfilment of this calling (1 Cor 9:16-17). Ministry work is fraught with challenges, including long periods of isolation from family, exhaustion, forfeiting personal ambitions and aspirations, and financial difficulties. Without an unwavering determination to accomplish the call of God on one's life, a potential church planter may not fulfil the divine call when faced by such situations.

3. Godly character. It is instructive to observe that of the several attributes listed in 1 Timothy 3 for a minister, only one is indicative of an ability (to teach); the remainder highlight character, and therefore, the possession of a godly character is paramount for a church planter.

4. A ministry-minded marital partner. Based on Amos 3:3 ("How can two walk together except they be agreed?") it is important for a married potential church planter to have his/her partner's support for ministry.

The Advanced Church Planting Training Programme (ACPTP), like the CWTP, consists of two parts: acquisition of both biblical and theological knowledge from in-house developed study materials, and hands-on ministry skills acquisition.

All church planting trainees must acquire strong biblical and theological foundations for church planting in four major areas, including Basic Theology, Evangelism and Missions, Pastoral Ministry, and Church Administration and Management. The academic component is administered online, making it easily accessible to all trainees around the world. However, trainees can obtain tutorials from an academic teaching minister; these experienced ministers teach the courses of the ABS.

Concurrently, a Potential Church Planter (PCP) is attached to a Disciple-Making Minister (DMM). A DMM is a senior minister and experienced church planter of the LCI who has proven and recognized skills for training church planters, pastors and ministry workers. The DMM mentors his disciples (PCPs) in an informal practical hands-on setting. The rationale is for him to impart his years of vast ministry experience and practical church planting and pastoral skills to his trainees. During the period of attachment to a DMM for a minimum of two years, the PCP simultaneously carries out the availability, teaching and church planting/ church growth rotations.

**Availability Rotation:** This is a period of apprenticeship. During this rotation PCPs are to shadow their DMMs by ensuring that they are available and accessible to their DMMs. This PCP gains spiritual guidance, knowledge and skills by seeing, knowing, feeling and practising how ministry work is done through the mentoring relationship with the DMM. The DMM continuously assesses the PCPs on the qualities they are expected to possess at the end of the rotation, such as their spiritual development, ministerial abilities and character.

**Teaching Rotation:** A PCP fulfils this rotation by attending teaching camp-meetings and other ministerial conferences that are periodically organized by the LCI founder, senior ministers and DMMs, and the PCP's progress is assessed by their DMM using a standard format.

**Church Planting and Church Growth Rotation:** After completing one year on the ACPTP each PCP is posted to start a satellite church, which offers opportunity for the PCPs to put the knowledge and skills they have acquired into practice. The PCP's success in this venture is a major determining factor for consideration for recruitment as an LCI church planter. In certain cases, the PCP may be asked to take over responsibility of growing an existing small church plant instead. Additionally, all PCP trainees are expected to develop spiritual habits of personal Bible study, prayer, regular fasting and reading, as well as studying church planting resources, listening to audio- or video-taped sermons by the LCI founder and other recommended pastors. These all work together to enhance the PCP's spiritual preparation for church planting and also help to ensure that the PCPs model their activities after the church planting approach of the founder. A PCP undertaking a Church Planting/Church Growth rotation is assessed using a standard format developed by the church.

A lay person who successfully completes this comprehensive church planting training program and is subsequently approved by the eldership of the denomination gains the status of a full-fledged church planter.

#### Training of Full-time Church Planters

Full-time church planters are people who believe that they have the call of God on their life and have decided to devote their whole life to serve God as missionaries without engaging in a secular profession or vocation. The important differences between the training for this category of potential church planters and that of the lay system are as follows:

1. Enrolment into the four-year residential seminary of the LCI.
2. A more regimented and intensive academic, spiritual, moral and general discipline training programme with more focused supervision.
3. A more structured field experience component where trainees are attached to experienced church planters and key administrative offices for periods lasting a minimum of three months in order to gain knowledge and skills in the rudiments of church planting and pastoring as well as church administration and management.

#### **5.1.4 The Involvement of Lay People in Church Planting**

Except for the LCI founder's vision and doctrine for church planting, the involvement of lay people in church planting is the central theme of the LCI church planting model. The involvement of lay people for doing church planting work has been useful for the following reasons:

1. The belief that many are called to work for God; therefore, all ordinary church members who are engaged in various professions but have the desire to do God's work should be accorded opportunity to do so (2008c:12-14).

2. The ministry is not the preserve of a few specially "called" or "chosen" people. Ordinary people desiring to serve the Lord can be trained and equipped to do so (Eph 4:11-12).

3. It is Jesus' desire to have more labourers to reap the abundant harvest (Matt 9:37) and the use of lay persons responds to this.

4. In the LCI, lay people do not receive any form of financial remuneration and therefore their use reduces the financial burden associated with church planting. It is a wholly voluntary and sacrificial work (Lay Pastors Camp Meeting, Switzerland, 2010).



5. Lay people constitute more than 80% of the LCI church planting workforce (2008c:8).

6. Lay people who become economic migrants to other nations are trained to start churches in those places. These are referred to as lay missions.

7. The lay ministry is complimentary to full-time ministry. The effective combination of the lay and full-time ministries has ensured church planting, church growth and the expansion of the kingdom of God (2008c:8-9).

### **Guidelines for Selection of Lay Church Planters**

Although the LCI strongly favours the lay ministry, interested persons must possess some key qualities before they are considered for this variant of ministry. These include (2008c:85-90):

1. Having a personal relationship with God as demonstrated by love for God, prayer and Bible study. Love for God Himself should be the fundamental foundation to work for him (John 21:15-17; 2 Cor 5:14).

2. Having a personal fasting life, which is an indication of commitment and readiness to sacrifice.

3. Being available for the work. This is one of the most vital indicators of readiness to do lay ministry, since church planting demands time for preaching, teaching, praying and caring for the members.

4. Demonstrated ability for preaching and teaching

5. Having interest in evangelism.

6. Stable marriage.

7. “Catching” the spirit of the leader. It is important for such persons to understand the mindset of the apostolic leadership of the denomination and execute the church planting enterprise with the same spirit and attitude as that of the leaders (Num 11:16-17).

8. Personal financial and job security. This is fundamental since the lay ministry is completely voluntary.

9. Being loyal.

10. Having a vision to see the Great Commission fulfilled.

## **Disadvantages and Challenges of Lay Church Planters**

Over the years the LCI has encountered several challenges associated with its reliance on lay people for church planting. Chief among these are:

1. Under-performance, often due either to genuine time constraints or inability of the lay person to cope effectively with personal challenges or difficulties associated with church planting. Symptoms of under-performance include stagnated growth or lack of growth, inadequate pastoral care of the church members and a general lack of vitality and development of the church.

2. Abandonment of ministry. Some lay church planters do not place as much premium on their work as church planters as they do on other aspirations they may have. This kind of mindset can quickly lead to a decision to abandon a ministerial vocation.

3. Lack of divine call. With time, it has been noticed that not all church members who have a desire to work for the Lord have a divine call. Those without a divine call tend to fail in the church planting venture and often even in their own spiritual development.

4. Concentration of lay church work in financially well-endowed towns, cities and nations. Since the main vision for such people is the development of their secular, financial and business aspirations, there is a general lack of readiness to undertake church planting in the poorer towns, cities and countries. In effect, this constitutes a limitation to the proliferation of churches.

5. Financial unfaithfulness. Purloining and misappropriation of the church's finances are sometimes associated with lay church planters. This situation tends to be prevalent where the lay church planter lacks financial security.

6. Church splits. Occasionally, lay church planters break away from the local church to start a new church plant of their own; in other cases, they completely take over the local church and convert it into their own. Often the underlying causes of such occurrences include desire for personal financial gain and disloyalty to the vision of the denomination (verbal communication with Heward-Mills, 2012).

The above-enumerated limitations notwithstanding, the lay ministry plays an irreplaceable role in the church expansion work of the Lighthouse Chapel International.

### **5.1.5 Heward-Mills' Doctrine of Loyalty as a Key Prerequisite for Church Planting**

This concept has been comprehensively discussed in Chapter Two of this thesis. Heward-Mills (2005: 14-15) is a strong proponent of the doctrine of loyalty. He asserts that loyalty or faithfulness must be the underpinning character for anyone who wants to engage in church planting, especially in a denominational setting. He insists that without loyalty there will be limited church expansion because of the menace of church splits. A very important component of the training of all categories of LCI church planters, therefore, is the teaching on the doctrine of loyalty and disloyalty (unpublished LCI Church Planters' Training Curriculum and Policy Manual). Potential church planters who exhibit signs of disloyalty are not permitted to engage in church planting for the denomination. Additionally, those who develop disloyal tendencies while at post on missions are eventually withdrawn if they persistently do not respond to counselling and other interventions provided. Although this doctrine has not entirely uprooted the canker of church splits, it has minimized it significantly in the LCI denomination (verbal communication with E.A.T. Sackey, 2012).

The significant strides that the Lighthouse Chapel International has garnered in church planting, and has transformed it into a coherent Ghanaian charismatic denomination, have been made possible by the rigorous application of this unique doctrine.

### **5.1.6 The Construction of Permanent Church Halls for Effective Church Planting**

A key strategic component of the LCI model of church planting is the systematic construction of permanent church buildings rather than using temporary premises, the latter being a standard practice among the charismatic movement in Ghana. For various reasons most charismatic churches in Ghana hold their worship services, often on permanent basis, in temporary premises such as classrooms, public halls, wooden structures, homes and playing fields. This situation has contributed to hindering the growth and expansion of the charismatic denominations. Holding church services in impermanent locations has the following disadvantages:

1. Instability, since the church could be asked to move at any time, with the real danger of the dispersion of the members.
2. Lack of confidence amongst the congregants in the future of the church, which tends to derail their commitment.

3. Prominent and educated sections of the society tend to shun such worship places, thus depriving such churches of the contributions these people could make available for their development.

4. Stagnation in the general progress and development of such churches.

5. Public contempt for such churches, often associating them with the occult and other non-Christian spiritual groupings.

In an effort to avoid the pitfalls indicated, the LCI has, since 1992 (unpublished archival LCI Executive Board records), implemented a policy of constructing permanent church buildings for its missions where possible. In places where the church is unable to construct church buildings for various reasons, especially in Western Europe and America, the LCI acquires industrial buildings and redesigns them for use as permanent church halls. A clear demonstration of the effectiveness of this strategy to impact church planting and catalyse the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ is the case of the three northern regions of Ghana, areas that are predominantly Islamic. From 1995 to date the LCI has planted approximately 150 churches and constructed within the same period, over 70 permanent church halls in this region (unpublished archival records, LCI Denominational Office). Given that the headquarters of the LCI is in Ghana, a developing country, the church's ability to make the huge financial investments required for building construction has been impressive and has not gone unnoticed. Here, it is important to note that although there seems not to be clear biblical justification for adding permanent church halls to the LCI's missiopraxis, it is an efficient pragmatic strategy.

The principles that have ensured the success of this strategy include the following (verbal communication with Richard Aryee, 2012):

1. All church planters must prioritize ownership of permanent meeting places; this must precede the personal material development of the missionary.

2. The policy of centrally owned and directed finances. Under this financial arrangement, the income of all satellite branches of the LCI that is earned through offerings, tithing and special fundraisings is considered as worldwide denominational holdings. All missionaries are permitted to manage the church income at the local level to take care of both human resource and church development expenditures; the rest of the income is reserved and managed by the Bishops' Council for the undertaking of church building projects worldwide.

This strategic component of the Heward-Mills church planting model has its own challenges. Building construction is expensive and spans a long period of time; apart from draining the finances of the church and therefore hindering development in other areas of the local church (recruitment of permanent staff, acquisition of needed sophisticated church equipment and improved remuneration), it has the propensity to drift away from the spiritual focus of the church planter.

However, permanent church buildings generally engender confidence and commitment of congregants of new church plants, and have immeasurably facilitated the denomination's vision of worldwide church expansion.

### **5.1.7 The Processes of Sending, Supporting, Sustaining, Expanding and Monitoring LCI Missions**

An efficient administrative and apostolic leadership system has been evolved to ensure the sending, supporting, sustaining, expansion and monitoring of the LCI's church planting efforts.

#### **Sending Processes**

Once church planters have been recruited and trained, they are posted out to the mission field by the Placement Office of the Proton World Missionary Society (PWMS). The latter is the umbrella department that is responsible for supporting church planting work (LCI Constitution, Church Government Manual, 2012). Essentially the LCI has two broad fields for church planting, the Ghana missions and the international missions. The Ghana missions encompass all the villages, towns and cities of Ghana whilst the international missions cover all areas outside the borders of Ghana. Each year the Bishops' Council prayerfully decides on new locations for church planting. The Bishop's Council uses four main methods for selecting new missionary fields. Whereas the Council would often send church planters to new fields it chooses directly, it could also accept fields that are suggested by the church planters themselves, that is, those to which they feel called or burdened about. In other cases, economic migrant church planters could request to be allowed to start churches, such requests being acceded to by the Bishops' Council if it considers them appropriate. Finally, lay church planters are normally encouraged to start new church plants in the cities and towns where they work, being careful to site such churches as close as possible to their places of

residence; the latter arrangement makes it possible for such lay church planters to combine church work effectively with their secular preoccupations (verbal communication with Richard Aryee, 2012).

### **Support and Sustenance**

All LCI church planters are supported in several ways. These include financial, administrative, supervisory and monitoring methods. The initial processes of support are carried out by the Denominational Office, which is charged with the administrative and monitoring functions of the LCI. The Denominational Office (DO) registers all new church planters that have been assigned by the Placement Office and organizes adequate orientation for them, after which it provides them with the starterpack that is required to start a new church plant; this includes pulpit, chairs, offering baskets, signboards and banners. An initial financial provision is made to cater for travel, church meeting place and house rent and a monthly stipend for a year.

Upon the successful establishment of the new church plant, missionaries are allowed to make requests to the PWMS for more support in areas such as acquisition of land, church property, equipment and church building projects. In order to encourage the missionaries to be self-initiating and self-supporting, the LCI has implemented a concept known as Mature Non-Dependent System (MNDS). The MNDS discourages laziness, incompetence, ineptitude and a dependency mindset by full-time church planters. The MNDS is not applicable to lay church planters.

Under the MNDS missionaries are obliged to effectively administrate their churches to ensure financial sufficiency and sustainability of their missions while at the same time not operating as independent churches, but remaining part of the LCI network (Maturity Camp notes, 2009). The level and continuity of support provided to any LCI mission are based on the mission's ability to meet this requirement. In other words, missions that are able to achieve sustained financial stability are given more support to assist with the purchase of property to develop permanent structures and other further advanced developmental projects. While missionaries are expected to focus on building and developing a new church plant, they are also trained and encouraged to become self-supporting and financially independent by engaging in the following where possible (unpublished Farmers Camp notes, 2006):

1. Secular work engagement for a period of time
2. Farming/animal husbandry
3. Running a business
4. Encouraging their spouses to work
5. Octopus-style branching of churches

This is an innovative concept developed by the founder to help LCI church planters achieve rapid, mature non-dependence. This is when missionaries, after establishing a stable new plant, move on to start smaller church plants (up to 8) in several surrounding neighbourhoods or areas. By developing these satellite churches simultaneously, the gospel is spread more widely and there is a corresponding increase in the church's income. Additionally, more people become available for training to help establish the churches. Some missionaries even involve their church members in micro-enterprises for their mutual benefit. The "octopus" missional strategy has proved to be very successful, especially in the northern parts of Ghana and other rural areas where poverty is endemic, resulting in massive church planting in rural Ghana.

Other forms of support given to LCI church planters are administrative and apostolic visits. The Denominational Office (DO) offers regular administrative support to ensure that the missions run according to the principles and regulations of the denomination. Bishops, General Superintendents and other senior ministers of the denomination regularly visit the missions for continuous training, personal interactions and encouragement as well as the assessment of the general well-being of both the missionary and the mission (unpublished archival records, LCI Denominational Office).

This support system has contributed to ensuring effective church planting and growth and it also serves to keep the missionaries motivated. These mechanisms have helped minimize the plague of church splits emanating from excessive central financial control and feelings of neglect and impoverishment.

### **Expansion of LCI Missions**

It is the policy of the LCI to expand its missions both nationally and internationally. This vision is being achieved through the sustained implementation of the following strategies:

1. Prioritizing church planting over other projects
2. Allocation of the majority of the annual budget to the spawning of new missions
3. Relentless recruitment and training of new church planters
4. Building or acquisition of permanent church meeting halls
5. Multi-layered system of starting new church plants

The last strategy can be initiated by LCI councils, individual missions, and through the Octopus strategy. At all these levels, church planters are drafted, trained and sent out in accordance with denominational guidelines and apostolic leadership approval. This approach results in the procreation of new churches each year at multiple mission fields (unpublished archival records, LCI Missions Office).

### **Monitoring, Supervision and Assessment**

To ensure the achievement of church planting goals, effective systems for monitoring, supervision and evaluation are necessary. To this end, several departments have been created for the purposes of providing continuous monitoring, supervision and assessment of church planting activities.

#### **Monitoring**

Monitoring is overseen by three different offices, namely, the Denominational Office, the Income/Expense Office, and the Paraphernalia Office (The LCI Constitution, Church Government Manual, 2012).

The Denominational Office (Den Office) monitors the administration of LCI churches and missions. Monthly reports on preaching guides, church attendance, income and expenditures and building projects are received from the missions and collated. Charts are used to give visual representation of the data received and these give an indication of the state of each Church.

The Income/Expense Office monitors financial procedures and helps to ensure that they are appropriately followed so that the financial integrity of the missionary and the mission is not compromised. This is achieved through the collection and review of monthly financial reports and by conducting unannounced spot checks known as Fast-track Audits. In addition, this office assists with the preparation of statutory annual



fiscal reports to keep the mission in good standing with the appropriate governmental agencies.

The Paraphernalia Office monitors compliance with the LCI regulations with respect to furnishings and equipment. The aim is to ensure denominational uniformity.

### Supervision

Missions are supervised directly by the full-time or lay deputy minister who has oversight over the region/area that the mission is located.

### Assessment

The LCI churches are assessed administratively (by the offices involved in the monitoring processes discussed) and spiritually. Spiritual assessment is accomplished through the Worldwide Shuffling Conference (WSC). The WSC is an annual gathering of the denomination's apostolic leadership and all categories of church planters. Church planters are assessed during the WSC on the basis of their personal, spiritual and leadership development, compliance with administrative and financial practices and apostolic leadership directives and achievement of church planting targets. The WSC provides a platform for learning from others, self-assessment, receiving constructive criticism and guidance on making improvements. Challenges faced on the mission fields are deliberated upon and appropriate solutions identified.

Additionally, the Bishops' Council uses the opportunity to outline new directives for the denomination. Smaller conferences called Titus-in-Crete are also held periodically where Council and diocesan leaders deliberate with their pastors on state issues concerning the life of their churches to ensure further advancement (The LCI Constitution, Church Government Manual, 2012).

