

9.0 CHAPTER NINE: EVALUATION AND GENERAL CONCLUSION

9.1 Introduction

This concluding chapter is an evaluation of the core emphases and tendencies expressed in the *Gidan Addu'a* prophet-healing movement. This section considers diagnoses, imprecatory prayers, medication versus prayer-healing, spiritual experiences as participation in the Word of God, as well as emphases and tendencies, challenges and impact, prospects and future, the way forward and the theology of power. The study offers a few suggestions as to the way forward for both the movement and the churches, and the areas for further study.

The *Gidan Addu'a* under study is an indigenously initiated renewal movement formed by lay Charismatic members of a mission-founded church, the Christian Reformed Church of Nigeria (CRCN). The origin of all the *Gidan Addu'a* healing homes is traced to indigenous initiative due to the guide of 'spiritual experiences'. The Charismatic lay leaders altogether claimed to have been called through unique spiritual experiences. *Gidan Addu'a* Charismatic lay leaders have developed a new set of practices for healing, exorcism and other such interventionist ministries through the synthesis of biblical and primal worldviews. In their practices, they present new forms of Christian religious innovation that resonate with traditional notions of mystical causality and ways to respond to its perceived effects on victims. They appealed to their clients to believe in the power of the Holy Spirit and renounce any cultic object of the old religion in order to receive peace and salvation of God.

The Charismatic lay leaders have the understanding of the African (Jukun) spiritual universe. They are rooted in African culture in the sense that they are responding to culturally rooted issues emanating from the realities of life experiences. They attempt to allay the fears of their followers by presenting Jesus Christ as the living power, with authority over Satan, demons, witchcraft, and other cult objects formerly believed to diminish the life-force.

The beliefs and expressions of the Charismatic lay leaders share in the African concept of salvation, which includes healing, success in life, material prosperity and the ability to deal with evil forces here and now.

Almost all the Charismatic lay leaders (except the one led by Bitrus Samaila: see Chapter Seven) keep their clients in their house for a period of time (depending on the perceived depth of the problem) for prayers, fasting, medication and counselling, until the Charismatic

lay leaders perceive that the clients have been healed. They used various elements or objects for healing. After the clients are perceived to have been healed, it is required that they express gratitude to the ministry in cash or kind. They are always encouraged to participate in the ministry's weekday activities.

All the Charismatic lay leaders maintained that their ministry was not a church but a healing home or healing centre. So they encourage their followers to join churches of their choice to further strengthen their faith.

The *Gidan Addu'a* as a movement becomes relevant to the deeply felt needs and aspirations of its followers. Its influence cuts across church denominations – mission-founded, AICs, and Charismatic church bodies as well as African traditional religion adherents. The traditional leadership resists the practices of the Charismatic lay leaders only on the ground of causing social disharmony, for example, through witchcraft accusations and other secret practices. People from various social cadres patronise the ministries because they are at home with the ministries and their needs are being addressed. On the contrary, the Charismatic lay leaders always maintain that the mission-founded churches and bodies, the CRCN, for example, consciously or unconsciously ignored addressing the indigenous and deeply felt concerns of the people. The emphases of the Charismatic lay leaders show that an African convert to the Christian faith is not completely cut off from his or her past.

9.2 Diagnosis

Connected with the 'spiritual experience' and democratisation of the *charismata* is diagnosis. All leaders and their acolytes claim direct commission from God, imparted by dream, or vision, or vocal utterance, or/and trance and confirmed by several signs. The first aspect of the diagnosis often stressed by the *Gidan Addu'a* Charismatic lay leaders is 'discernment'. Discernment here meant a spiritual process which guides in detecting and determining the root cause of a person's misfortune. The Charismatic lay leaders assert that a 'discerning spirit' helps them decipher their client's problem, and it guides them on how to solve the problem. They claimed that discernment gives them the ability to see beyond the natural. The common expression of the Charismatic leaders to their clientele is, 'God speaks to me before, during and after your arrival on what the problem is, why it is there and how to solve it'. An

examination of the assertion often reveals that on some occasions, the practices exhibit similarities with the old religious practices.