### **5.1.8 Key Principles for Starting a New Church**

Having discussed issues relating to selecting, training, sending, support and oversight in the previous sections, I will now deliberate on the actual processes involved in the starting of a new church plant. While LCI church planters are permitted to be innovative, they are expected to closely follow guidelines for church planting outlined by the church's founder (2007:163-180). These are:

1. A foundation of prayer and fasting for a minimum of three weeks.
2. Critical surveying of the particular mission field. This enables the church planter to examine the topography of the place, the distribution of human population, its major constituents, and the transport network, with the sole aim of arriving at a good judgement for a suitable location.
3. Evangelism. Personal evangelism is preferred over masspublic crusades because it requires fewer resource inputs and allows the planter to be better acquainted with the residential and other personal details of new converts. Mass crusades demand more human, material and financial logistics to undertake; these are resources the church planter would not have available at this stage.
4. New church plants should be conveniently located to ensure accessibility by the target population. It could be a classroom, public hall, cinema hall or a tent in an open field.
5. The church launch should be practical and inexpensive. A few people won through the planter's personal evangelism efforts should be enough to start, without much advertised publicity and with minimum or no equipment. These factors make the launch practical and inexpensive.

The denomination also frowns on "sheep stealing", where the church planter canvasses members of existing churches to join the new church. These principles help foster greater unity between the new congregants and the planter and compel the planter to give of himself or herself completely (both spiritually and physically) right from the onset. Following these processes also helps create a sense of purpose and commitment, both of which are invaluable ingredients for the nurture of a healthy and coherent spiritual family. However, this launch style is beleaguered with some disadvantages, including retarded growth of the new church, and overtaxing of the church planter, since much of the burden associated with the initial evangelism, spiritual and physical preparation for the launch depends on the planter. Another important factor that makes this type of church launch problematic is the lack of adequate initial publicity (radio, television, banners, and posters) which causes undue delay in the recognition of the existence of the new church plant by the locals.

6. Development of the new church plant. The processes involved in the development of a new church plant include personal and spiritual leadership of the planter, membership and eldership, administrative and physical developments.

All new church members are encouraged to complete a three month introductory programme for new converts, where they receive instruction in the basic doctrines of the Christian faith and are given opportunity to be baptized in water and also receive Holy Spirit baptism. After completing the introductory programme, they join the church as full members and are encouraged to participate in the activities of smaller subgroups in the church. Apart from affording them the opportunity to bond with other church members, this exercise introduces them to the rudiments of Christian service and serves as the springboard for early ministerial training (unpublished New Believers' School Training Manual).

From the onset of the new plant, the church planter serves as the sole spiritual, managerial and administrative leader of the new church, and over time gradually recruits and trains suitable members to assist in running the various components of the church, from church administration to the various aspects of church services (2008d: 187-188). All of such people render non-payable services to the church, and these acts of service are key prerequisite for engagement(2010:35-37). Upon further maturation, the church planter appoints members who are spiritually gifted, godly and loyal as shepherds. The latter together with the planter manage the administration of the church (2008d:187-188).

An important apostolic expectation of every LCI church planter is the acquisition of a permanent church building that provides space for church services, and administrative offices that foster stability and growth of the church.

7. Oversight of a new church plant. The new church plant is enlisted under a diocese, and its spiritual and administrative oversight falls under the jurisdiction of a Diocesan Overseer. The Overseer enforces compliance with all LCI doctrines, financial management practices, administrative and church development policies (LCI Constitution, Church Government Manual, 2012).

This chapter has described the LCI's model for church planting. The Heward-Mills church planting model (the Anagkazo model) has been deployed successfully by the Lighthouse Chapel International to expand the kingdom of God in Ghana and abroad. The key challenges associated with it have been highlighted. Even though the model has been implemented over the years, it still has not reached consolidation; the founder and the Bishops' Council review and make changes and adjustments as and when it is deemed necessary to strengthen the church planting drive of the denomination. For example, the concept of MNDS evolved in 2009. It is also important

to note that some aspects of this model, including the WSC, and the system of the creation of dioceses and overseers for the direct administration and supervision of LCI missions, have been adopted from the Methodist Church of Ghana (verbal communication with Heward-Mills, 2012). Overall, the Heward-Mills church planting model has been useful in church expansion through the church planting vision of the Lighthouse Chapel International.

## CHAPTER SIX

### EVALUATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE LCI MODEL OF CHURCH PLANTING

#### 6.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings from my interviews and questionnaires as well as an analysis and evaluation of these findings. Explanatory notes are accompanied by requisite tables. In order to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the LCI's model, a comparative analysis will be undertaken with those of some other major charismatic churches in Ghana based on their responses to the questionnaires. These charismatic ministries, namely, the Action Chapel International (ACI), International Central Gospel Church (ICGC) and the Word Miracle Church International (WMCI), together with the Lighthouse Chapel International, are the most prominent among the churches of the charismatic persuasion, as rightly pointed out by Gifford (2004:vii). Both Alfred Koduah and Kingsley Larbi, Ghanaian Pentecostal theologians, also provide profiles of leaders of some of these networks in their respective works *Christianity In Ghana Today* (2004:182-262) and *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity* (2001:502-505) respectively. The selection of the aforementioned churches together with the Charismatic Evangelistic Ministry (CEM) and the Victory Bible Church International (VBCI) has been based on the availability of some form of church mission document or policy (in some cases this researcher was given access to them, in others, relevant portions were read during interviews) and also the fact that this researcher was able to conduct extensive interviews with their key officers. The researcher will, however, where appropriate also make use of data obtained from the other surveyed churches that have not been listed above, including Royalhouse Chapel International (RHCI), Family Chapel (FC), House Of Prayer Ministries (HOPM), Temple Of Praise (TOP), Global Revival Ministries (GRM), Living Grace Ministries (LGM), Christian Faith Church (CFC), Gospel Light International Church (GLIC) and Fountain Gate Chapel International (FGC). All except two regions of Ghana are represented by these churches to give the study a national outlook.

## 6.1 SURVEY RESULTS OF LCI CHURCH PLANTERS

Background characteristics of the forty LCI church planters who completed the survey are summarized in Table 1. All except four of the respondents were male and only one was non-Ghanaian. The sampling of the respondents was done randomly; the male/female ratio is just coincidental. The LCI endorses the involvement of women in church planting, with many of them having risen to the levels of senior leadership. In this rather enormous mission field of lost humanity, there is the urgent need to train and equip all God's people, men and women, for the work of evangelism and churchplanting to which we are called (Ephesians 4:11-13; Romans 10:9-15). The partnership of both sexes in Christian missions is fittingly advocated by *The Cape Town Commitment*(2010: 45, 46). The respondents ranged in age from 28 to 63 years and the average age was 46. Most of them had completed at least tertiary level education and all of them were married. Church planters are not chosen on the basis of marital status, but the church is of the view that planters with higher levels of education are more suited to deal with the complex and multifaceted issues that are associated with planting churches and leading them, and this is not the sole preserve of the LCI. For instance, the ICGC prefers to send out graduate level church planters for its international mission for similar reasons (ICGC Mission Policy Document, 2004).

**Table 1: Background Characteristics of LCI Church Planters**

<b><u>Characteristics</u></b>	<b><u>Frequency (%)</u></b>
<b>Age(yrs.)</b>	46(28-63)
<b>Sex</b>	
<i>Male</i>	36 (90.0)
<i>Female</i>	4 (10.0)
<b>Marital Status</b>	
<i>Married</i>	40 (100)
<b>Country of Origin</b>	
<i>Africa(inclusive of Ghana)</i>	29 (72.5)
<i>Australia</i>	1 (2.5)
<i>UK</i>	5 (12.5)
<i>USA</i>	5(12.5)
<b>Educational Level</b>	
<i>High School or less</i>	2 (5.0)
<i>Tertiary</i>	16 (40.0)
<i>Post Tertiary</i>	22 (55.0)

**Table 2: Church Planter Information**

<b><u>Characteristics</u></b>	<b><u>Frequency (%)</u></b>
<b>Type of church planter</b>	
<i>Full time</i>	14 (35.0)
<i>Lay (part time)</i>	26 (65.0)
<b>Importance of church planting</b>	
<i>Fulfilment of scripture</i>	35 (87.5)
<i>Increase spiritual workforce</i>	11(27.5)
<i>Counter the spread of non-Christian congregations</i>	3(7.5)
<i>Others(Founders vision and Gather tithes and offerings for God's work)</i>	2 (5.0)
<b>Motivation for church planting</b>	
<i>Messages/inspiration/direction from LCI founder</i>	17 (94.2)
<i>Desire to work for God</i>	13 (72.2)
<i>Supernatural encounter with God</i>	2 (11.1)
<b>Training received for church planting</b>	
<i>Seminary education</i>	2 (5.0)
<i>Informal church work</i>	38 (95.0)
<b>Adequacy of training</b>	
<i>Satisfactory</i>	4 (10.0)
<i>Very adequate</i>	36 (90.0)
<b>Usefulness of LCI church planters model</b>	
<i>Yes</i>	40 (100)

Fourteen out of the 40 LCI church planters surveyed were full-time church planters (see Table 2) representing 35 percent. The strategic combination of this category of missionaries with a well-mobilised laity counterpart (representing not less than 70 percent of the current LCI workforce for missions) as an important growth dynamic for the LCI's church multiplication will be discussed in this chapter. When asked why church planting is important, the majority (88 percent) quoted Matthew 28:18-20(Great Commission), indicating that church planting fulfils scripture, which indeed is the case. As J.D. Payne(2009:4) correctly declares,

the best way to fulfil this mandate of evangelising, baptising, and teaching obedience is through the planting of contextualized churches among the various people groups and population



segments of the world ... Biblical church planting is evangelism that results in new churches.

The motivation for the LCI's missionary enterprise is embedded inextricably in this understanding; the Great Commission will be fulfilled when evangelism is combined with planting churches.

Others said that church planting helps to increase the spiritual workforce (28 percent), a critical necessity for further proselytizing. This is a true observation. The planting of new churches with its inseparable factor of witnessing leads to the procreation of new converts, who tend to be more zealous and enthusiastic in their witness about Jesus Christ, as exemplified by the healed demonised man of Gadara and the Samaritan woman (Mark 5:18-20; John 4:28-30, 39). Foli(2006: 292)appropriately points out that“new Christians are the best and most enthusiastic evangelists in a church”. Three respondents said church planting is important because it helps to curb the spread of non-Christian religions, prominent among which is Islam. This last assertion has been one of the potent driving forces behind the LCI's expansion to the three northern regions of Ghana with a strong Islamic presence (Northern, Upper East and Upper West regions). Michael Ntumy(2000:9)correctly notes that Ghana's population is composed of 16 percent Muslims. The above observation makes it worrying that most of the church expansion efforts of the charismatic network of churches is limited largely to Southern Ghana (84 percent of all charismatic churches are found here; see Table 11). The eight per cent contribution of the LCI to the overall presence of the charismatic denominations in these mostly Islamic regions is a demonstration of its significant mission enterprise as compared to the rest. Together with the Fountain Gate Chapel (FGC), whose ministry operation covers mostly these stated areas, they contribute 13.5 percent of the total charismatic presence. Factors including preference for ministering among the relatively southern-rich population and a lack of commitment to Christian sacrifice have resulted in this imbalance of the Ghanaian charismatic ministries. Koduah (2004:130-131) also pinpoints some of these factors as the reasons for the virtual absence of charismatic networks in these aforementioned northern locations.

The successes of the LCI in these regions are due to the application of key mission strategies including Christian sacrifice by its church planters, the involvement of the laity (which has significantly reduced the financial burden on the church) and the Octopus system. To this researcher, the adoption of these methodologies by other charismatic churches can change their fortunes in these regions.

One respondent said church planting is important because it is in line with the LCI founder's vision. This is aptly captured by the founder's statement that "a church at every door and in every language must be the goal of every true servant of God" (2007: 4). This vision which has become Heward-Mills' missiological ethos (a causative factor in the LCI's successful expansion); how it compares with that of other contemporary charismatic leaders will be further elucidated in this chapter. One respondent said church planting helps generate funds (through tithes and offerings) for the work of God. The researcher shares in these views of the respondent because not only are they in conformity with scripture and the LCI's missiological and theological philosophies, as succinctly elucidated in Chapters 3 to 5 of this work, but also it is these ideas that have spurred them on to establish churches in Ghana and abroad.

Almost all the respondents indicated that their primary motivation for going into church planting was the inspiration from the LCI founder. This is the strongest component of the LCI's model. Leaders must always have the posture of "follow me" as was demonstrated by Christ (Matt 4:19, 9:9; Luke 5:27) and not "just go". Heward-Mills has not only planted churches himself, but has passionately taught and motivated his followers to do the same.

Other important church planting stimulating factors stated by the LCI respondents included a desire to work for God (72 percent of respondents) and two respondents said they had been motivated by a supernatural encounter with God. Such "spiritual" reasons are sufficient motivation for serving in the ministry as a church planter by LCI standards. They are biblical, as exemplified by Paul's dramatic calling and commission (Acts 9:1-6, 15) and subsequent church planting exploits (Acts 13-15). Larbi alludes to the prevalence of "revelation knowledge" in the missiopraxis of Ghanaian charismatics by stating that "revelation knowledge is common among Ghanaian charismatics" (2001:446). For example, Bishop Charles Agyin-Asare(2009:11), founder of the Word Miracle Church International, a leading charismatic church planter in Ghana, and whose church is one of the respondents, declares his calling into ministry and church planting this way:

Many thought I was too young, others thought I had not studied for ministry, etc. I was therefore pushed after much prayer to start a church, and, later, after I heard from heaven, in a Morris Cerullo School of Ministry in 1983, the audible voice of God said to me, "My boy Charles, I send you out as I sent Moses. Go, and I will put my words on your lips and reach the world for me".

With such a supernatural motivation Agyin-Asare has gone on to become a church planter who, according to Emmanuel Anim, “could claim about 10,000 members in 1998 with 62 branches in Ghana, Liberia, Amsterdam and Hamburg in Germany” (2003:157-158). His revelatory understanding of his calling is in line with the experience of some LCI church planters. In a communication with E.A.T. Sackey, he explained that the apostolic leadership of the LCI would commission members who claim to have such “revelation knowledge” (these could include dreams, visions, personal prophecies or a strong conviction) to plant churches after careful evaluation and verification that such occurrences are in line with biblical teachings and apostolic examples (Acts 9:1-6, 15, 11:1-18; 1 Cor 12:8), and also after undergoing the needed prescribed training for church planting (verbal communication, 2012).

With respect to training received before becoming a church planter, only two of the respondents had received formal seminary education; the remainder had received training through informal church work. This is a key strength of the LCI’s model. Although the church trains church planters formally through its seminary (which provides ministerial formation rather than theological education), this training is augmented heavily by the informal instruction of large armies of the laity who are then released for church planting. This is a clear reflection of the church’s adherence to the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers (1 Pet 2:9; Rev 1:6). Asamoah-Gyadu (2005:27) highlights this doctrinal understanding as one of the landmark labels of the Ghanaian Neo-Pentecostals (that is, charismatics). He states:

In practice this ‘democratisation of ministry’ sounds truer of Ghanaian neo-Pentecostalism, particularly with respect to the emphasis placed on ‘every-member-ministry’, than of other Pentecostals...Ghanaian neo-Pentecostals, however, make ‘personal spiritual power for every believer’ the hallmark of their theology and pastoral endeavours.

LCI exemplifies this “democratisation of ministry”, a feature highlighted in this chapter, as a major contributory factor in its growth. A critical question that needs to be asked, though, is whether the LCI lay ministers are effective in their ministry, and also whether this style of church leadership is the most appropriate biblically. Given the challenges the LCI itself has observed with its lay ministry (see Chapter Five), there is little doubt that the lay ministry in itself will be adequate to provide all the needed spectrum of pastoral ministry. Furthermore, the church elders in the Bible were required to feed, teach, care and take oversight of the congregation (Acts 20:28, 1 Pet 5:2). Such scriptures and others that discouraged church elders from engaging in secular

enterprises (2 Tim 2:4) seems to suggest that these early church elders were engaged in ministry on a full-time basis. The above analysis shows that much as the lay ministry was practised in the Bible (Paul engaged in this) and the LCI has succeeded with it, there is still the need for the LCI to engage more full-time church leaders to strengthen its model even further.

Thirty-six out of the 49 respondents (see Table 2) rated the adequacy of their training for church planting as “very adequate” and the remaining four respondents said their training was “satisfactory”. All the respondents said the LCI church planting model was useful.

Thus, it is evident that key biblical teachings and other factors, including the need to realise the Great Commission, the desire to work for God, supernatural experiences and inspiration drawn from the LCI’s founder’s sermons, are some of the motivational factors for the participation of LCI members in church planting.

#### **6.1.1 Strengths of the LCI Model for Church Planting**

Asked about the strengths of the LCI model for church planting, more than 50 percent of the respondents identified the emphasis on training people and the lay ministry as strengths. Other strengths described included the model being simple and practical; support, encouragement and regular monitoring by senior pastors and administrators; availability of literature; involvement of many people; the founder’s messages and example; and the idea of not being afraid to start small. An analysis of the perceived strengths of the LCI model now follows as depicted in Table 3.

**Table 3: LCI Church planters’ perceptions of the strengths of the LCI model for church planting**

<b>Strength</b>	<b>Frequency (%)</b>
<i>Simple and practical</i>	7 (17.5)
<i>Emphasis on training people/Lay ministry</i>	10 (25.0)
<i>Support and encouragement/regular monitoring by senior pastor and administrators</i>	6 (15.0)
<i>Availability of literature</i>	4 (10.0)
<i>Many people are involved</i>	4 (10.0)
<i>Founder’s messages and example</i>	4 (10.0)
<i>Not afraid to start small</i>	1 (2.5)

**Simple and practical:** This is an appropriate sentiment, and the fact that large numbers of the laity have made use of it to plant churches worldwide is an attestation to this quality of the model.

**Emphasis on training people/Lay ministry:** This observation affirms a key strength of the church’s model. The fact that more labourers are needed for soul winning (Matt 9:38), combined with the biblical requirement for apostolic leadership to equip congregants for this work (Ephesians 4:11, 12) makes it possible and indeed imperative for the involvement of both full-time and part-time church planters. Indeed, this theological understanding has propelled many of the surveyed non-LCI charismatic churches to train both full-time and lay church planters (71.4 percent—see Table 6). However, in practice, the majority of them tend to rely heavily on full-time ministers (fully engaged and paid church planters) for the actual church planting (see Table 10). For example, even though the Action Chapel International, largely recognised as the pioneer charismatic church in Ghana (Asamoah-Gyadu, 2005:98), put in place a policy guideline to deploy lay people for church planting around the late 1990s, and actually did some initial training, it has yet to implement this strategy in any meaningful way, with the result that 80 percent of its current church planting workforce are still full-time clergy (verbal communication with Bishop Clive Mould, 2013). A similar position was indicated by key officers of the International Central Gospel Church and the Word Miracle Church International. Even though these churches and others that were surveyed have all undertaken missions in Ghana, it is this researcher’s opinion that the limited involvement of the lay component in their mission strategy (see Tables 7 and

11) has militated against their efforts over the years in terms of the ability to proliferate more churches in the different mission fields of the country. This assertion becomes even more glaring from the observation that none or very few of the churches surveyed have carried out appreciable levels of mission outside Ghana; one of the commonest hindering factors cited for this was the unavailability of church planters (see Table 6), a problem that could have been circumvented through the employment of unpaid volunteer church planters, as has been amply demonstrated by the LCI for its international expansion (see Tables 8a and b).

This preference for full-time clergy (especially those with ministerial ordination), which induced the lack of church planters in most of the charismatic networks, presents to this researcher a rather paradoxical perplexity. This assertion evolves from the fact that the charismatics have rather been associated with a liberal approach to the issue of ministerial calling. Koduah cites Hanson's(2002:45)observation:

Whereas the Classical Pentecostals have remained rigid and traditional in the calling of ministers... the Neo-Pentecostals [charismatics, addition mine] have been more liberal, thinking that the key factor for entry into the ministry is the call of God upon the person's life and an understanding of the scriptures.

However, this principle is still consistent with the headship of Christ over His church to set apart particular people for distinctive positions of leadership "to prepare God's people for works of service" (Ephesians 4:11-16). The scriptures are clear about the place for full-time gospel workers. Such people are needed to dedicate all their energies to the work of the ministry (a challenge that is associated with lay ministry). The biblical injunction is for such people to be provided for by the church (1 Cor 9:11-12; 1 Tim 5:17 NIV). Additionally, even though it is clear that the scriptures teach pastors to be fully devoted and committed to the work of ministry, and should therefore not be involved in any other secular and money-making schemes (1 Tim 6:10-11; 2 Tim 2:4-6 NIV),it is evident that the scriptures make room for unpaid workers to be involved. Heward-Mills (2007:73-74) teaches that church planters could follow Paul's example of ministry without receiving a salary or stipend from certain churches. Paul chose this style of ministry to show a good example for others to follow and also to desist from burdening the churches financially (Acts 20:32-36; 2 Thess 3:7-9).

It is also clear that the lay ministry does not in any way remove the financial responsibility of the congregants since they continue to give offerings, tithes and other

support. Rather, not having to pay hordes of church planters (most of whom have a means of living anyway) not only reduces the financial burden on the church but also allows the limited resources to be channelled into other areas of ministry, including church development, starting and supporting more full time missions, and social ministry.

The above analysis reveals that in spite of the appreciable role played by this “democratisation of ministry”, it should not take away the God-given right of full-time gospel workers to receive support from other Christians.

This correct assessment by Hanson should have led logically to what Asamoah-Gyadu (2005:27) describes with regard to African charismatics: the “democratisation of ministry ... particularly with respect to the emphasis placed on every-member-ministry” with its resultant procreation of abundant church workers. The limited use of part-time church planters could also be linked to the rather undue tendency of the earlier originators of the charismatic movement to place a greater premium on the acquisition of formal ministerial formation (Bible School but not necessarily formal theological education) before a Christian claiming to be called by God could start active Christian ministry. Thus, Christians who had not attended Bible School accompanied by some form of ministerial ordination were deemed “unfit” to start churches. Heward-Mills(2007:133, 164), for instance, claims that he experienced hostilities from some of these leaders because of his lack of seminary training.

Since opportunities at the time for enrolment in Bible schools were minimal because of their near non-existence and also their non-affordability (Koduah [2004:108] states that the late Archbishop Benson Idahosa had to offer scholarship packages to some of the earlier would-be charismatic leaders to study in his Bible School in Nigeria) and also because some Christians found Bible School education altogether unnecessary, considerable numbers of Ghanaian Christians could not fulfil their callings. It is probable that this has been a serious mistake made by the early initiators of the charismatic movement. Apart from the fact that the argument for Bible School education as a prerequisite for Christian ministry is indiscernible in the scriptures, the biblical injunction of the priesthood of all believers for ministry (1 Pet 2:9; Rev 1:6), which is accepted by adherents of charismatism, was unfortunately not given a sufficient priority in practice.

Heward-Mills not only believed these scriptural teachings, starting as a lay church planter himself, but also formulated these beliefs into his missiological strategy

with respect to the lay ministry. Emmanuel Anim (2003:158-160) corroborates this fact by observing that Heward-Mills “emphasizes evangelism and encourages lay ministry”. In comparison with the others, therefore, the strength of the LCI’s model lies with the conscious emphasis of training and releasing both the laity and full-time ministers for its expansion efforts, with the laity playing the predominant role as at present. Currently not less than 70 per cent of all church planters are lay workers, even though full-time workers have more responsibilities, including the oversight of lay church planters and administration.

Observing rightly the impact of involving the laity in Christian missions in Ghana, Asamoah-Gyadu(2011:83)mentions the Church of Pentecost (the largest Pentecostal denomination in Ghana) as an example:

If the Church of Pentecost has been able to spread extensively throughout the country, it is partly due to the effective ways in which ministry is shared with the laity.

It is important to notice that in recent times many charismatic churches in Ghana have started to train lay people for church planting. According to the Missions Director of the ICGC,

The recent strong surge in branch work of our church in Accra and around the country is due to the adoption of the lay church planters strategy from a directive by the church’s founder and leader somewhere in 2010 (verbal communication with Rev. Lewis Fiadjor, 2013).

In their case, the Charismatic Evangelistic Ministry (see Table 10), which initially relied only on training full-time church planters, has since 2005 incorporated the aspect of the lay ministry of the LCI’s model into its own church expansion (Branch Policy Document, 2012). This is also true of the Victory Bible Church International (Branch Handbook Policy Document, 2012).

This researcher is of the view that Ghanaian charismatic will receive a major boost through the application of the lay ministry in their mission strategy, as corroborated by Rev. Steve Mensah, the General Overseer of the Charismatic Evangelistic Ministry:

Our decision to involve our ordinary members in church planting has produced tremendous results. From a couple of churches in the mid-2000s we have spawned over a hundred churches now, the majority of which were started by our lay pastors (verbal communication, 2012).



### **Support and encouragement/regular monitoring by senior pastor/administrators:**

The LCI has a well-structured and well-equipped administrative infrastructure and systems with qualified managers, as sufficiently captured in Chapters Four and Five of this work. This is another clear strength of the church's model. Whereas all the surveyed churches theoretically attach much seriousness to this aspect of church expansion, as evidenced by its inclusion in their respective Mission Policy documents, the evidence on the ground shows that there are either no well-established administrative structures, or, where they exist, they are ill-equipped, both in terms of facilities and human resources, to foster the sustainability of new church plants. This researcher gained this information through actual visits to church premises for interviews. Other researchers have made similar observations. According to Koduah, when comparing Neo-Pentecostals to Classical Pentecostals in Ghana (2004:112),

Hanson posits that whereas the Classical Pentecostals inherited carefully planned administrative structures and managerial policies, which makes church polity easy, the Neo-Pentecostals are still hassling to establish sound financial, administrative, moral, managerial and doctrinal systems (Hanson, 2002:45).

It is probable that the Classical Pentecostals, in view of their longer history of existence in Ghana, have developed a clearer understanding of their theology of mission and church leadership as opposed to the Neo-Pentecostals. The lack of well set-up administrative and leadership structures, as observed by the researcher, included a number of the surveyed churches that have remarkable mission work records, and that have been in existence for decades. In the researcher's judgement, the most plausible explanation for this deficiency lies in the present neonatal stage of development in the mission enterprise of the Ghanaian charismatic church. Other contributing factors could include the preference of the Neo-Pentecostals for a one-man leadership style (the founder or overseer adds all aspects of administrative and managerial duties to his roles) as well as a more pragmatic approach to leadership and administration, which are often "spiritual/charismatic" in nature and lack the needed scholarly, theological and missiological considerations. Happily, some of them (notably ACI, ICGC, VBCI, CEM and RHCI) have initiated admirable steps to ameliorate this weakness by setting up mission and other administrative offices with qualified personnel. It is important for these efforts to also be motivated by the need to emulate biblical examples of overseeing the work of expanding God's kingdom (Acts 15:4; 1 Pet 5:1-4) and not to be conceived solely by expediency. Changes motivated primarily by better business

models will not stand the test of time; they have to be undergirded by clear biblical and theological convictions.

Such biblical convictions combined with carefully defined pragmatic considerations influenced the change of the LCI's initial governance structure to its current episcopal setup; this shift has impacted positively on its expansion work. It is probable that the missions of the Ghanaian charismatic movement will see greater advances with the addition of well-equipped and professionally managed administrative systems, which should be undergirded by sound biblical and theological convictions to engender more effective support, monitoring, supervision and development—an essential ingredient for expansion.

**Availability of literature:** The availability of abundant devotional and instructional books to LCI church planters is of great help to the expansion work. This is not the sole preserve of the LCI though, since most leading charismatic figures have written copiously (Gifford, 2004:36). Some Ghanaian theologians, including Larbi (2001:448), have lamented the lack of academic publications by ministers of the charismatic strand in Ghana, revealing that most of what is known in academia about these churches have been written by “outsiders who know very little about the movement and what its adherents believe”. One can totally agree with this criticism without hesitation. The horrendous challenges this researcher was confronted with while undertaking this work were due not only to the paucity of documented information on the Ghanaian Neo-Pentecostals, but also to the non-academic nature of what existed. This palpable vacuum undeniably straddles the full spectrum of Ghanaian charismatism.

Having said this, this researcher strongly argues that the lack of academic literature by the leaders of charismatic ministries cannot be described as a weakness in their mission strategy. The leaders of Ghanaian charismatism have chosen to limit their writings to the confines of practical ministry work rather than to promote academia. For instance, 70 percent of Heward-Mills' publications are clearly related to church planting and development, Christian leadership and church management, development of spiritual gifts and evangelism (LCI Central Literature Office records). The literary works of other influential charismatic church planters, including Duncan Williams (2003), Mensa Otabil (2002), Agyin-Asare (1999, 2004, 2009) and Addae-Mensah (2000) have focused on spiritual development, liberation theology, leadership and self-development, evangelism and spiritual gifts. These works have helped in promoting the vitality of this strand of Christianity, catapulting it to the zenith of contemporary

Ghanaian Christianity, as aptly observed by Asamoah-Gyadu (note that “Pentecostalism” is Asamoah-Gyadu’s(2005:14)adopted nomenclature for non-classical Pentecostals and Charismatics, even though he analyses them as separate entities in his work):

In the face of this religious advance and mosaic, the contention of this research is that, in terms of religious and theological influence, Pentecostalism at the moment represents the most cogent, powerful and visible evidence of religious renewal and influence in Ghana.

It is clear, therefore, that the founders of the Ghanaian charismatic movement have used the mode and format of their writings as appropriate theological tools to promote church expansion. In other words, their theological writings are not produced for an academic audience; instead, this literature is popular in style and has been effective in influencing the hearts and souls of both churched and unchurched Ghanaians. In this vein, if their non-academic writings have helped them to become “all things to all men” in order to ensure their salvation and spiritual development, as epitomised by the apostle Paul (1 Cor 9:22), then the Great Commission has been well served. Moreover, such writings are more appealing to Africans, who prefer theology to be appropriate to their daily circumstances. Asamoah-Gyadu cites Andrews Walls(1976:182, 183), with evident justification, as predicting that this type of theology would influence African Christianity in the twenty-first century:

On the importance of current developments in Africa, and for that matter Ghanaian Christianity for historical and theological research, it is sufficient at this point, to quote Andrew Walls, who, writing almost three decades ago, noted that in the ensuing years “theology that matters will be theology where the Christians are”, and that “what sort of theology is most characteristic of the Christianity of the twenty-first century may well depend on what has happened in the minds of African Christians in the interim”.

Walls’ judgement has been vindicated in the experience of Ghanaian charismatic churches.

The publications of leaders of networks with charismatic orientation have played and are still playing a significant role in their church multiplication. It must be made clear, though, that this practice is not a criticism of academic scholarly works. There is a place for critical studies that analyse and reflect on the impact of the endeavours of such leaders and their churches in academic works. The current research

project has been undertaken to provide a partial remedy of this problem, at least with respect to LCI.

**Many people are involved:** This strength of the LCI's model has been made possible by the sustained encouragement of its founder for the members to join the labourers for the harvest (Luke 10:2). This means that ministry has not been limited only to a few "called" clergy but rather in conjunction with the entire congregation. We are in consonance with Alfred Koduah (2004:161) with reference to factors militating against the progress of the church in Ghana, that "inadequate training of leaders and members for the system is another setback". It is our observation that this inadequacy has often stemmed from the tradition of some churches to rely more on full-time ordained ministers, as discussed above, while neglecting the "non-ministerially" trained categories of their membership. This problem straddles both the charismatic and mainline historic churches. Asamoah-Gyadu(2011:56-59), a Methodist minister, alludes to the existence of this situation, albeit subtly, in Ghanaian Methodism. In offering correction to this anomaly he states,

Theological education may be important, ordination may be required, but ministry is more than education and ordination. It is a calling ... in the New Testament, ministry belongs to all.

These reflections are biblical. All Christians are priests (Rev 1:6) and should not be debarred directly or indirectly from the task of soul winning.

The LCI's conscious training and deployment of all categories of its membership, including the youth, aged, professional and the unskilled, has resulted in an ever-present reservoir of church planters, a factor that has greatly promoted church planting. We have already demonstrated the limited presence of such an approach among major sections of the charismatic churches. Limiting church planting to mostly full-time ordained ministers is a decatalysing factor for facilitating the achievement of the Great Commission. Foli(2006:294)is of the same view. In analysing the role of leadership for church growth in Ghana, he states,

It is impossible to implement a successful plan for growth within the church if the minister is the only one doing the work. A way to ensure maximum success is by building lay men and women to assume leadership roles in the plan.

Thus, LCI's practical application of the biblical injunction to utilise all God's people, male and female, ordained or laypeople, has rendered its church planting model more effective than other churches that have taught otherwise.

**Founder's messages and example:** This is the strongest component of the LCI's model of church planting. Since faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God (Rom 10:17) and the sheep must follow the shepherd (John 10:4; 1 Cor 11:1), it follows then that the attitudes and visions of the congregants are greatly moulded and affected by what they hear and see. For a church to be focused on soul-winning, the vision must be cast persistently from the pulpit. Foli(2006:281) indicates this as the first important step in his church planting methodology, stating that the church leader should "impact a vision and build a commitment to church planting. Heward-Mills' unabated adherence to this biblical and theological injunction, manifesting in 70 percent of both his writings and sermons focusing on soul-winning and working for God (LCI Central Literature Office records), has produced church planting mindedness in his followers. Although it is true that many of the contemporary leaders of the charismatic church see church planting as a necessity to fulfil the Great Commission (87.5 percent of respondents), and have in fact all engaged in it (100 percent of respondents), this researcher believes that many of them have demonstrated a half-hearted attitude towards pushing the church planting agenda (see Table 11). This assertion emanates from the fact that even though these churches have been in existence over the last two or three decades, they had only planted an average of 77 churches in Ghana by the close of 2012. In sharp contrast, the LCI had planted 887 churches within the same time period. This generally unremarkable performance by a majority of the surveyed major charismatic churches could be ascribed to two reasons. It is probable that this situation is a reflection of either a side-lining of the Great Commission agenda or a sustained emphasis on other Christian doctrines.

For instance, Mensa Otabil (founder of the ICGC) believes that liberating people from their bondage, especially the African, and equipping them to enhance their human dignity and to pursue excellence, both ingredients necessary to mirror the image of God, will enable them to fulfil the original intent of God for their lives. Larbi(2001:348) appropriately observes of Otabil's message "the distinctiveness of Otabil's theology is in the areas of what seems like Evangelical-Pentecostal Liberation theology and human development", adding that "this seems to set him aside from all the other Neo-Pentecostal preachers in the country". Having perused Otabil's publications, Gifford(2004:113) is of the view that Otabil is a standard faith preacher, has a concern for effort and productivity, and writes to identify the important role of blacks in the Bible with the aim of instilling pride in them. Gifford quotes Otabil himself as saying "the people I am called to ... want practical information from the word of God that is

usable in their lives for personal development and personal improvement” (2004:115, sermon tape “The ICGC Vision”).

It is clear that this doctrinal emphasis of Otabil coupled with Larbi’s observation that “the church began with the focus on building only one single large church for the whole of the country” (2004:344-345), “moved his eye” from vigorous church planting.

Action Chapel International (ACI), under the inspirational leadership of Duncan Williams, started on the platform of strong evangelism and church planting. However, rampant incidences of disloyalty to his denominational development vision, characterized by unauthorized annexation and ownership of branch churches, succeeded in quenching his zeal for church planting (verbal communication with Clive Mould, 2013). Over a long period, therefore, the founder shifted his attention to raising and mentoring leaders (Heward-Mills being one of these leaders), offering apostolic oversight over ACI and its more than 300 affiliate churches worldwide. His passion for intercessory prayers as a means to overcome the machinations of Satan and his spiritual entities, which he claims adversely affects the socio-political-economic conditions of societies (Eph 6:11-12; 2 Cor 10:3-6) has preoccupied him with Prayer Summits (special prayer conferences organized in conjunction with church and political leaders) both in Ghana and abroad ([www.actionchapel.net](http://www.actionchapel.net)). This preoccupation has had a hindering effect on the ACI’s church planting effort, according to Clive Mould.

Another emphasis from many charismatic pulpits that has been inimical to missions is the overemphasis on the message of prosperity. Some charismatic churches have over-indulged in the prosperity message, resulting in neglect of the expansion of God’s kingdom through church planting to many mission fields in Ghana. Foli (2006: 81) justly indicts the charismatics when he says “charismatics ...are preoccupied with the performance of miracles and preach a ‘prosperity gospel’ at the expense of salvation evangelism”.

Koduah (2004:130) rightly laments,

The preaching of the “new gospel” in Ghana brings with it the proliferation of churches at virtually every street corner of Southern Ghana. While the founders of those churches claim to have been called by God, one finds it difficult to understand why God now appears to call people only to minister in Southern Ghana. The poorer un-reached northern Ghana that needs the gospel the more appears to have been neglected by those ministries. While thanking God for the good work He is doing through the mainline mission and classical Pentecostal churches in Northern Ghana, apart from a few Neo-Pentecostal

churches that operate in Northern Ghana, the bulk of them operate in Southern Ghana.

I agree with Koduah's(2004:130). conclusion that "this may tempt any observer to conclude that these 'new gospel' preachers are only in it for money, which is relatively more readily available in the richer Southern Ghana, than the north"

The expectation that the charismatic movement was going to unleash a powerful workforce on the missionary fields, which has become a mirage, must be restored. David Kpobi (2008:171), one of Ghana's foremost missiologists, in his work *Mission In Ghana: The Ecumenical Heritage*, echoing Paul Gifford, explains the basis of the disappointment of some in the core values of many charismatic churches:

The new churches were considered to be in some sense an answer to the constant prayer of missionaries already in the field that the Lord would "send out labourers into his harvest field" (Matt 9:38). The general feeling among Ghanaians, however, is that many of the new churches have not always lived up to expectation. There is much mistrust and apprehension about their real motives because of frequent lapses in morality and the suspect teachings that many of them are associated with.

It is clear from the foregoing analysis why the ingredients of the LCI's model, including the founder's focused message on soulwinning, church planting and Christian sacrifice, have boosted church planting across the length and breadth of Ghana, including the neglected Northern regions (see Table 11), and why the absence of such a focus in the mission strategies of a considerable section of Ghanaian charismatism in a sustained manner has either hindered altogether or limited their expansion in the country and indeed elsewhere.

Notwithstanding the fact that this researcher agrees that Heward-Mills' emphasis on church planting and working for God is a strength of his church's model, it will still be useful for research to be undertaken to assess and evaluate the processes that are available for ensuring the total spiritual maturity of his congregants in Christ. This is necessary in view of the fact that, from Paul's teaching, it seems that in a healthy biblical Christian church 50 percent of the preaching is focused on what God has done to save His people and 50 percent on how He preserves them by sanctifying and equipping them through the Holy Spirit for service (Acts 2:42-47; Ephesians 4:11-16; Hebrews 6:1-3). It is important in ensuring a biblically healthy church for the preaching and teaching ministry to proclaim "the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20: 27).