This is true of the findings of this study on witchcraft accusations that led to breaches in the family social structure, as well as the consequent trauma, ostracism, discrimination, victimisation and rejection of the alleged witches. Moreover, the Charismatic lay leaders are using similar techniques and styles of diagnosis characteristic of traditional diviners and Charismatic healers. It is difficult to see the shift from the old sources being adequately interpreted for a meaningful understanding of the new faith. Although in Africa a convert from the traditional religion to the Christian faith is not cut off completely from the old, the old is however transformed and reshaped with innovations. The issue is therefore the inadequate conversion of the old elements.

In African traditional religion, spiritists or mediums, like discerners, are capable of detecting evildoers. However, such discerners are always cautious of disclosing the secret to the public during and after the experience. It is equally true that where God revealed evil acts through His servants, the revelation was meant to serve as a deterrent to actual and potential perpetrators. This does not necessarily mean that those who disclose the secret are generally counterfeit discerners. It however becomes a problem when attempts are made to attach and disclose personalities behind them simply for reasons of egoism, personal obsession and self-authentication of spiritual endowment. Jesus Christ had nowhere endorsed the disclosure of alleged perpetrators of evil throughout His ministry. Even if the Holy Spirit guides the Charismatic lay leaders, as they usually claim, there are different contexts and levels of disclosure because of varied spiritual maturity and understanding. In our contemporary society, it may lead to untold social problems, possibly ending in litigation.¹ An examination of disclosure scenarios has shown that sometimes it is motivated by pressure from the clientele. Like the traditional medical purveyors, the Charismatic lay leaders delved into disclosing a purported situation to respond to their religious aspirations.

Generally speaking, discernment may be disclosed or concealed, depending on the situation. It seems that the problem of the church leadership with the *Gidan Addu'a* Charismatic lay leaders is the frequent disclosure of the alleged 'personal cause' of misfortune to their members, not bearing in mind the scenario and the maturity of the members and the possible

¹ Many lay Charismatic leaders of the movement faced litigations. For example, Musa Emmanuel Dantani of 'Heart-Sowing and Sewing Mission' and Martha Sabo of 'Prayer and Healing Ministry'.

consequent social implications. This naming and disclosure of alleged culprits makes the church leadership categorise the Charismatic lay leaders as ‘modern diviners’ or ‘traditional African spiritists’.² They are so called because in traditional African society, people often resort to divination when confronted with mystical problems that revolve around social, economic, ethical, political and moral issues. Second, all the Charismatic lay leaders of the *Gidan Addu’a* under study always attribute omens to evil forces, especially witchcraft, occult powers and agents of Satan. Occasionally, they encourage their clientele to go back and talk things over in the family or reconcile with the perpetrator(s) to ensure healing. This is common in the practices of Martha Sabo (Chapter Five), Patience Nuhu (Chapter Six) and Joel Hammajulde (Chapter Seven). This is characteristic of prophet-healers whom Andrew Walls observes stress that ‘God speaks directly’ to them. Moreover, they always stress having ‘heard the voice of God’, or having seen ‘a vision of Christ’, sometimes in a dream.³ Walls further notes that they claim to have determined ‘their vocation by a voice heard as the voice of God’. They do not assume that the voice, vision and dream are self-authenticating. What they believe is that God reveals his divine will through a voice, visions and dreams.⁴ As Walls observes, ‘they remain in one guise or another, adapting the goals of the old order in terms of protection, power and interventions of the transcendent world and phenomenal world’.⁵ According to Walls, such prophet-healers always oppose the active use of the old sources because the new demonstrate more power than that of the traditional practitioners.⁶ In the midst of this, when there is social stress and economic strain, they quickly attribute it to physical and spiritual powers; in particular, they call it demonic power – principalities and powers.⁷

² Magaji, Interview, 17 February 2011; Angyunwe, Interview, 7 February 2011; Adamu M. Eyab, Interview, 17 November 2010, Takum; Philip D. Aboki, Interview, 12 November 2010, Wukari; Gani, Interview, 17 November 2010; David G. Angye, Interview, 9 November 2010, Wukari; Nyajon, interview, 16 November 2010.