**Not afraid to start small:** There is insufficient proof to demonstrate that this is a strength of the LCI’s methodology. Approaches to initiating a new church plant vary in the surveyed churches. While some begin with just a few people (WMCI, GLIC), others send a team of people (ICGC, VBCI, RHCI, FC). The advocates of a team launch (several people including the church planter are sent to form a new church plant) explain that this communal approach reduces the burden on the church planter, eases evangelism, and engenders quick church growth and better pastoral care. It will be useful to undertake further research in today’s approaches to ascertain which of them is more effective. However, given the higher growth rate associated with churches with a team launch approach as compared to a slower rate by churches who start with only a couple of people (between 100 - 200, and 30 - 50 respectively) within the first two years (see Table 10), the LCI launch style in this regard is a weakness.

### 6.1.2 Perceived Weaknesses of the LCI Model for Church Planting

**Table 4: LCI Church planters’ perceptions of the weaknesses of the LCI model for church planting**

<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Frequency (%)</b>
<i>Model has not been culturally sensitive as materials are largely in English and therefore does not consider issues of local language usage and illiteracy. Also has not factored in utility for Islamic environment.</i>	3 (7.5)
<i>Program is new and evolving</i>	2 (5.0)
<i>Inadequate training and experience of church planters</i>	2 (5.0)
<i>Small numbers of planters and assistants per church planted</i>	3 (7.5)
<i>Inadequate support for struggling church planters</i>	1 (2.5)
<i>Young adult church planters are despised in the society</i>	1 (2.5)
<i>Limited financial and infrastructural (furniture) support for new churches</i>	3 (7.5)
<i>Pressure to begin without waiting on God</i>	1 (2.5)
<i>Attendance as a measure of success may make some people feel they have failed or are failing</i>	1 (2.5)
<i>System is infiltrated with numerous planters</i>	1 (2.5)

Perceived weaknesses of the LCI model for church planting included the following concerns:



**The model is not sufficiently sensitive to the various cultural milieus in which the church planters find themselves, such as working in the local dialect of the area, dealing with illiterate populations and working in an Islamic environment.**

This is a fair comment to make, although LCI cannot be said to be altogether insensitive to culture, judging from its strong presence in rural Ghana (see Table 11). The LCI believes, in line with the apostolic practice, that the gospel is more easily acceptable when transmitted in the thought patterns of the target population (Acts 17). However, the church has been slow in adopting the use of local languages principally because of the dependence on mostly urban-domiciled missionaries who often have poor mastery of such local dialects.

This is a weakness of the LCI model and indeed in the mission methodologies of most charismatic ministries, whose ministers prefer preaching and ministering in the English language. Foli cites linguistic differences as one of the limiting factors to the spread of the gospel in the neglected Northern Regions of Ghana by the church in Ghana (2006:268). One strategy LCI has adopted to address the language barrier, as well as to render it more effective among poorly educated sections of the Ghanaian population, is the grooming of indigenes with competency in local dialects to undertake missions in such communities. Two specialised sub-denominations, namely, the *Asendua* and the Evangelicals, have been created to advance church planting in the Akan and Ewe speaking regions of Ghana (knowledge of these two languages provides a planter with a good opportunity to evangelise the majority of the people groups in Ghana). An example of good practice with respect to mission methodology is found in the Lausanne Movement's guidelines for evangelising unreached and unengaged peoples with predominantly oral cultures (*The Cape Town Commitment*, 2010:37). These are very useful and worthy of adoption by the LCI.

**The programme is new and evolving.** While this is true, there is still a clear openness to change. In fact, the several documented adjustments and modifications that the model has seen and continues to experience have added to its robustness.

**Small numbers of church planters and assistants per church plant:** The weakness of this approach by the LCI has been pointed out in an earlier discussion of this chapter. Even though, scripturally, two or three are enough to plant a church, as exemplified by both Jesus and the Apostles (Luke 10:1; Acts 13:2-4), the enormous challenges associated with initiating a church, including setting up, evangelism, caring for early converts and administration, makes a team launch preferable. As shown earlier, the

results in terms of early church growth are better with a team launch. Consequently, the team launch approach employed by the ICGC, ACI, VBCI, RHCI and others is a stronger new church plant strategy.

**Inadequate training and experience of church planters:** This perception is palpably wrong; the survey demonstrated that 90 percent of the LCI respondents rated their training as “very adequate” (see Table 2). This research has revealed that not only is the duration of the LCI ministerial formation within the prevailing charismatic norm (ranging from one to four years) but the content of the instruction, including apprenticeship, personal spiritual development in Bible study, prayer and fasting, soul winning and managerial skills, among others, falls within the commonality of charismatic ministerial formation in Ghana (see Table 6). This researcher has rather come to the realisation that the LCI’s strong emphasis on the doctrine of loyalty (as explained in Chapter Two) and Christian sacrifice has equipped its church planters to become better adapted especially to rural conditions whilst ensuring their unity of purpose in expanding God’s kingdom as one denomination (the LCI is more prevalent in rural Ghana than all the other major charismatic ministries—see Table 11).

The researcher believes that it is the lack of such aspects in the ministerial formation education of a large section of the surveyed non-LCI charismatic churches that has contributed to making their church planters become more comfortable in the affluent sections of the Ghanaian communities to the neglect of much of rural Ghana. Besides, the canker of charismatic church splits (to be analysed in more detail later in this chapter) is a reflection of the absence of the doctrine of loyalty in the curriculum of these charismatic networks, though this may not be the only contributory factor. It is probable that the absence of proper training of sacrificial servantleadership (1 Pet 5:1-4) prior to being commissioned as a church planter has also played a role in creating this challenge.

**Limited financial and infrastructural support for new church plants:** In view of limited and overstretched financial resources, this is a prudent policy. Besides, it induces the planters to focus their energies to succeed early. Christian sacrifice is a necessary ingredient for church planting (John 12:24; Phil 3:7-8). The Word Miracle Church International, for instance, insists that church planters should use their personal resources to acquire equipment, church hall, and residential accommodation, at the initial stages of the new plant (Agyin-Asare, 2009:32). This approach allows a healthy growth of the church where the new church members are not overly burdened

financially. While this principle undoubtedly encourages the quality of self-sacrificing leaders (church planters) it is important to emphasize that, for the healthy growth of new church members, they should also be encouraged to learn right from the onset of their Christian lives how to sacrifice financially themselves. Paul commended the Macedonian church for doing so (2 Cor 8:3-5). This commendation coupled with scriptural injunctions for full-time church workers to receive support highlights a palpable weakness in this aspect of the LCI's model (1 Cor 9:11-12, 14; 1 Tim 5:17).

Although some western church planters prefer what David Stroud (2009:154-160) describes as a "top-down" church launch, that is, a more glamorous start (a large initial group, state of the art equipment, widespread publicity), the unavoidable financial demands needed for such a comprehensive mobilisation makes this launch style impractical within the weak economic circumstances of Ghana and indeed most sub-Saharan African countries.

This notwithstanding, as indicated earlier, this research has revealed that the minimal initial financial support by the LCI for its new church plants is a severe weakness of the church's model (to be analysed further in this chapter).

**There is sometimes pressure to begin without waiting on God:** This is an unjustifiable critique. The LCI model stipulates a period of at least 21 days (this is more of a church convention) to be used to undertake such key spiritual exercises as prayer and fasting before the church is started, imitating the biblical examples of both Jesus and the Apostles (Matt 4:1-2; Luke 6:12; Acts 6:4, 13:1-4). Indeed, this is a commonality with other charismatic churches. The survey showed that such spiritual preparations preceding the parturition of a new church plant is a common denominator among the charismatic churches, as affirmed by Agyin-Asare (2009:24-25). While some church planters may want to "steal the start" to ensure early success, this cannot be said to be the acceptable norm in the LCI.

**Inadequate support for challenged church planters:** "There are no clinics for struggling church planters." This is a weakness that arises out of the enormous scale of the expansion work, which outpaces the availability of experienced apostolic leadership for strengthening and overseeing all the work in all locations. Biblical church planting requires meticulous apostolic oversight (Acts 13, 14). The LCI needs to enhance its existing mechanisms to train and appoint more experienced leadership with the requisite competencies for undertaking regular clinics and oversight for struggling church

planters. This observation also demonstrates the necessity for the LCI to add a good dose of full-time workers to its church planting programme, since they will be more devoted to this work and help to offset such challenges.

**Use of attendance as a measure of success can be discouraging and makes some planters feel like failures:** The sentiment could be true in some instances, for example, in a strongly Islamic community where pressure to continue in that faith could be very strong. However, not only are Christians commanded to produce fruit (harvesting the souls of the lost into God's Kingdom, and displaying character qualities as in Galatians 5:22-23), but also that their fruit must be durable (John 15:16). However, it can become a problem when numbers becomes the main criterion.

One of the real means of determining the results of planting churches, with the principal aim of drawing lost humanity to Christ, therefore, is the absolute numbers of proselytes that have been gained. The scriptures are replete with several examples of this methodology (Acts 1:15, 2:41, 4:4). The LCI finds this approach simple, useful, and practical, and in consonance with the views of other missiologists who accept this strategy for assessing success in missionary work. For instance, Richard Foli(2006:217-220, 291) employed church attendance for assessing the growth in different denominations in Ghana, stressing that “unless ministers are achievement-oriented, the decline of the church may be the result”.

On the whole, this researcher has observed sadly that the majority of the surveyed charismatic cluster of churches do not have the capacity to capture on a regular basis useful indicators of their mission enterprises (it has been an arduous task for these churches to assemble such data for this work). Such important indices for missions include availability of mission policies, administrative/governance structures, composition of church planters (full-time workers/volunteers), permanent church halls and financial planning.

From the above analysis it is reasonable to conclude that the LCI model has more strengths than weaknesses.

### 6.1.3 Suggestions for Improving the LCI Model for Church Planting

Several suggestions were articulated by the respondents to address these challenges or to improve the model. These are summarized in Table 5 below. Analysis of many of these propositions has invariably been done in different earlier sections of this chapter; those remaining will be the subject of deliberations at this point.

**Table 5: Suggestions for improving the LCI model for church planting**

<i>Education and skills development</i>	6 (15)
<i>Yearly forums, visits and clinics to assess and address challenges and performance of new planters</i>	3 (7.5)
<i>Increase the number of planters and assistants per each church to be planted</i>	3 (7.5)
<i>Enough resources should be available for each new church that is planted</i>	3 (7.5)
<i>There should be a period of tarrying in prayers before starting</i>	2 (5.0)
<i>LCI model should be tailored to meet the needs of society such as illiterates, local language</i>	2 (5.0)
<i>LCI model should be added to the free books on the LCI website</i>	1 (2.5)
<i>Emphasis must be placed on young people's involvement in the ministry</i>	1 (2.5)
<i>Mature church members should be trained and encouraged to get involved in church planting</i>	1 (2.5)
<i>Examine and supervise spiritual life of planters</i>	1 (2.5)
<i>Experienced church planters with at least 3 working churches should be honoured as successful and assigned to plant more churches</i>	1 (2.5)
<i>LCI model should be flexible in terms of time and materials being used so that the aims of the programme will be realised.</i>	1 (2.5)
<i>Focus on lay pastors can push them to rise and maintain churches planted</i>	1 (2.5)

**Education and skills development:** As indicated in the discussions with regard to perceived weaknesses of the LCI model, a majority of the LCI church planters are well educated, with 95 percent of the surveyed church planters having tertiary or post-tertiary education (see Table 1). A weakness that has become apparent especially with the introduction of the Matured Non-Dependence System (MNDS) of support, which requires the LCI church planter at some stages of establishing the new church plant to engage in extra ministerial or secular jobs to supplement their incomes, is the lack of

expertise for such types of employment. Many LCI church planters without tertiary level education and professional vocations (for example, doctors, engineers, accountants, lawyers) have been found to be not adequately trained to handle such jobs as teaching, masonry, plumbing, electronics and computer science (Anagkazo Bible Seminary Alumni Office records). This situation has in some instances led to the abandonment of the ministry in order to allow the planter to pursue some form of secular education or professional skills before resuming their ministerial careers. Accordingly, it is imperative for the LCI to include adequate levels of professional or skills training in its church planting curriculum to address this deficiency. In this regard, this researcher thinks that the policy of the ICGC and other charismatic networks to offer sufficient and sustained support for up to two years (in some instances) should be considered by the LCI. This allows the church planter to be fully dedicated to growing the new church plant without being distracted to pursue other ventures for survival.

**Yearly forums, visits and clinics to assess and address challenges and performance of new planters:** The combination of the annual Shuffling Conference and the Titus-in-Crete meetings described in Chapter Five of this work effectively addresses these crucial concerns. The surveyed non-LCI charismatic churches all have different forms of ensuring that the challenges and performance of new church planters are addressed. Some of the measures put in place to achieve this aim include periodic church audits (ICGC), submission of monthly, quarterly or annual reports (CEM, VBCI) and attendance at annual general ministerial meetings (CEM, ICGC, VBCI). Stroud regards such apostolic leadership support as crucial to the success of the church planting venture. He rightly observes that church planters must therefore receive and benefit from their apostolic ministry so that they will not be isolated. Principally, the apostolic ministry serves, in his opinion, as a coach to the church planter, rendering useful advice, and helping the planter surmount the challenges and issues that arise as the church progresses (Stroud, 2009:143).

We share in these views and believe that such measures are not only necessary but also mandatory in keeping with the apostolic example of strengthening new church plants and accomplishing the goal “to set in order things that are wanting” (Titus 1:5).

## 6.2 ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS WITH LCI FOUNDING FATHERS

Five Lighthouse Chapel International (LCI) pastors who were present and participated in the inception of the church were interviewed individually as key informants about their perceptions of the underlying impetus for the starting of the church and issues related to the church's strategies for church planting. The five whose names and contributions have been discussed in detail in Chapter Four were E.A.T. Sackey, Eddy Addy, Richard Aryee, Hamish Oddoye and Jake Godwyll, all current bishops of the LCI group of churches. They all agreed that the LCI founder's vision and commitment to obey Jesus' instruction in Matthew 28:19 (the Great Commission) was the major inspiration for the church. All but one of the pastors articulated that the founder was the major force behind the starting of the church. One of them, Jake Godwyll, stated:

Sometime in October 1986, the presiding Bishop Dag Heward-Mills visited my room in the University of Ghana, where I was studying, and spoke to me about the church they had started. He described that the church was going to be a launching pad where crusades would be launched to every town and village in Ghana. I felt his passion for souls (verbal communication, 2012).

The founder not only inspired the inception of the church, but also inspired the pastors to get involved in ministry work. In the words of one of the key informants, "The presiding bishop's messages made me believe in the call of God upon my life" (verbal communication, 2012).

The five were also unanimous that the strategy of church planting was a prime motivation right from the inception of the church. This is a vital departure of the LCI from most of the surveyed non-LCI charismatic ministries, many of which, including CEM, HOPM and ICGC, were initiated to be single large churches.

While the church's founder was the primary motivation for the initiation of the church, the underlying reasons for the starting and proliferation of the ministry through church planting were, as acknowledged by the key informants, grounded in the vision to obey the Great Commission. This is evidenced by the following quote from Hamish Oddoye:

The vision to obey the Great Commission and spread into other nations, and the passion, has been undeniably very strong in the heart of the Presiding Bishop. So very early in the development of the church, he kept speaking about having churches in the other towns in Ghana and other countries. We prayed about it during all night prayer meetings, at retreats, and during

extensive fasting and prayer times (verbal communication, 2012).

When asked their opinions about the importance of church planting, the primary themes that emerged were that 1) church planting enables the spreading of the gospel to reach as many people as possible, and that 2) church planting provides opportunity to serve God meaningfully. As an example of the latter, Jacob Godwyll said, “Church planting is the best work with eternal reward, and the best way to sacrifice anything to the Lord is to give your whole life” (verbal communication, 2012).

In describing the training of church planters at LCI, the pastors echoed the existence of informal systems of training early in the church’s history and the development of a more formalized training programme through the church’s Bible School. This concept is summarized by the following quote from Eddy Addy, who has been involved in the formulation of the church’s training programme from the outset:

Church planters were trained through night schools, camps, retreats, conferences and all day teachings. At these meetings the founder taught extensively on the ministry. There were small group meetings where the founder taught and he also spoke to people one-on-one. Thus, he knew everyone on a personal level. Later on, other senior ministers did the training. Later on these camps, which were put in videos, DVDs, CDs and tapes, were used for training. With the inception of the Bible School, young men and women were sent to be trained and then sent out to plant churches (verbal communication, 2012).

The research has revealed that this format of training of pastors and missionaries, largely informal through apprenticeship, and graded levels of formal Bible School instruction (without too much academic emphasis) is the commonest type of ministerial formation among churches of the charismatic strand. They are modelled on Jesus’ informal interactions with his disciples (Mark 3:13-15). They are practical, easily reproducible, do not require massive and expensive infrastructure, and more importantly, are geared towards producing ministers who can undertake practical church planting. The key components that overlap in the Ghanaian charismatic missionary training methodologies include:

1. A good duration of membership (commonly 3 or 4 years)
2. Identification and selection of prospective church planters as indicated by such signs as commitment to church work, prayer and Bible study
3. Apprenticeship with senior ministers



4. Instructions in key Christian doctrines such as faith, Holy Spirit, prayer and Bible study
5. Church planting techniques, evangelism, discipleship of new converts and social ministry
6. Leadership, church administration and pastoral ethics

Formal theological tutelage for ministry, an uncommon feature, varies from short durations of residential/non-residential school of ministry (six months to one year), to more elaborate undergraduate level of theological studies (in very few cases postgraduate, as exemplified by the ICGC). The ICGC, ACI and the Church of Pentecost have faculties of theology in their respective universities.

Instead of producing theologically and academically-bred clergymen, as is the case of most mainline non-Pentecostal churches, the training systems employed by most Ghanaian charismatics generate hands-on practitioners who mostly succeed in planting churches in different mission terrains. This approach of preparing church planters by the charismatic networks of churches in Ghana, which has yielded high church planting results, is identical with what pertains with other Pentecostals/Charismatics in other parts of the world. C. Peter Wagner (1995:278) is one prominent church growth proponent who believes that this group of churches, the Pentecostals (he includes charismatics in this group), have better training methodologies, in terms of promoting church growth through church planting, as compared with those of non-Pentecostals. He notes, and rightly so, that

Not only were their training institutions appropriately geared to a relatively low academic level, but the curricula were built around a practical ministry-oriented knowledge of the Bible. Their model was one of *ministerial training* rather than one of theological education, a crucial distinction for developing leadership in most parts of the third world.

Wagner states further:

The methodologies utilised by Pentecostals for selecting and training leaders may well turn out to be the most crucial of all growth factors contributing to the high degree of success that Pentecostal mission work has enjoyed through the years (1995:277).

It is likely that Wagner and others like him with similar assessment are right, and this status quo must continue. Though he does not adduce concrete reasons for their remarkable church planting results, Richard Foli (2006:221, 227) clearly shows that the

charismatics in Ghana planted more churches than other denominations during the period from 1988 to 1998 with a rapid growth of 99 percent (Foli used the “National Church Survey Reports” by the Ghana Evangelism Committee between 1988 to 1998 as the source of his information).

It is probable that the tailor-measured training approach that the Pentecostals (to borrow Wagner’s definition) use has contributed significantly to their greater performance. Unfortunately, just as some Pentecostals/charismatics in the western hemisphere have done, there is a current trend amongst the Ghanaian charismatics to introduce more elaborate theologically and academically oriented Bible school training for their church planters. The LCI, for example, was at the time of this research constructing a huge campus complex for its Bible School (one of the prerequisites for gaining accreditation). The fear (and this is not unfounded) is that if adequate and intentional safeguards are not implemented to police the missiopraxis of charismatic missionary training, such impressive innovations will negate the earlier achievements.

Commenting on this observation among American Pentecostals/charismatics, Wagner(1995:279)is at pains to note that “ironically, some Pentecostals are moving in the opposite direction toward more formal education”. This indeed is an ominous sign to avoid, even though it may be necessary to modernize and deepen charismatic pastoral training in one way or the other. In spite of such need, the researcher is of the view that it must be done responsibly, making sure to maintain the strong foundations that have yielded capable and fruitful missionaries for charismatic church expansion over the years.

The ICGC and the Church of Pentecost are taking steps at the time of this research to separate their faculties of theology (meant for preparing their church planters) from their respective universities, in an attempt to “de-academize” them and to make them more suited for effective ministerial formation towards church planting and pastoral ministry. This is a potent corroboration of the existence of this researcher’s concerns, and a promising development indeed.

There are other worrying deficiencies in charismatic missionary training that must be addressed. One of the most prominent issues is the rather disturbing prevalence of disloyalty (unfaithfulness) of many charismatic church planters to the denominational development vision of their networks and the lack of what Susan Hanson (2002:45) describes as “sound financial, administrative, moral, managerial and doctrinal systems”. Although we have sufficiently analysed this latter lapse in an earlier section in this

chapter, the issue of disloyalty needs to be re-echoed at this stage. Ninety percent of all the respondents indicated this canker as an inimical factor to their efforts to expand. Dr. Victor Osei, the leader of the Family Chapel denomination in Ghana, describes this phenomenon as a “charismatic disease” because of its widespread occurrence among the charismatics (verbal communication, 2013).

The typical manifestation of this challenge is the unauthorized annexation of either new or established church plants, wholly or partly (a section of the congregation is taken away by the usurper to plant his own church) especially those located in financially endowed mission fields, including the big cities of Ghana, Europe and America. Though there are no previous documented data, it is an undisputed truism that most of the major charismatic denominations have experienced to a greater or lesser extent this antithetical charismatic church expansion factor.

Some church growth scholars like Wagner (1995:275) view church/denominational schisms as “an important growth dynamic because new denominations are constantly needed since they provoke a type of new wine skins for the new wine of each successive generation”, citing the positive impact on Christendom of the breaking away of the Protestants from the Catholic Church. Nevertheless, the nature of the Ghanaian charismatic disloyalty has had an overall negative effect on church growth. The very underlying motives that instigate these actions are embedded curiously in financial gain, parochialism, envy, jealousy and self-promotion, and not in theological differences. These disorderly occurrences have resulted in hampering the church planting drive of many charismatic churches, and have often created an undesirable and unbiblical platform for animosity between the “sent” and the “senders”. God is not the author of confusion (1 Cor 14:33) and exhorts that “all things be done decently and in order” (1 Cor 14:40). Therefore, the wisdom behind these acts of disloyalty “descend not from above, but [are] earthly, sensual, devilish” (Jas 3:15). It is abundantly clear that the Ghanaian charismatic churches, through this rampant tendency to disloyalty, have indeed fulfilled the scripture that “for where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work” (Jas 3:16). This calls for correction.

The LCI has largely been immune to this challenge (even though it has had its own fair share, albeit minimal) through the incorporation of a strong dose of the teaching of loyalty in its training curriculum at all levels, as has been extensively highlighted in Chapters Three to Five of this thesis. Several charismatic congregations, including ACI, CEM, VBCI, and Gospel Light International Church, have now adopted

this doctrine into their own preparatory programmes (this researcher was given access to the contents of their training programmes). This research has also shown that 100 percent of all surveyed churches who are conversant with the LCI model were unanimous that it had been useful for their church growth endeavours (see Table 12). Undoubtedly, the doctrine of loyalty is one of the most significant strengths of the LCI model.

With respect to categories of church planters in the LCI denomination, the pastors attested that both lay and full-time workers participate in church planting activities. One of the pastors, Richard Aryee (the current chairman of the LCI's Bishops' Council) confirmed that "Church planting is done by lay workers or full-time workers, most of the initial church planting was done by lay workers". This key strength of the LCI's model has been analysed in this chapter.

In response to questions about how church planting activities in the church are financed, the key informants affirmed that lay church planters maintain their secular pursuits and do church planting alongside them, implying that this category of church planters do not receive a salary from the church but receive some assistance to start the church. More explicitly, one of the key informants, Jacob Godwyll (now a bishop and the church's first Missions Director) articulated:

A MissionsBoard was put in place. Lay workers were helped to rent a meeting place, full-time workers were helped with accommodation and an allowance. In addition, full-time missionaries were transported into the designated country and assisted with immigration. A Starter Pack, constituting a banner, pulpit and offering baskets, were given—chairs were added to these starter packs when there was a real need for them. Sometimes additional help was given to lay or full-time workers to help with the church planting efforts. For example, in some instances, vehicles have been provided to help with the work (verbal communication, 2012).

This research has revealed some significant differences in the way new church plants are supported initially by their sending agencies. To a greater or lesser extent, these include the following:

1. Full sponsorship for one year (some extend it if the economic conditions are unfavourable) to cater for remuneration, personal and church accommodation, transport and healthcare
2. Continuous support until the church becomes self-supporting

3. Good quality church equipment (sound systems, drums)

4. Payment of either salaries or allowances to lay church planters

The above financial support system is employed by the majority of the surveyed non-LCI churches. In contrast, as has been indicated in an earlier section in this chapter, the LCI gives only minimal initial support (for three months, after which the Matured Non-Dependent Support system is invoked). The Gospel Light Church International, in line with its Marine Corps policy, claiming to emulate the sending philosophy of Jesus (Matt 10:1-42; Luke 10:1-23) provides little or no money to its new church planters (*Gospel Marines Manual for Evangelism*, unpublished).

It is the researcher's view that this support style of the LCI model is a weakness, as mentioned elsewhere in this thesis. Large sections of the available mission fields in Ghana are poor (Koduah, 2004:130) making the development of new churches difficult. In this regard, providing more adequate support would better help in the successful development of new church plants. The rather tardy growth which characterizes most new LCI church plants could be attributed, although not exclusively, to its financial support approach (the typical size of a new LCI church plant averages between 30 to 40 members for the first two years). In comparison, the average size of new church plants of non-LCI denominations (for instance, ACI, RHCI and ICGC) which provide higher levels of initial support falls within the range of 100 to 200 (see Table 10).

When the pastors were asked about factors that were considered when locating new church plants, three main issues were mentioned. These were: 1) leading of the founder; 2) availability of an affordable meeting place; 3) church members who relocate to other places for secular or other pursuits can start churches. The pastors affirmed several structures that have been put in place to ensure the success of planted churches; these structures included organizational, supervisory and monitoring systems. Richard Aryee, for example, confirmed that,

Our churches are grouped under Dioceses and Octopuses headed by deputies. These are further grouped under Regional Councils which operate under General Superintendents who also report to the Bishops' Council and the Central administrative system or office. This multilevel administrative reporting and supervisory system helps to ensure that all aspects of the churches are running well. Necessary decisions are taken at the various administrative tiers in managing all aspects of the church including church planting efforts (verbal communication, 2012).

This administrative system has been discussed in further detail in Chapters Four and Five of this work. Pastors interviewed authenticated that over 1,200 churches have been planted worldwide by the LCI denomination, with thousands more targeted to be planted, while one other key informant acknowledged that there is a target to have churches in 150 countries. The founder continues to infuse inspiration for church planting through his messages and through sharing his vision for more churches. For example, one of the pastors said, “In the year 2000, at a camp meeting, the founder felt led to share the vision for one thousand churches”. This vision was accomplished by 2009.

### **6.3 SURVEY RESULTS FOR NON-LCI CHARISMATIC CHURCH LEADERS**

This part of the survey was completed by representatives of fourteen non-LCI charismatic churches in Ghana (listed in the introduction of this chapter). Table 6 provides some background information of the churches that participated in the survey.

**Table 6: General characteristics of non-LCI charismatic churches in Ghana**

<b><u>Characteristics</u></b>	<b>Frequency %</b>
<b>Year of establishment</b>	1968-1992
<b>Church involved in planting new churches</b>	
<i>Yes</i>	14 (100)
<b>Reason for church involvement in church planting</b>	
<i>In fulfilment of Great Commission</i>	13 (92.9)
<i>Core mandate of church (vision)</i>	6 (42.9)
<i>Development of leadership and pastoral skills of church members</i>	4 (28.6)
<b>Major human resource for church planting</b>	
<i>Both full-time graduates and lay church members</i>	10 (71.4)
<i>Full time seminary/Bible school graduates</i>	3 (21.4)
<i>Lay church members</i>	1 (7.1)
<b>Presence of a well-structured system to train lay church planters</b>	
<i>No</i>	2 (14.3)
<i>Yes</i>	12 (85.7)
<b>Major target of church's income/budget</b>	
<i>Church Buildings</i>	8 (61.6)
<i>Planting of new churches</i>	8 (61.6)
<i>Staff salaries</i>	6 (46.2)
<i>Parachurch ventures (schools, hospitals and orphanages)</i>	5 (38.5)
<b>Key elements of church's training program for church planters</b>	
<i>Training for targeted church planters</i>	11 (91.7)
<i>Identification of loyal, zealous and volunteered members</i>	5 (41.7)
<b>Main aspects of methods used in planting new churches</b>	
<i>Crusades, audio and video outreach</i>	13 (42.9)
<i>Missionaries or church members do field and underground work</i>	11(78.6)
<i>Door to door evangelism</i>	6 (42.8)
<i>Identification of a location</i>	5 (35.7)
<i>Inauguration of church</i>	4 (28.6)
<i>Effective follow up and visitation</i>	3 (21.4)

**Table 6 continued: General characteristics of non-LCI charismatic churches**

<b>Key methods starting new church plants</b>	
<i>Door-to-door evangelism</i>	12 (85.7)
<i>Crusade, radio broadcast and video outreach</i>	11 (78.6)
<i>Social action and programs (funerals, out-dooring, weddings) as well as community outreach (medical, provision of needs like bore holes)</i>	4 (28.6)
<i>Follow up and visitation</i>	3 (21.4)
<i>Prayer and cell meeting</i>	2 (14.3)
<b>Most Prominent Challenges for Planting new Churches in Ghana and Abroad</b>	
<i>Inadequate funds to run church</i>	8 (57.1)
<i>Personnel availability and their commitment to work</i>	7 (50.0)
<i>Place of worship</i>	7 (50.0)
<i>Disloyalty, annexing churches, breaking away from leadership</i>	9 (90)
<i>Inadequate funds</i>	3 (30)
<i>Unfavourable conditions in host countries (legislation, people have numerous tasks: work, school, church etc.)</i>	2 (20)
<i>Other (Training program in English makes it difficult to include all branches at a time &amp; Catholic Church's opposition in the North)</i>	2 (14.3)
<b>Methodology for the sustainability of new churches</b>	
<i>Financial and administrative support</i>	11 (78.6)
<i>Effective monitoring and supervision</i>	8 (57.1)
<i>Organization of periodic growth and leadership programs</i>	5 (35.7)
<b>Methods for discipling new converts</b>	
<i>Bible teachings</i>	14 (100)
<i>Follow up and visits</i>	3 (21.4)
<i>Participating in church groups</i>	3 (21.4)
<b>Typical charismatic evangelistic tools for soul winning</b>	
<i>Door-to-door evangelism</i>	12 (85.7)
<i>Crusade, radio broadcast and video outreach</i>	11 (78.6)
<i>Social action and programs (funerals, out-dooring, weddings) as well as community outreach such as medical outreach, provision of needs like bore holes</i>	4 (28.6)
<i>Follow up and visitation</i>	3 (21.4)
<i>Prayer and cell meeting</i>	2 (14.3)



The year of establishment of the churches ranged from 1968 to 1992. All the churches were reportedly involved in church planting and the primary motivation for church planting was “in fulfilment of the Great Commission” as delineated by Matthew 28:19. Other reasons given for the churches’ involvement in church planting were that church planting was a core mandate of the church, and to develop leadership and pastoral skills of church members. Both full-time seminary/Bible school graduates and lay church members were the major human resource for church planting for about 72 percent (10 out of 14) of the churches surveyed. The remaining 28 percent of the churches relied on either full-time seminary or Bible school graduates only or lay church members only as the major human resource for their church planting activities. Twelve out of the 14 churches reported having a well-structured system to train lay church planters and the key elements of the training program for church planters at the churches included training for targeted church planters (11 of the 14 churches), identification of loyal and zealous church member volunteers (5 of the 14 churches) and mentoring of the potential church planters (3 out of the 14 churches). For about 62 percent of the churches surveyed, most of the church’s income/budget was allocated to church buildings and planting of new churches. Staff salaries and parachurch activities constituted the major expenditures for 46 percent (6 churches) and 39 percent (5 churches) respectively, of the churches surveyed.

Table 7 (below) provides information on the number of churches planted in the ten regions of Ghana by the churches surveyed. Most of the churches had church plants in the regions located in the southern parts of the country. Only a few of the churches had a presence in the three Northern regions (Upper East, Upper West and Northern Regions) of the country. The average number of church plants was highest for the Greater Accra Region where the 14 churches together had up to 154 churches with an average of 29 churches. The region with the fewest church plants by the churches surveyed was the Volta region where the five churches with church branches in the region had an average of five branches and the number of church branches among these five churches ranged from one to twelve.

**Table 7: Number of churches planted by non-LCI charismatic church planters in regions of Ghana**

<b>Regions of Ghana</b>	<b>Number of Non-LCI denominations which have planted churches (N=14)</b>	<b>Average number of churches planted by non-LCI denominations</b>	<b>Actual Range of Churches Planted by non-LCI denominations (minimum to maximum)</b>
Ashanti Region	9 (64.2)	8	2 to 21
Brong-Ahafo Region	9 (64.2)	12	1 to 45
Central Region	10 (71.2)	7	1 to 24
Eastern Region	8 (57.2)	12	1 to 44
Greater Accra Region	10 (71.2)	29	1 to 145
Northern Region	3 (21.4)	16	12 to 18
Upper East Region	2 (14.3)	25	5 to 44
Upper West Region	3 (21.4)	19	1 to 51
Volta Region	7 (50.0)	5	1 to 12
Western Region	10 (71.2)	7	1 to 21

Of the churches surveyed, one church is predominantly located in the three Northern Regions of Ghana (Upper East, West and Northern Region) and has most of its church planting efforts in those areas; this perhaps accounts for the relatively high numbers of church plants recorded in the Northern Regions.

Fifty per cent or less of the 14 non-LCI charismatic churches surveyed had church buildings in the ten regions of Ghana. Only one church reported having church buildings in Upper East and Upper West regions but the number of church buildings in these two regions was greater than the average number of church buildings in the other regions. Although the churches reported an average of 29 church plants in the Greater Accra region (see Table 7), only six out of the ten churches with church plants in the Greater Accra region had church buildings there. These churches together had an average of 17 church buildings in the Greater Accra Region.

This section of the chapter has provided some of the different features of the missiopraxis of the surveyed non-LCI charismatic churches, including involvement and

reasons for church planting, components of church planting methodologies, budgetary allocations, human resources and availability of permanent church halls. This information has served as the basis for the comparative analysis with those of the LCI.

**Table 8a: Number of churches planted in different continents by non-LCI charismatic churches represented in the study**

Continent	Number of non-LCI churches with church plants	Average number of churches planted	Range (minimum to maximum)
Africa(Exclusive of Ghana)	7 (50)	12	1 to 54
Asia	0 (0)	0	0
Australia	0 (0)	0	0
Europe	9 (64.2)	8	1 to 21
North America	9 (64.2)	7	1 to 20
South America	0 (0)	0	0

**Table 8b: Number of churches planted in different continents by charismatic denominations represented in the study (Dec, 2012)**

Denomination	Africa	North America	South America	Asia	Australasia	Europe	Total number of churches
LCI	155	64	6	3	8	137	<b>373</b>
VBCI	0	6	0	0	0	1	<b>7</b>
WMCI	3	1	0	0	0	11	<b>15</b>
ICGC	2	20	0	0	0	8	<b>30</b>
CEM	3	2	0	0	1	2	<b>8</b>
ACI	20	6	0	0	0	15	<b>51</b>
FC	0	1	0	0	0	1	<b>2</b>
LGM	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
TOP	0	1	0	0	0	4	<b>5</b>
RHCI	0	15	0	0	0	21	<b>36</b>
GRM	1	0	0	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
FGC	3	3	0	0	0	7	<b>13</b>

CF	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
CFC	0	2	0	0	0	3	<b>5</b>
HOPM	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>

When asked about new congregations planted on other continents, none of the other churches had church plants in Asia, Australasia and South America. The majority had church plants in Europe (9 out of 14 churches) and North America (9 out of 14 churches) and in Africa, Ghana not inclusive (7 out of 14 churches). The average number of church plants in Africa was 7 and ranged from 1 to 54 church plants among the 7 churches who reported having church plants in Africa. The average number of churches planted in the continents of Europe and North America were 8 and 7 church plants, respectively.

When the non-LCI charismatic church planters in the study were asked about challenges they faced in planting new churches in and outside Ghana, the most commonly mentioned challenge for planting churches in Ghana was disloyalty (90 percent) and inadequate funds (57 per cent) to run new churches (see Table 6). Other key challenges mentioned by 50 percent of respondents were lack of committed personnel and difficulties with finding a place of worship. Less commonly mentioned challenges with church planting in Ghana included difficulties in being inclusive when the training programme for church planting is done in English, and opposition from the Catholic Church when planting churches in the Northern regions of the country.

Among those with church plants outside Ghana, the most common challenge, mentioned by 90 percent of respondents with church plants outside Ghana, was availability of personnel and disloyalty. About one third of the respondents mentioned inadequate funds as a challenge, while unfavourable conditions in the host countries (including legislative challenges as well as time constraints of church members who are working or in school) were identified as a challenge by 20 percent of the respondents.

This section of the chapter has highlighted some of the key challenges relating to cross-cultural missions, church schisms, lack of finances, human resources and unfriendly legislation that have confronted the mission enterprise of the surveyed non-LCI charismatic churches. Their commonality or otherwise with those of the LCI, as well as how the LCI has succeeded or failed to circumvent or reduce their effects in its model, has formed part of the overall evaluation.

Tables 9a, 9b, 10 and 11 follow.