³ Andrew F. Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission and Appropriation of Faith* (Maryknoll: Orbis books/Edinburgh: T& T Clark, 2002), p.129.

⁴ Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History*, p.130.

⁵ Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History*, p.122.

⁶ Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History*, p.122.

⁷ Andrew F. Walls, ‘Christian Scholarship in Africa in the Twenty-first Century’, *Journal of African Christian Thought*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (December 2001), pp.44-52 (50).

The evangelical church ministers postulated that the *Gidan Addu'a* Charismatic lay leaders have either inherited divinatory practices, or acquired unknown powers, or both.⁸ To the evangelical ministers, this is foreign to Christian practices. This is not a denial of God using a voice, vision and dream to unfold his counsel, but in whichever way the Charismatic lay leaders may have understood and experienced it, one cannot for sure affirm that *all* voices, trance-visitation and dreams are exclusively from God.

The nature of the practices made evangelical church bodies and/or outsiders conclude that the Charismatic lay leaders were intensifying fears among their members. The reason appears to be the way the Charismatic lay leaders choose, interpret and apply issues connected with mystical powers. Some ministers of the evangelical church bodies believe that whenever the members hear or feel and see unusual phenomena, they quickly describe it as evil in disguise. It is however possible that the fear is heightened due to increasing societal upheavals. In the past, evil deeds were mostly done in secret; but today they are done in the open. Evil is intensifying, while the value placed upon human life is correspondingly diminishing. Nevertheless, the Charismatic lay leaders are being accused of intensifying fear to make monetary gains as they directly or indirectly sell their 'healing elements and objects' such as olive oil, holy water, handkerchiefs and more. They believe that the substances and objects heal faster and better than the traditional and biomedical aids. Their elements, they claim, have the potency to ward off evil forces. Martha, Patience and Joel often express this publicly.⁹

The Charismatic lay leaders' interpretation and application of the role of omens in the society also instils fears in the lives of the clientele. For instance, omens such as an owl hooting, a dog barking, a child crying and cats fighting in the night, are always attributed to concealed witchcraft aimed at retrogressing the life-force. The fear also makes many members wander from one *Gidan Addu'a* to another in search of success, protection and security.

The expressions of the Charismatic lay leaders made some of the early evangelical ministers, drawing from the biodata of the Charismatic lay leaders argue that the Charismatic lay leaders still adhered to the traditional practices, directly or indirectly colouring them with

⁸ Joel T. Aji, Interview, 9 February 2011, Wukari; Joshua Ikyumbur, Interview, 13 November 2010, NKST Wukari; Jerry Parah, Interview, 23 November 2010, Bishara Baptist Church Wukari; Jones T. Dan-Bature, Interview, 13 December 2010, UMCN Wukari; Joseph U. Rika, Interview, 13 December 2010, RCCN Wukari; Damulak Bawa, Interview, 8 February 2011, COCIN Wukari.

⁹ I deduced this from my participatory-observation in the ministries over time.

Christian thought processes. The CRCN leadership is evaluating the practices of the Charismatic lay leaders against their family background, saying that their practices underscore divinatory and mediumistic practices.¹⁰ For example, Musa Emmanuel Dantani came from a spirit mediumistic group, Mbakpa, that links all adverse life experiences to spirit causality. The response of some church ministers is that Musa's teachings have undermined the efficacy and potency of the Christ-event: the cross and resurrection of Christ, since Christ had completed the work of salvation. Besides, God's redemptive history is progressive and not static. The climax of God's salvation still belongs in the future. The salvation already witnessed is a foretaste of the future and complete one.

Second, since Patience Nuhu's father was a traditional healer, it is assumed that Patience continues with this practice, because she alleges that children have dealings with occult practices. The church deduces that her practice is an extension of her traditional religious background (see Chapter Six).