**Table 9a: Number of permanent church buildings owned by non- LCI charismatic church planters in regions of Ghana**

<b>Region</b>	<b>Number of denominations with permanent church buildings (n=14)</b>	<b>Average number of permanent church buildings owned by the churches</b>	<b>Range (minimum-maximum)</b>
Ashanti Region	7 (50)	4	1 to 15
Brong-Ahafo Region	4 (28.6)	12	3 to 22
Central Region	6 (42.9)	3	1 to 5
Eastern Region	5 (35.7)	4	1 to 7
Greater Accra Region	6 (42.9)	17	1 to 80
Northern Region	2 (14.3)	3	1 to 5
Upper East Region	1 (7.1)	30	30
Upper West Region	1 (7.1)	25	25
Volta Region	3 (21.4)	4	1 to 6
Western Region	2 (14.3)	8	5 to 10

**Table 9b: Number of permanent church halls (not leased) by charismatic denominations in regions of Ghana represented in the study (Dec. 2012)**

NAME OF CHURCH	REGIONS OF GHANA										TOTAL NUMBER OF PERMANENT CHURCH HALLS
	A R	BA R	C R	E R	GA R	N R	UE R	UW R	V R	W R	
LCI	19	6	13	17	58	44	24	4	7	13	<b>209</b>
FC	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	<b>4</b>
FGC	2	1	0	0	1	8	7	8	1	0	<b>28</b>
TOP	1	22	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	<b>25</b>
HOPM	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>3</b>
LGM	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>4</b>
CFC	0	0	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	<b>8</b>
VBCI	7	0	5	3	15	0	0	0	4	6	<b>40</b>
WMCI	3	12	4	7	9	5	0	0	6	0	<b>46</b>
ICGC	7	5	8	15	48	1	1	1	5	10	<b>101</b>
CEM	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
CF	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	<b>2</b>
ACI	1	3	1	5	7	0	0	0	0	0	<b>16</b>
GRM	1	0	2	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	<b>13</b>
RHCI	0	1	0	1	12	0	0	0	1	2	<b>17</b>

**Table 10: Charismatic denominations and key church planting indicators**  
(Dec 2012)

<b>Name of Church</b>	<b>NUMBER OF CHURCH PLANTERS TRAINED</b>	<b>FULL-TIME CHURCH PLANTERS %</b>	<b>LAY CHURCH PLANTERS %</b>	<b>AVERAGE MEMBERSHIP FOR NEW CHURCH PLANTS FOR FIRST TWO YEARS*</b>
LCI	1254	30	70	30
VBCI	120	45	55	80
WMCI	160	90	10	60
ICGC	625	70	30	200
CEM	255	10	90	50
ACI	120	95	5	150
FC	20	100	0	50
LGM	8	80	20	40
TOP	36	100	0	30
RHCI	320	80	20	130
GRM	54	90	10	110
FGC	120	31	69	120
GLCI	216	40	60	70
CFC	40	90	10	50

\*Membership indicated as actual average Sunday church attendance

**Table 11: Comparative table of number of churches planted in the regions of Ghana (2012)**

Church name	REGIONS OF GHANA										Total number of churches in Ghana	Percentage distribution
	A R	B A R	C R	E R	G A R	N R	U E R	UW R	V R	WR		
LCI	108	41	83	50	322	102	45	11	52	73	<b>887</b>	<b>45.04</b>
FC	10	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	<b>15</b>	<b>0.76</b>
FGC	6	24	2	3	5	12	44	51	1	7	<b>155</b>	<b>7.87</b>
TOP	2	45	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	<b>52</b>	<b>2.64</b>
HOPM	0	0	2	10	0	0	0	0	2	0	<b>14</b>	<b>0.71</b>
LGM	2	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>17</b>	<b>0.86</b>
CFC	2	1	15	0	4	0	0	0	0	21	<b>43</b>	<b>2.18</b>
VBCI	13	4	17	8	48	0	0	0	12	9	<b>111</b>	<b>5.63</b>
WMCI	6	15	5	14	41	17	0	1	8	3	<b>110</b>	<b>5.58</b>
ICGC	21	7	24	44	145	18	5	4	10	21	<b>299</b>	<b>15.18</b>
CEM	2	1	3	6	33	1	0	0	20	1	<b>67</b>	<b>3.40</b>
CF	0	0	1	0	5	0	0	0	0	1	<b>7</b>	<b>0.35</b>
ACI	12	3	3	5	22	0	0	0	1	2	<b>48</b>	<b>2.43</b>
GRM	2	0	2	7	13	0	0	0	1	1	<b>26</b>	<b>1.32</b>
RHCI	7	6	6	21	36	1	0	1	35	5	<b>118</b>	<b>5.99</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>675</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>1969</b>	<b>100</b>

In earlier sections of this chapter, the data from the non-LCI charismatic respondents has been used invariably to engage in a comparative analysis with that of the LCI model. The chapter has clearly demonstrated not only the distinctives but also highlighted the well-defined strengths and weaknesses of the various models.

The only other sharp distinction which sets the LCI's model apart from those of other charismatic churches is the construction and acquisition of permanent church meeting halls. We have elucidated the importance of this factor in promoting LCI's



church planting in Chapter Five. Here we want to underscore, as per their responses, the fact that this component seems equally important to most of the surveyed non-LCI charismatic churches. The real evidence on the ground, however, will reveal to any discerning observer that the majority of the charismatic denominations meet in rented premises and not in permanent church halls (see Tables 9a and b). Whereas all the surveyed non-LCI churches have their own permanent headquarters, only a few of their branch churches are housed in permanent structures.

This situation can be attributed to three reasons. First, there is a genuine lack of sufficient finances for mission work, as stated by 57 percent of the respondents (see Table 6). Second, where such finances are abundant, they often inappropriately used to promote the personal lifestyle of the leader, as alleged by David Kpobi(2008:173). He observes,

The churches in Ghana, particularly in the urban centre [the locus of most charismatic churches, addition mine] have been beneficiaries of a new prosperity introduced by the improved economic circumstances of the nation...one significant outcome of the increasing prosperity has been the increasing opulence and extravagance not only on the part of the churches but also more atrociously on the part of their leadership.

While Kpobi does not name the perpetrators, it must be admitted that there is an inescapable generalised perception in Ghana that charismatic leaders engage in opulence and extravagance. The admonition by the exponents of *TheCape Town Commitment*(2010:43) to mission leaders to “reject the idolatry of greed” should be one of the cornerstones of the mission strategies of the charismatic church in Ghana. If charismatic mission leaders manage church income more purposefully (this is not to imply that the leaders should not be sufficiently catered for) there will be enough resources which could be channelled into the construction or acquisition of permanent church halls to accelerate the proliferation of stable long-lasting churches, as has been amply demonstrated in the case of the LCI.

The third factor limiting the development of permanent church halls is occasioned by the governance policy of certain charismatic denominations, that is, to run their new church plants or branches as semi-autonomous entities (ICGC, CEM, GRM, FGC and VBCI are examples). In the case of ICGC, for instance, all branches are semi-autonomous, and are mandated to become “self-propagating, self-governing and self-supporting”. Besides, the branches must have a semi-autochthonous mindset, as observed by Larbi(2001:340):

Otabil, a strong believer in the indigenous church principle, is convinced in stating that, “I fully believe that wherever God puts you He has enough resources in place to take care of your needs.” This emphasis has helped the church to develop on its own initiative, becoming what seems like one of the more prosperous young churches in the country.

Under the tenets of this policy, once the new church plant has been supported adequately enough to be firmly established (a strength in the church’s model already highlighted), all aspects of further development, including acquisition and construction of permanent church halls, becomes the full responsibility of the new church plant/branch. While accepting that the ICGC approach engenders initiative which is needed for progress and development of the branch church, such capital intensive projects like construction of church buildings come at too great a cost to a burgeoning church. Consequently, either the projects are avoided entirely or developed at a tortoise-like pace.

The evidence presented on this point suggests, therefore, that the LCI’s strategy of centrally-supported building projects is a better practice. The various advantages associated with ownership of permanent church buildings (see Chapter Five) including security and stability should motivate Ghanaian charismatics to pursue this policy aggressively.

#### **6.4 SURVEY RESULTS OF NON-LCI CHURCH PLANTERS CONVERSANT WITH THE LCI MODEL**

Eleven (11) non-LCI church planters conversant with the LCI church planting model were surveyed about their use of the LCI church planting model in their church planting efforts. All the respondents indicated that their churches have been influenced by LCI’s church planting activities and that the LCI model has influenced their churches to be more involved in church planting. Responses are tabulated below (Table 12).

**Table 12: Responses about the influence and use of the LCI church planting model by non-LCI church planters conversant with the model**

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>Frequency (%)</b>
<b>Yes, have been influenced by LCI church planting work</b>	11 (100)
<b>Yes, LCI model has influenced the church to be more involved in church planting</b>	11 (100)
<b>Yes, have adopted aspects of LCI model for your church planting effort</b>	11 (100)
<b>Aspect of the LCI model adopted</b>	
<i>The LCI's founder teachings focused on working for God using audio, video, camp meeting messages, books and pastors conference</i>	11 (100)
<i>The teachings on the doctrine of loyalty and disloyalty to potential church planters</i>	11 (100)
<i>The hands-on approach for training church leaders</i>	10 (90.9)
<i>The principle of combining secular work with church planting (Lay ministry concept)</i>	7 (63.6)
<i>The principle of constructing church halls as a tool for effective church planting</i>	6 (54.5)
<i>The principle of effective supervision and monitoring of church planting</i>	2 (18.2)
<i>The octopus-church strategy</i>	1 (9.1)
<b>LCI model been a cardinal part of preparation for your potential church planters</b>	10 (90.1)
<b>Experiences resulting from teaching doctrine of loyalty as part of church planting efforts</b>	
<i>Church growth</i>	11 (100)
<i>Church stability</i>	9 (81.8)
<i>Effective church planting</i>	9 (81.8)

The main thread that runs through how these leaders were affected for church planting was the conscientization they gained through Heward-Mills' emphasis on planting churches to fulfil the Great Commission. Several of the respondents, including the CEM (Accra, Ghana), Grace Bible Church (Soweto, South Africa), House of Grace (Nairobi, Kenya), The Bridge Church (Glasgow, Scotland), and Word Alive Ministries (Malawi) indicated that prior to being mentored by Heward-Mills through his publications and pastoral training conferences, their focus had principally been to build a single large

church. For instance, Bishop Mosa Sono, the leader of Grace Bible Church, Soweto, one of Johannesburg's mega churches, observed:

Even though our church started in the early 1980s we concentrated on growing it into a one big church family. Our key church growth strategy was the operation of cells as a way of bringing in more irreligious people from our communities. In the mid-2000s our leaders started receiving training from Bishop Heward-Mills of the Lighthouse Chapel International. We used his books and audio-visuals on church planting and church growth and other church planting strategies for our ministerial training. We have gained further insight into church planting from attending his annual Iron Sharpneth Iron (ISI) pastoral training conferences both in Ghana and in our own church. Bishop Heward-Mills' insight on the urgent need for fulfilling the Great Commission especially through the planting of churches has been an inspiration, and has since that time redirected our focus into more church planting. Currently, we have fourteen satellite churches and have plans to spawn churches all across South Africa (verbal communications, 2012).

The founder of the Charismatic Evangelistic Ministries, Rev. Steve Mensah, reminiscing on the origins of his church's church planting work, said:

The CEM was started in the early 1990s, and had as its vision the evangelisation of rural Ghana, Christ to the Rural World, using open-air crusades as the key methodology. We teamed up with existing churches for the crusades and thereafter handed to them the further responsibility for the converts' spiritual development. This continued throughout most of the 1990s and early 2000s. The origins of our church planting efforts were stimulated by the teachings on church planting and fulfilment of the Great Commission I and my leaders received from attending Bishop Heward-Mills' ISI conferences from 2005. Further exposure to the Bishop's promptings towards church planting was gained through his books, tapes and videos. All these served as powerful wake-up calls for our ministry to engage in church planting while at the same time continuing with our crusades. We have understood that combining the planting of churches with our crusades provides a more lasting soul-winning effect in the communities we visit, and have better placed us to fulfil the Lord's instruction in Matthew 28:18-20. Our denomination has adopted from the LCI's system for missions key factors such as administrative systems, using lay ministry and exposing our potential church planters to the doctrine of loyalty. In 2007, around fifty lay church planters for our church were instructed by key ministers of the LCI. As at 2012, the CEM has planted 153 churches with 90 percent of the planters being lay pastors (verbal communications, 2012).

The observations by such key charismatic church leaders demonstrate how the LCI's emphasis on church planting has changed their mindset for Christian ministry.

Furthermore, all the respondents said they had adopted aspects of the LCI church planting model in their own church planting activities with the LCI founder's teachings on working for God and the doctrine of loyalty and disloyalty delivered through written and audio-visual materials being the aspects of the LCI church planting model that have been most adopted. Other aspects of the LCI church planting model that the majority of respondents said their churches had adopted were the hands-on approach to training church leaders (10 out of 11 respondents), the principle of combining secular work with church planting or the Lay Ministry (7 out of 11 respondents) and the principle of constructing church halls as a tool for effective church planting (6 out of 11 respondents). The least adopted aspects of the LCI model were the principle of effective supervision and monitoring of church planting activities (2 out of 11 respondents) and the Octopuschurch strategy (1 respondent).

Whereas a majority of the respondents indicated that the non-adoption of the LCI's administrative and supervisory systems was a reflection of a relatively early developmental stage of their church planting efforts, they had not incorporated the Octopus strategy because of lack of clarity on that aspect (introduced in 2004, the Octopus church strategy of the LCI has not received much external publicity).

All but one of the respondents indicated that the LCI model has been a cardinal part of preparation of their potential church planters. Asked about their experiences from teaching on the doctrine of loyalty and disloyalty as part of their church's expansion efforts, all the respondents indicated that it has resulted in church growth, and nine respondents said it had resulted in church stability and effective church planting.

It is clear from the analysis, therefore, that not only have charismatic leaders who have used the LCI's methods found them helpful, but the model has also been the motivator for initiating their church planting enterprises.

## **6.5 CONCLUSIONS**

While most of the LCI church planters indicated the overall usefulness of the church's methodology, they indicated the need to make it friendlier to the illiterate communities, to increase the number of the initial planters and to offer more initial financial and logistic support.

The analysis of the church planting methodologies of the non-LCI charismatic churches has revealed that they are stronger in such key areas as the provision of adequate and sustained initial financial and logistic support as well as adequate numbers for starting a new church plant.

With regard to charismatic leaders who have been mentored into church planting by the LCI, the analysis has shown that there is the need to increase publicity on the Octopus church planting strategy to enable others to emulate it if they have found it to be beneficial.

On the other hand, overall, the LCI's mission strategies, including the focused teaching on working for God, with emphasis on church planting, lay ministry, and better administrative support systems, the actualization of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and usage of permanent church halls, have combined in the creation of a more productive model. The superior church planting results that LCI has garnered both in Ghana and internationally as compared to its counterparts is a clear manifestation of its model's greater effectiveness. In spite of the few weaknesses detected, there is little doubt that the model is robust and has been able to stand the test of time.

A critical evaluation of the church's model has led to the following conclusions:

1. Its employment has been successful, since it has helped the church to a large extent to achieve its set goals. The LCI has spawned more churches in Ghana and cross-culturally than all the other major charismatic churches in Ghana (see Tables 8b and 11). In the process it has grown in membership from a single location and handful of initial members to a worldwide denomination of more than 1200 churches in 62 countries.
2. The LCI has trained and released more of its members for church planting than all other charismatic groups of churches in Ghana (see Table 10).
3. In particular, key distinctive theological and missiological principles, including the priesthood of all believers, involvement of the laity in missions, emphasis on the Great Commission from the pulpit, efficient administrative and governance structures, as well as innovative policies such as the Octopus strategy and the construction and ownership of permanent church halls, have served as the foundation pillars that have resulted in the LCI's model being much stronger and productive than those of other charismatic churches.

4. The evaluation has also demonstrated clearly that the LCI's church planting model has been undergirded not only by pragmatism, but also by sound and acceptable biblical and theological principles.

The following reflections by Archbishop Nicholas Duncan-Williams, the founder of contemporary Ghanaian charismatic (Asamoah-Gyadu, 2005:96-98) at a Pastors and Church Leaders Conference in February 2013, are a clear attestation to the work the LCI has done to expand the church of God, and atestimony to the effectiveness of its model:

Over the years I have observed the unparalleled church multiplication work of Bishop Dag in Ghana, especially among us, the charismatics. We at Action have found his administrative set-ups and the numerous church buildings across the country very revealing. Now that we are ready to plunge aggressively into starting more churches ourselves, we have decided to adopt more of the LCI's methods (2013).

This chapter has provided the research data for this work and a comparative analysis of the models used by the LCI and other major charismatic churches in Ghana. It has become clear that the LCI's church planting model has been more effective in achieving its goals than the strategies employed by these other bodies. It is also evident that not only mere rationality has informed the processes of the model, but also biblical and theological principles have been given careful consideration. The researcher will proceed to discuss the conclusions and recommendations emanating from this research work in the final chapter.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **7.0 INTRODUCTION**

This study began as an enquiry into the church planting activities of the LCI with the aim of documenting the processes and principles underlying the church's mission. It was proposed that an empirical analysis of the LCI's strategies might benefit a number of the newer churches that are struggling to find their feet. These churches, particularly those within the charismatic tradition, might learn from the LCI and thereby contribute to the spread of the Gospel of Christ. The LCI itself would achieve a new self-understanding that would carry it into the future. In this chapter, in addition to making a broad summary of the findings, we seek to draw certain conclusions and make some recommendations in line with our objectives. Finally, areas for further research will be suggested.

#### **7.1 WHAT ARE THE MAIN CONCLUSIONS?**

##### **7.1.1 Fulfilling the Great Commission must be the Primary Preoccupation of the Charismatic Church in Ghana.**

The study has clearly revealed that this has been the case with the LCI. Not only is the Great Commission's fulfilment embedded in the LCI's mission statement, namely "to make available all resources for the advancement of the gospel and the fulfilment of the Great Commission" (LCI Constitution – Church Government Manual, 2012), but the evidence from the study has disclosed that from its neonatal stage of development this Christian denomination has pursued its realization. Jesus' command to make disciples of all nations may have to be on the top of the pile of the church's agenda, not just an addendum, neither just a convenient embellishment to make the church look and sound spiritual. It is a serious business that must be given serious attention. This, we believe, is what Jesus meant by His command to "*keep on working in this business until I come*" (Luke 19:13, emphasis mine), meaning the church must be engrossed passionately in the actualization of this mandate with spirit, body and soul. Jesus' intention here is very clearly a command challenging some people who had lost their focus to recommit to it (Luke 19:11). The lamentation of the proponents of the *Cape*



*Town Commitment* (2010:15) with regards to the need to fulfil the Great Commission is most apt and should jolt the worldwide church into vigorous church planting:

We confess with great shame that there are still very many peoples in the world who have never yet heard the message of God's love in Jesus Christ. We renew the commitment that has inspired the Lausanne Movement from its beginning, to use every means possible to reach all peoples with the gospel.

As noted rightly by Goheen, the church's function is to participate in God's mission, emphasizing that "*we are to be caught up in God's own work of restoration and healing. This defines the identity and role of the church*" (2011:19, emphasis mine).

### **7.1.2 Church Planting is the Principal Strategy for Expanding the Kingdom of God.**

The study has shown that from a single church in 1988, the LCI over a 25 year period has expanded its frontiers, and thus the kingdom of God, to more than 1200 locations in 62 different countries. This has been achieved through conscious, systematic and relentless planting of churches. If disciples must be made globally as Jesus instructed the church to do (Matt 28:19-20, Luke 24:47), then the best agency that must be deployed is church planting. This indeed is the best way for souls to be won, taught, and baptized to become adherents of Jesus Christ. The words of J.D. Payne (2009:4) quoted earlier in Chapter Six give strong support to this view.

Other Christian enterprises which line up with biblical teachings including care for the needy, provision of health care (Matt 25:35-36, 41-42) and Christian establishments including colleges and universities, important as they are, must not be allowed to supplant the aggressive pursuance of the Great Commission through church planting.

### **7.1.3 Persistent and Sustained Vision-Casting from Christian Pulpits is the Key to Raising up Church Planters.**

This has been amply shown by the LCI example. Its founder has made the subject of the Great Commission and its associated need for church planting his main focus over the years. This has resulted in an ever-increasing number of members who are eager and ready to engage in church planting. God's sheep hear the voice of their shepherds (John 10:3) and are greatly influenced by what they teach them (Romans 10:17). A lot of time, energy and attention must therefore be given to the teaching from the pulpit on

soul winning, and the need for Christians to urgently rescue lost humanity from eternal hell (Rev 20:12-15). Charismatic churches in Ghana should desist from over-emphasizing the teachings on prosperity, divine blessings, deliverance and personal well-being. Rather, biblical teachings such as Christian sacrifice and suffering (Matt 16:24; Phil 1:29) must be trumpeted from Christian platforms to enable congregants to develop the needed mindset for undertaking Christian missions.

#### **7.1.4 The Doctrine of the Priesthood of all Believers and the Deployment of the Laity for Church Planting are Potent Tools for the Expansion of God’s kingdom.**

This research has highlighted the strong reliance of the LCI on its laity for planting churches. The church has successfully conscientized its congregants with the doctrine that all Christians are called to minister. Indeed the application of this biblical teaching (1 Pet 2:9; Rev 1:6) by the church will greatly circumvent one of the post-modern challenges of church planting, the lack of ready labourers. Jesus said the harvest is abundant, but the harvesters are few (Matt 9:37-38). More labourers are therefore needed, but the propensity of most churches to rely on only “professional priests” has proven rather to be counter-productive. We need both types of ministers to put their hands to the plough. Asamoah-Gyadu (2011: 55) echoes this assertion:

Nowhere in the New Testament is the Christian ministry presented as the preserve of the ordained...From the viewpoint of Scripture, this means that *ministry is expected to be a shared enterprise* as Paul told the Corinthians: “To each grace has been given for the common good” (1 Cor 12:7, emphasis mine).

The laity can teach, preach, evangelize and lead churches. What the mission leaders need to do is to equip them for the task of soul winning and leading churches (Eph 4:11-12). The “pew warmers” should be mobilised and empowered to bring the warmth they have gathered to ignite the fire of evangelism and church planting.

#### **7.1.5 Loyalty as a Necessary Foundation for the Expansion of the Kingdom of God**

This study has shown that the LCI sees the quality of faithfulness as an indispensable partner for expanding the kingdom of God through church planting, especially in the context of the development of a denomination. The biblical injunction is that stewards must exhibit faithfulness or loyalty in the discharge of their duties. Both Jesus and the

apostles were emphatic on this point (Luke 16:12-13, 1 Cor 4:2, 1 Tim 3:10, II Timothy 2:2).

Church planters who have been sent on missions should not only be able to execute that agenda, it is also important for them to understand and fully comply with the carefully thought-out biblical and pragmatic vision of the sending agency. They must thus be loyal or faithful to this overall vision. Jesus was an example: having been sent by the father, He exhibited loyalty to Him. He emphasized to his hearers that not only had He come to do the will of His Father, but also He was limiting His ministry to only those things He saw the Father Himself doing (Jn 5:19,30). He demonstrated His harmony with the vision and purpose of His Father by stating that “for the very work that the *Father has given me* to finish, and which *I am doing*, testifies that the Father *has sent me*” (Jn 5:36, emphasis mine). The example of Christ therefore teaches that those who have been sent must endeavour to implement and sustain the ideals of their senders. As elaborated in Chapter Two, it is important for those who have been called by God for His work to also be faithful to the human and institutional vessels that God has delegated His authority to, always being mindful, however, that the authority of church leaders is never absolute authority but only delegated authority from the Head of the church, Jesus Himself.

This study has revealed that the canker of disloyalty to the denominational vision of the mission leaders of the charismatic churches in Ghana by some of their church planters has had an overall inimical and unprogressive effect on their attempts to expand the kingdom of God. The frequent church splits which invariably are accompanied by animosity, disunity and breakdown in loving Christian brotherhood do not help the course of Christ. Mission leaders and practitioners must strive to bear fruits for the Lord whilst at the same time remembering that “the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace” (Jas 3:18). This peace and unity of purpose (1 Cor 1:10) are necessary ingredients for concentrating on the important task of bringing the lost into the kingdom. We are not advocating blind loyalty; there should be room for theological, missiological and other differences between the sender and the sent. However, it is important in such instances to emulate the apostolic example (Acts 15), which did not only ensure resolution of conflicts but also safeguarded the ongoing spread of the gospel. This researcher is in total consonance with Heward-Mills (2005:15) when he says “what I can say for sure is that without principled and loyal pastors the ministry of our Lord will always be limited”.

### **7.1.6 Permanent Church Halls Promote Church Planting**

The study has disclosed that generally the charismatic church in Ghana exists in temporary structures, most of which are rented or poorly constructed. This has been a limiting and decelerating factor for charismatic missions. Factors including the unwholesome ambience, suspicion, sense of instability and insecurity for the future render such churches unattractive to the unchurched, especially those of the middle and upper social classes. Overall, such charismatic congregations have the propensity for chronic stagnation and eventual collapse.

It is abundantly clear from the study that the LCI's well thought-out mission strategy of progressively constructing or acquiring permanent church halls for its new church plants has eliminated the pitfalls associated with impermanent meeting locations (see Chapter Five) and has been greatly effective in promoting the denomination's expansion efforts. It is important to add that this ingredient in the LCI's model has no scriptural justification; however, it has proved to be a useful pragmatic strategy.

The adoption of this strategic policy by the churches of the charismatic leaning in Ghana will undoubtedly improve their fortunes in missions. This, however, will require vision, determination and especially the prudent management of church finances. The often gleefully trumpeted excuse that the poor African economy has affected the financial resources of the church and thus thwarted church building projects is no longer plausible. David Kpobi (2008:172) disclosed that overall, the church in Ghana has benefited from the improved economic conditions that emanated from the Economic Recovery Programme (ERP) initiated in 1986 by the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) of Jerry Rawlings (the then head of Ghana's military government) with support from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Kpobi(2008:173) argues correctly that

The churches in Ghana, particularly in the urban centres, have been beneficiaries of a new prosperity introduced by the improved economic circumstances of the nation. Since the beginning of the 1990s therefore, the churches as institutions have been relatively well-off in economic terms, with annual turnovers sometimes exceeding those of some big industrial and commercial concerns. One significant outcome of the increasing prosperity has been the increasing opulence and extravagance not only on the part of the churches but also more atrociously on the part of their leadership. Many church leaders acquired new and often worldly lifestyles as they sought to enter the ranks of the prosperous or successful, if not of the rich and famous.

Kpobi's assertion is not only revealing but a correct reflection of the undue emphasis on the prosperity gospel by some charismatic churches as was alluded to in Chapter Six. It is therefore safe to conclude that, if the mission leaders of the Ghanaian charismatic church will shy away from personal opulence and extravagance, a charge that it has been associated with as noted in Chapter Six, and appropriately channel the improved church finances into development, the construction or acquisition of permanent church premises will materialise – a needed ingredient to boost charismatic missions in the 21st Century.

As amply demonstrated in the study, charismatic missions have been undermined severely by the lack of permanent meeting structures. We are not advocating for expensive edifices at the neglect of other important ecclesiastical ministries, including caring for the poor and needy (Matt 25:41-45). The point being emphasized is that the church needs stability to develop in order for it to be able to carry out its ministries of soul-winning, developing spiritual maturity, social ministries and mission. Permanent church buildings can play an important role towards achieving these goals.

#### **7.1.7 Initiating New Church Plants is Accelerated by Team Launch and Adequate Financial and Logistical Support by the Mother Church.**

The study has demonstrated that new churches grow faster and achieve self-sufficiency earlier when the parenting church sends groups of people to start the daughter churches, and also provides adequate financial and logistical support. When this happens, the new church's initial burdens, including prayer, evangelism and pastoral care, are shared. In addition, with sufficient welfare the planters become more focused and channel all their energies into the new endeavour. Churches such as the LCI, whose model deploys "lone rangers" to start new church plants, and also provides minimal initial financial and logistical support, have shown inferior results. They have also failed to adhere to clear biblical teachings that full-time church workers must be provided for, as discussed in Chapter Six. Their daughter churches exhibit tardy growth, and their planters get demoralized, sometimes resulting in the abandonment of the mission. The reality is that it takes time for a new mission to mature and become self-supporting. Two years of committed support by the mother church seems realistic. Malphurs (2004: 262), for example, observes that the average time for a church to become self-supporting appears

to be somewhere between twenty to thirty months. The median time would be closer to twenty months.

Recruiting volunteers to assist the lead church planter is crucial. One way to ensure availability of support teams is through continuous casting of the church planting vision through the church's different platforms—normal worship services, leadership conferences, and camp meetings. Malphurs(2004:260) shares this view. In suggesting the methodology of recruiting congregants to be involved in a launch team, he notes:

... indeed, the church will have cast the vision so well that people in the congregation are looking forward to becoming involved in a church plant to reach unchurched lost people.

Group ministry is in line with New Testament examples. Both Jesus and Paul ministered with others (Matt 10:1; Mark 3:13-15; Luke 9:1-2; Acts 13:2-6; Rom 16; Phil 4:7-17). The charismatic churches should therefore incorporate this approach into their mission strategy.

### **7.1.8 Church Planting Requires Efficient Governance and Administrative Support Systems**

Another important conclusion from the study is the role played by good organizational structures within the LCI denomination. The well-defined and well-connected structure ensures accountability at all levels of operation and promotes teamwork and a team spirit among the leadership as well as evoking confidence in the membership towards achieving the objectives of the church. All the processes that are involved in church planting, from the vision to the actual parturition, must be guided by a good leadership structure and oiled by an efficient administrative setup. A biblical example shows that the churches were planned, executed and overseen by apostolic leadership (Acts 11; 13; 15). They chose people for the planting, strengthened the churches, appointed elders and settled conflicts. The contemporary charismatic churches should emulate such biblical patterns.

The study has shown unequivocally that there is a veritable vacuum in the missiopraxis of the churches of the charismatic strand in Ghana in these areas. This weakness must be overcome if charismatic missions are to succeed in the 21st century. In particular, this group of Christian denominations must move away from the one-man leadership style to an all-encompassing governance system. Church leaders with the requisite spirituality and experience in missions must be commissioned to oversee the

mission enterprise. The New Testament example is clear that churches were started and governed by established apostolic/elder leadership (Acts 13:1-3; 15:1-4; Titus 1:5). Such apostolic leadership (referring to the visionary and supervisory mission leaders, be they bishops, apostles, prophets, senior pastors or even mature lay elders) is necessary to provide the needed direction, training and practical expertise for mission work, and also ensures the safeguarding of the overall vision of the church as well as resolution of conflicts, differences and misunderstandings that may arise. All this is essential to guarantee a healthy, cohesive and biblical church expansion work.

This biblical example functions in the LCI set-up. Its Bishops Council, comprising bishops, apostles and prophets, carries out these biblical roles, a situation that has both promoted and strengthened its church planting work.

Of equal importance is the creation of an efficient administrative set-up. This must include buildings, well-trained and educated managers and appropriate office equipment. A competent and resourceful mission administration serves as the needle eye through which the following questions are threaded: “What is happening at our missions? Have we provided all that is needed? How well are we doing? Are our systems and principles being complied with? What challenges must be addressed, and to whom should we direct these challenges?”

While it is difficult to pinpoint direct theological underpinnings to support the need for administrative systems, this researcher believes that it is a pragmatic and strategic missiological requirement. Additionally, the presence of such gifts as those of administration (1 Cor 12:28) could indicate their need for such purposes in the church of God. Overall, an effective mission administration plays a prominent role in determining healthy missions.

The LCI’s church planting model has sufficiently satisfied these two prerequisites and can serve as a worthy example for other charismatic churches in Ghana.

#### **7.1.9 Church Planting Models must be predicated on Biblical and Theological Principles.**

The vision for the winning and restoration of lost humanity into God’s kingdom does not have its origin from any human heart or mind. It is and will ever remain God’s own mission—the *Missio Dei*. Consequently, the whys, hows, whens and wheres of the

church's missionary endeavours must be firmly inspired, motivated and guided by a proper and acceptable understanding and interpretation of the Word of God. Not only does God promise to lead and guide us but He expects the church to depend on His inspired Word for guidance and preparation for all Christian endeavours (Ps 32:8; 2 Tim 3:16). All of this points to the fact that sound biblical and theological convictions and principles must undergird the missiopraxis of the charismatic churches in Ghana. In other words, developing an appropriate mission theology should not be seen as decorative but rather an imperative. Such an approach will shield the charismatic churches from initiating missions out of sheer rationality, competitiveness, parochialism and contemporary secular business trends. As Payne (2009:5) cogently points out in his definition of biblical church planting,

The first obvious and most significant component of this definition is that biblical church planting has a *biblical* foundation. The Scriptures are our source of guidance for doctrine and practice. *Church planters who fail to base their theological framework on the Bible tread on the shifting sands of contemporary fads, trends and whims* (emphasis mine)

Therefore, there must be a necessary marriage between the desire and zeal for expanding God's kingdom through missions, and appropriate biblical theology; one cannot do without the other. Christopher Wright (2010:20) endorses this thinking:

There should be no theology that does not relate to the mission of the church—either by being generated out of the church's mission or by inspiring and shaping it. And there should be no mission of the church carried on without deep theological roots in the soil of the Bible... No theology without missional impact; no mission without theological foundations.

The study has clearly demonstrated that the LCI has fulfilled these paramount demands by these outstanding missiologists. There is no doubt that both the motivation for kingdom expansion and the strategic components of the LCI's model for executing this mission, namely the emphasis on fulfilling the Great Commission, the priesthood of all believers and the involvement of the laity, the doctrine of loyalty, the principles of ministerial formation and governance structures have *deep theological roots in the soil of the Bible*, to borrow the words of Wright.



## **7.2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

In view of the findings, analyses and conclusions we now make the following recommendations to assist both the LCI and other charismatic churches in general to make up for their weaknesses and drawbacks as well as to encourage them in the areas of strengths and achievements.

### **7.2.1 Recommendations for LCI**

**i.** In the first place, it is recommended that the leadership of the LCI should seek ways of ensuring that the spirit of church planting is maintained as a crucial principle of fulfilling the Great Commission. As the study revealed, the presence of more churches often ensures that the Word is preached and lives are changed through the preaching of the Word. The various methods and strategies that have been found to contribute positively to the work of the mission ought to be jealously encouraged and exported to other churches. These include the provision of church buildings, mentoring and training programmes and teachings on loyalty to God and His delegated authority. The use of the laity in ministry, being one of the greatest strengths of the LCI church planting efforts, should continue to be employed for maximum benefits.

**ii.** It is also recommended that the weakness identified in the study regarding the provision of adequate human and material resources for church planters be taken seriously and addressed appropriately. More persons may have to be assigned to the planting of churches in order to reduce the stress imposed on a few workers in the field. This may call for seeking more volunteers to become assistants to the trained church planters. The LCI is one of the churches currently attracting significant numbers of young adults. This should be an opportunity to use more young people in this area to yield better results for the church's mission.

**iii.** The discovery that the LCI pays less attention to the local conditions in their areas of operation ought to be addressed urgently. It is recommended that a special study should be instituted into the matter and the findings and recommendations from this study used to introduce change in that area. The LCI may not need to abandon its use of the English language as the main means of communication, but might also find it necessary to accelerate the training of some church planters in the use of local dialects. The church might even need to use persons with substantial knowledge of traditional and other world religions.

**iv.** It is recommended that the LCI incorporates more full-time church workers who would devote more time to Christian ministry to overcome the challenges that confront the church's lay ministry.

**v.** It is also recommended that the LCI continues to deepen the theological education of its lay and full-time church planters. It is important that the church's church planting and other ministries are grounded in sound biblical and theological understandings. However, it is equally important for such theological education not to evolve into mere academic enterprise; rather it must always aim to provide the necessary scriptural, spiritual, pragmatic and missiological instructions that will transform the members into effective ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

**vi.** There is little doubt that quite a number of charismatic churches have been influenced by the LCI's church planting zeal, methods and strategies and that many are even employing some of these methods in their own mission and ministry. This places a burden on the LCI to assume the role of a mentor institution for those churches that are willing to benefit from it. It is necessary to formalize such mentorship and make room for it at various areas and stages of the LCI's own activities.

### **7.2.2 Recommendations for Charismatic Churches**

**i.** The charismatic churches in Ghana must recognize the Great Commission as their *raison d'être*. Therefore, it should consider promoting this imperative vigorously among its congregations and mobilise all resources towards achieving this mandate. In particular, it will be helpful for members of charismatic denominations to be mobilised and equipped to help with the massive harvest (Eph 4:11-13).

**ii.** In view of the observations made in the study regarding the usefulness of permanent church halls in promoting church planting, it is recommended that the charismatic churches in Ghana endeavour to add this factor to their mission strategy. It is a practical need, not a biblical and theological requirement. The denomination acting as a corporate entity could direct and finance these projects centrally. This can be achieved by pooling financial resources from all the churches within the particular denomination towards building projects. This would fulfil the biblical injunction for equitable distribution of God's blessings among Christians (2 Cor 8:13-15). A central development office may have to be set up with qualified administrators to implement, supervise and monitor the decisions of the denominational leaders concerning building projects.

**iii.** Charismatic churches must develop a wellthought-out biblical and theologically based mission strategy. This must cover issues including the vision and mission of the church, recruitment, preparation of church planters and clear guidelines regarding the sending, support, supervision, monitoring, further development of new plants and conflict resolution. Adequate theological and biblical training should be provided for both the managers and practitioners to be well educated in God's way of undertaking church planting.

**iv.** A mission department with a mission director as its principal officer is also recommended. This department must be properly equipped with trained managers and logistics to enable it to function well. Its responsibilities would include sending, support, supervision and monitoring of all aspects of the mission enterprise. It must receive feedback from the mission fields, serving as a liaison between the missionaries and mission leaders.

**v.** It is also recommended that charismatic churches develop well-defined governance institutions. The denominational organizational structure must be clear, with experienced and spiritual leaders placed in charge of the different aspects of the denomination. The mode of appointment or selection of such leaders must be transparent and their responsibilities clearly defined. A leadership succession policy must be put in place to safeguard the overall future of the ministry.

**vi.** Charismatic churches must establish good administrative systems, which will serve as the engine of the mission enterprise. Departments including the denominational office (serving as the custodian of all data to monitor all denominational affairs), mission directorate, finance and development among others, should be set up. In particular, the activities of the different facets of the denomination's ministry must be documented and stored securely to serve as the basis for performance appraisals, history and research.

**vii.** Finally, charismatic churches could incorporate the doctrine of loyalty in their ministerial formation curriculum. As shown by the LCI, this could limit the canker of church splits. Included in the statement of loyalty must be clearly defined principles that will guide steps that should be implemented in instances where mutually desirable separation is necessary. The kingdom of God should be expanded, but while doing this, mission practitioners should endeavour to preserve the unity of the brotherhood and the Spirit at all times (Eph 4:3, 1 Pet 2:17, 3:8-9).

### **7.3 Suggestions for Further Research**

It is obvious that the scope of this research is limited because of its pioneering nature. It will be useful for further research to be undertaken in these areas:

1. Evaluation of the processes of Christian discipleship in LCI
2. The role of apostolic leadership in charismatic missions
3. The concept of loyalty and its perceived impact on charismatic missions
4. The impact of appropriate governance systems on charismatic missions
5. The impact of administrative systems on charismatic missions
6. The question of leadership in Ghanaian charismatism
7. A comparative study of the mission theologies of contemporary Ghanaian charismatic churches.
8. The question of theological education versus ministerial formation in 21<sup>st</sup> century charismatism.

We believe that, since the evidence seems to suggest that not much academic work has so far been undertaken with regards to this religious brand in Ghana, especially in the area of missions, these suggested areas of research could help not only to unravel the nature of what already exists but also provide the needed foundations to promote and strengthen charismatic missions.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aboagye, M. 1993. Mission and Democracy in Africa: The Problem of Ethnocentrism. *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 17.
- Addae-Mensah, M. 2000. *Walking in the Supernatural Power of God: Thrilling Testimonies about Supernatural Encounters with God*. Ontario: Guardian Books.
- Agbeti, J.K. 1986. *West African Church History: Christian Missions and Church Foundations 1482-1919*. Leiden: Brill Publishers.
- Agyin-Asare, C. 1999. *Rooted and Built Up in Him: Things that make Sound Doctrine*. Accra: Miracle Publications.
- Agyin-Asare, C. 2004. *Pastors Protocol*. Florida, USA: Xulon Press.
- Agyin-Asare, C. 2009. *Evangelism Crusade Planning and Church Planting*. Accra: Rhotchets Ltd.
- Alexander, T.D. and Baker, D.W., eds. 2003. *Dictionary of the Old Testament Pentateuch*. Leicester: Inter Varsity Press.
- Anim, E. 2003. Who Wants To Be A Millionaire: An Analysis of Prosperity Teaching in the Charismatic Ministries (Churches) in Ghana and its Wider Impact. Ph.D. Dissertation, Open University, UK.
- Ansah, E. 2012. *My Journey with the Charismatics*. Spintex, Accra: Smartline Publishers.
- Arn, W. 1984. Mass Evangelism: The Button Line., In Win Arn, ed., *The Pastor's Church Growth Handbook*, Vol 1. Pasadena, CA: Church Growth Press.
- Asamoah-Gyadu, K. 2004. *African Charismatics: Current Development within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*. Leiden, Netherlands: Brill Academic Publishers.
- Asamoah-Gyadu, K. 2011. *Strange Warmth – Wesleyan Perspectives on Ministry, Renewal and Discipleship*. Accra: Asempa Publishers.
- Bandoh, S.E. 2012. Transforming Lives Through Christian Mission: A case study of Lighthouse Chapel International Social Ministry. M.Th. Dissertation, Trinity Theological Seminary, Legon, Accra.
- Barna, G. 1988. *Marketing the Church*. Colorado Springs, CO: Navpress.
- Barker, P. & Boadi-Siaw, S. 2005. *Changed by the Word: The Story of Scripture Union Ghana*. Bangalore: Bangalore Offset Printers.
- Bavinck J.H. 1979. *An Introduction to the Science of Missions*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company.
- Becker, Paul, & Williams M. 1999. *The Dynamic Daughter Church Planting Handbook*. Oceanside, CA: Dynamic Church Planting International.
- Bonnke, R. 2010. Living a Life of Fire [DVD].
- Bosch, D. 1991. *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shift in Theology of Mission*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
- Bradshaw, M. 1969. *Church Growth through Evangelism-in-Depth*. South Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library.

- Buehler, H.G. 1973. "Nominality Considered: A Survey of Contemporary Thinking" Doctor of Missiology Thesis, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena.
- Cassidy, M. 1976. "Limitations of Mass Media Evangelism and its Potentialities" *International Review of Missions*, Vol. 65 (258 April): 202-216.
- CEM. 2012. Denominational Office Branch Policy Document.
- Cho, D.Y. 1981. *Successful Home Cell Groups*. North Brunswick, NJ: Bridge-Logos Publishers.
- Chaney, C. 1991. *Church Planting At the End of the Twentieth Century*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers Inc.
- Cox, H. 1996. *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first Century*. London: Cassell.
- Debrunner, H. 1967. *A History of Christianity in Ghana*. Accra: Waterville Publishing House.
- De Diétrich, S. 1954. "You Are My Witnesses": A Study of the Church's Witness. *Interpretation* 8:278.
- Dempster, M. et al., eds. 1991. *Called and Empowered: Global Mission in Pentecostal Perspective*. Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House.
- Dovlo, E. Associate Professor and Vice Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Ghana: Legon.
- Duncan-Williams, N. 2002. *Binding the Strong Man*. Florida: Pneuma Life.
- Duncan-Williams, N. 2003. *Destined to Make an Impact*. Pittsburg: Pneuma Life.
- Duncan-Williams, N. 2013. Pastors and Church Leaders Conference, Philadelphia. [CD].
- Fanning, D. 2009. *Trends and Issues in Mission*, Paper 6.
- Foli, R. 2006. *Christianity In Ghana: A Comparative Church Growth Study*. Accra: Trust Publications.
- Frost M. & Hirsch A. 2003. *The Shaping of Things to Come: Innovation and Mission for the 21st-Century Church*. Peabody, MA: Henderickson Publishers.
- Gifford, P. 2004. *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing African Economy*. London: C. Hurst & Co. Ltd.
- Goheen, M.W. 2011. *A Light to the Nations: The Missional Church and the Biblical History*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic.
- Gonzalez, J. 2001. *Acts: The Gospel of the Spirit*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
- Gospel Light International Church (GLIC) Gospel Marines Unpublished Manual.
- Green, M. 1990. The Principle of God's Sovereignty. *Criswell Theological Review* 5(1):172-73.
- Guder, L.D., ed. 1998. *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Guthrie, S. 1992. Outreach in Mexico City district is a big deal to its evangelicals. *World Pulse*, Vol. 27 (3 February).
- Hadaway, C.K. 2003. *Mission Funding and Fundraising in Episcopal Dioceses*. New York: Episcopal Church Center.

- Hadaway, K. 1991. *Church Growth Principles: Separating Fact from Fiction*. Nashville, TN: Broadman Press.
- Hanson, S. 2002. *A History of Pentecostalism in Ghana 1902-2002*. Accra: Graphix Heritage.
- Hale, T. 2003. *On Being a Missionary*. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library Pub.
- Hengel, M. 1983. *Between Jesus and Paul*. Trans. John Bowden. Philadelphia: Fortress Press.
- Heward-Mills, D. 1998a. *Anagkazo, the Compelling Power*. Dansoman, Accra: Parchment House.
- Heward-Mills, D. 1998b. *Backsliding*. Dansoman, Accra: Parchment House.
- Heward-Mills, D. 2001. *Win The Lost At Any Cost*. Dansoman, Accra: Parchment House.
- Heward-Mills, D. 2005. *Loyalty and Disloyalty*. Dansoman, Accra: Parchment House.
- Heward-Mills, D. 2007. *Church Planting*. Dansoman, Accra: Parchment House.
- Heward-Mills, D. 2008a. *Tell Them*. Dansoman, Accra: Parchment House.
- Heward-Mills, D. 2008b. *Remembrance*. Wellington, S. Africa: Lux Verbi.
- Heward-Mills, D. 2008c. *Lay People & the Ministry*. Wellington, S. Africa: Lux Verbi.
- Heward-Mills, D. 2008d. *The Mega Church: How to Make Your Church Grow*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Wellington, South Africa: Lux Verbi.
- Heward-Mills, D. 2009. *Many Are Called*. Dansoman, Accra: Parchment House.
- Heward-Mills, D. 2010. *Church Growth... It is Possible*. Accra: Parchment House.
- Heward-Mills, D. 2011a. *Sacrificing, Losing and Dying*. Accra: Parchment House.
- Heward-Mills, D. 2011b. *How You Can Be in the Perfect Will of God*. Dansoman, Accra: Parchment House.
- Heward-Mills, D. 2011c. *Remembrance: Those Who Forget*. Accra: Parchment House.
- Heward-Mills, D. 2011d. *Those Who Leave You*. Accra: Parchment House.
- Heward-Mills, D. 2012. *The Art of Following*. Accra: Parchment House.
- Hinn, B. 1990. *Seven Steps to the Anointing*. [DVD]. Rhema Bible Church, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- Hodges, L.M. 1973. *A Guide to Church Planting and Development*. Chicago: Moody Press.
- Howard, K.W. 2005. *Reaching the Unchurched: A Research Review*. Darnestown, MD: St. Nicholas Church.
- Howard, K.W. 2005. *Church Planting and Congregational Growth: A Research Review*. Darnestown, MD: St. Nicholas Church.
- ICGC. 2004. Mission Policy Document.
- Koduah, A. 2004. *Christianity in Ghana Today*. Accra: Church of Pentecost.
- Kpobi, D.N.A. 2008. *Mission in Ghana: The Ecumenical Heritage*, Accra: Asempa Publishers.
- Küng, H. 1976. *The Church*. Garden City, NY: Image Books.

- Lamarche, R. & Andres, P. 1966. *The Salvation of the Gentile and the Prophets*. Baltimore: Helicon.
- Larbi, K. 2001. *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*. Dansoman, Accra: Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies.
- Lay Pastors' Camp Meeting, 2010, Switzerland. [CD].
- Lausanne Occasional Papers. 1989. #26 *Radio in Mission*. Charlotte, NC: Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization.
- Lifeway Research. 2008. *What Adults Search for When Switching Churches*. Nashville, TN: Lifeway Christian Resources.
- Lighthouse Chapel International. 2012. *The LCI Constitution – Church Government Manual*. Dansoman, Accra: Parchment House.
- Logan, R. 1989. *Beyond Church Growth*. Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming & Revell.
- Lohfink, G. 1984. *Jesus and Community: The Social Dimension of the Christian Faith*. Trans. John P. Galvin. Philadelphia: Fortress Press.
- Malphurs, A. 2004. *Planting Growing Churches for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Comprehensive Guide for New Churches and Those Desiring Renewal*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books.
- Martin-Achard, R. 1962. *A Light to the Nations: A Study of the Old Testament Conception of Israel's Mission to the World*. Trans. John Penney Smith. London: Oliver and Boyd.
- Mathews, E. 2001. Mass Evangelism: Problems and Potentials. *Journal of Applied Missiology*. Volume 4(1). Texas: Abilene Christian University.
- McGavran, D. 1965. *Church Growth and Christian Mission*. New York: Harper & Row.
- McGavran, D. 1967. Imperialism and Church Multiplication. *Church Growth Bulletin* Vol. III, p. 225.
- McGavran, D., ed. 1972. *Crucial Issues in Missions Tomorrow*. Chicago: Moody Press.
- McNamara, R. & Davis, K. 2005. *The Y-B-H Handbook of Church Planting: A Practical Guide to Church Planting (Yes, But How?)*. USA: Xulon Press.
- Mills-Odoi, A. 2008. *The History of the Lighthouse Chapel International*. M.Th. Dissertation, Trinity Theological Seminary, Legon, Accra.
- Mills-Odoi, L. 2008. *The Concept of Miracles*. M.Th. Dissertation, Trinity Theological Seminary, Legon, Accra.
- Newbigin, L. 1987. *Mission in Christ's Way: Bible Studies*. Geneva: World Council of Churches.
- Ntumy, M. 2000. *An Assessment of the Growth and Development of the Church of Pentecost with Particular Reference to its Impact on the Religious Life of Ghana*. M.Th. Dissertation, Regents Theological Seminary, UK.
- Otabil, M. 2002. *Four Laws of Productivity: God's foundation for Living*. Maryland: Pneuma Life Publishing Inc.
- Payne, J.D. 2009. *Discovering Church Planting: An Introduction to the Whats, Whys and Hows of Global Church Planting*. Milton Keynes: Authentic Publishing.
- Pobee J.S.. ed. 1976. *Religion in a Pluralistic Society*. Leiden: E.J. Brill.



- Reeves, R. D. & Jenson, R. 1984. *Always Advancing: Modern Strategies for Church Growth*. San Bernardino, CA: Here's Life Publishers.
- Redford, J. 1978. *Planting New Churches*. Nashville: Broadman Press.
- Robb, J.B. 1989. *The Power of People Group Thinking*. Monrovia, CA: MARC.
- Saa, S. 2000. *Ethnicity and the Church: The case of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana*. M.Th. thesis, Natal University.
- Scherer, J., 1987. *Gospel, Church, and Kingdom: Comparative Studies in World Mission Theology*. Augsburg Publishing House.
- Schwarz, C.A. 1996. *Natural Church Development: A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches*. Carol Stream, IL: Church Smart Resources.
- Smith, E.C. 1984. *Balanced Church Growth*. Nashville: Broadman Press.
- Stetzer, E.J. 2003. *The Impact of the Church Planting Process and Other Selected Factors on the Attendance of Southern Baptist Church Plants*. Louisville, KY: The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.
- Stetzer, E.J. 2006. *Planting Missional Churches*. Nashville: B& H Publishing Group.
- Stroud, D. 2009. *Planting Churches, Changing Communities*. Milton Keynes: Authentic Media.
- The Cape Town Commitment*. 2010. Cape Town: The Lausanne Movement.
- Towns, E. 2004. "Effective Evangelism View: Church Growth Effectively confronts and penetrates the culture". In Gary McIntosh, ed., *Evaluating the Church Growth Movement: Five Views*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.
- Towns, E. 1995. *A Practical Encyclopedia of Evangelism and Church Growth*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books.
- Unpublished LCI Church Planters' Training Curriculum and Policy Manual.
- Unpublished Archival Records, LCI Denominational Office.
- Unpublished Archival Records, LCI Missions Office.
- Unpublished Archival LCI Executive Board Records.
- Unpublished 'Farmers Camp' notes, June 2006.
- Unpublished 'Maturity Camp' notes, May 2009.
- Unpublished New Believers' School Training Manual.
- Van Rheenen, G. 1996. *Missions: Biblical Foundations and Contemporary Strategies*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.
- VBCI Branch Handbook Policy Document, 2012.
- Wagner, C.P. 1984. *Leading Your Church to Growth*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books.
- Wagner, C.P. 1987. *Strategies for Church Growth*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books.
- Walls, A. 1976. *Towards Understanding Africa's Place in Christian History*. Leiden: E.J. Brill.
- Win, A. 1977. A Church Growth Look at Here's Life America. *Church Growth America*. Vol. 3, p. 430.
- Win, A. ed. 1984. *The Pastor's Church Growth Handbook*. Vol. 1. Pasadena, CA: Church Growth Press.

- Wright, C.2006. *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative*. Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press.
- Wright C. 2010. *The Mission of God's People: A Biblical Theology of the Church's Mission*.Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan.
- [www.churchplanting.net/resources/index.htm](http://www.churchplanting.net/resources/index.htm)  
Date of access: 12 Dec. 2011.
- [www.episcopalchurch.org/newchurch\\_4327\\_ENG\\_HTML.htm](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/newchurch_4327_ENG_HTML.htm) (New Church Planting Models) Date of access: 3 Jan. 2012.
- [www.daghewardmills.org/about-us/history](http://www.daghewardmills.org/about-us/history)  
Date of access: 12 Dec. 2012.
- [www.wikipedia.org/research.guinnessbookofrecords.htm](http://www.wikipedia.org/research.guinnessbookofrecords.htm)  
Date of access: 10 Jan. 2012.
- [www.episcopalchurch.org/newchurch\\_4321\\_ENG\\_HTML.htm](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/newchurch_4321_ENG_HTML.htm) (The Church Planting Process) Date of access: 5 Feb.2012.
- [www.ChurchPlantingVillage.net](http://www.ChurchPlantingVillage.net)  
Date of access: 22 June 2012.
- [www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mission\\_%28Christianity%29](http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mission_%28Christianity%29)  
Date of access: 16 July 2012.
- [www.redeemer2.com/themovement/issues/2004/june/first100.html](http://www.redeemer2.com/themovement/issues/2004/june/first100.html)  
Date of access: 26 Aug.2012.
- [www.dcp.org](http://www.dcp.org)  
Date of access: 17 Sept.2012.

### **Interviews**

- Addy, E. 2012. Verbal communication with Emmanuel Nterful.
- Aidoo, A. 2012. Verbal communication with Emmanuel Nterful.
- Amonoo-Neizer, Y. 2012. Verbal communication with Emmanuel Nterful.
- Aryee, R. 2012. Verbal communication with Emmanuel Nterful.
- Fiadjour, L. 2013. Verbal communication with Emmanuel Nterful.
- Heward-Mills, D. 2012. Verbal communication with Emmanuel Nterful.
- Godwyll, J. 2012. Verbal communication with Emmanuel Nterful.
- Mensah, S. 2012. Verbal communication with Emmanuel Nterful.
- Mould, C. 2013. Verbal communication with Emmanuel Nterful.
- Oddoye, H. 2012. Verbal communication with Emmanuel Nterful.
- Osei, V. 2013. Verbal communication with Emmanuel Nterful.
- Sackey, E.A.T. 2012. Verbal communication with Emmanuel Nterful.
- Sono, M. 2012. Verbal communication with Emmanuel Nterful.

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

ABS	Anagkazo Bible School
KJV	King James Version (this is the preferred version used in the dissertation unless otherwise stated)
NIV	New International Version
CEV	Contemporary English Version
LCI	Lighthouse Chapel International
CWTP	Church Workers Training Programme
GEC	Ghana Evangelism Committee
UGBC	United Group of Branch Churches
IBMC	Independent Mission Branch Churches
IPTP	Informal Pastoral Training Programme
LCI	Lighthouse Chapel International
CEM	Charismatic Evangelistic Ministry
ACI	Action Chapel International
RHCI	Royalhouse Chapel International
FC	Family Chapel
HOPM	House of Prayer Ministries
TOP	Temple of Praise
GRM	Global Revival Ministries
LGM	Living Grace Ministries
CFC	Christian Faith Church
ICGC	International Central Gospel Church
FGC	Fountain Gate Chapel
GLIC	Gospel Light International Church
VBCI	Victory Bible Church International
WMCI	Word Miracle Church International
NOP	Northern Outreach Programme
BSPG	Bible Study and Prayer Group
GPC	Ghana Pentecostal Council
COP	Church Of Pentecost
PVCI	Prayer Visitation Counselling and Interaction
AIC	African Independent/Indigenous Churches
ICC	Independent Charismatic Churches
ACPTP	Advanced Church Planting Training Programme
PCP	Potential Church Planter
DMM	Disciple-Making Minister

PWMS	Proton World Missionary Society
DO	Den/Denominational Office
MNDS	Mature Non-Dependent System
WSC	Worldwide Shuffling Conference
CRI	Calvary Road Incorporated
HJ	Healing Jesus Crusades
PMCs	Permanent Mission Churches
IEMO	Income/Expense Management Office
AMO	Account Management Office
PO	Paraphernalia Office
DLO	Development and Legal Office
USDO	Unity and Spiritual Development Office
CCO	Care and Crisis Office
LO	Loyalty Office
SU	Scripture Union
UK	United Kingdom
DgTP	Dag's Tapes and Publications
C.C.A.L.B.U.D.D	Compassion Centre for the Assistance of the Lame, the Blind, the Under-privileged, the Deaf and Dumb
GAR	Greater Accra Region
BAR	Brong Ahafo Region
AR	Ashanti Region
WR	Western Region
ER	Eastern Region
VR	Volta Region
NR	Northern Region
CR	Central Region
UWR	Upper West Region
UER	Upper East Region
PNDC	Provisional National Defence Council
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ERP	Economic Recovery Programme