Third, Joel Hammajulde Gashaka was the son of a sorcerer, diviner and herbalist. He also practised snake charming and even superseded his father in that skill (see Chapter Seven). The church sees this practice of revealing the misfortunes of his clientele as gross spiritual immaturity and too traumatic for people. God has been revealing His counsel to His people and it had never at any point resulted in chaos and a disturbance of the peace. Moreover, although Jesus exorcised demons, He had never revealed the cause, basically in order to avoid generating conflict and disharmony.

Fourth, Martha Sabo was born into a spirit mediumistic family and most of the progeny of her extended family have been spirit mediums (see Chapter Five). Again, the church traces her constant emphasis on witchcraft back to her former religious practices. She is accused of favouring the old order over her new faith for inexplicable reasons.

To a large extent, the practices of the Charismatic lay leaders would seem to have no place in either the traditional healing system or the Christian healing processes. If this is true, how does their 'spiritual experience' contribute in advancing the church, the gospel and the kingdom? The so-called spiritual experience among the *Gidan Addu'a* Charismatic lay leaders and perhaps other prophet-healers today leads them to seek to respond to religious

¹⁰ Angye, Interview, 9 November 2010; Angyunwe, Interview, 7 February 2011; Eyab, Interview, 17 November 2010; Sumgbadu, 12 December 2010; Ahima, Interview, 31 January 2011; Ajaver, Interview, 25 October 2009; Nyajon, interview, 16 November 2010.

aspirations, although sometimes they may veer off course. This is because they do not take into account other contributory factors of societal problems.

9.3 Imprecatory Prayer

The ‘spiritual experience’ of the Charismatic lay leaders has shaped their thought on occasions to employ imprecatory prayers in an attempt to confront evil forces. In their imprecatory prayers, they call on God to bring misfortunes, curses and disasters upon their purported enemies. Four out of the five ministries under the auspices of the *Gidan Addu’a* movement¹¹ employed some verses from Psalm 109 for their imprecatory prayers. To the Charismatic lay leaders, God the avenger must inflict misfortune on the perpetrators of evil, especially witches and occult powers. These Charismatic lay leaders have not adequately understood the meaning of imprecatory prayers. There are, among others, three underlying theological principles in the imprecatory psalms. First, vengeance belongs to God. A person has no right to seek personal retaliation without a direct appeal to God to avenge. Second, God in his righteousness judges the wicked by pouring out His wrath on them. Third, God does intervene to avenge on behalf of His covenant people.¹²

The *Gidan Addu’a* Charismatic lay leaders generally believe that witches, occult powers and other malignant powers are the perpetrators of evil. They are the major agents of Satan that always generate power conflicts and these enemies must therefore be eliminated. The ‘Prayer and Healing Ministry’ (Chapter Five) has explicitly indicated in its liturgy the various enemies to be spiritually eliminated. The eliminator is primarily the ‘Holy Ghost Fire’ (see Chapter Five). The ministry believes that elimination of the enemies will bring relief from misfortunes such as barrenness and impotence, chronic bachelorhood and spinsterhood, deterioration in people’s life force at the various levels – economic, social, political, and moral. Moreover, there are occasions where both the ‘Prayer and Healing Ministry’ (Chapter Five) and the ‘Jesus the Healer Ministry’ (Chapter Six) employed physical methods such as chaining and beating or flogging, in an attempt to ward off evil forces. These ministries used

¹¹ Jesus the Healer Ministry; Freedom Ministry; Prayer and Healing Ministry and Heart Sowing and Sewing Mission.

¹² ‘Imprecation, Imprecatory Psalms’ in Chad Brad, Charles Draper & Archie England (Gen. eds.), *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Nashville, Tennessee: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003), n.p.

both avenging words and heinous crimes to eliminate so-called evil spirits. This is an infringement on the human right to life.

Like the ‘Prayer and Healing Ministry’ (Chapter Five), the ‘Heart-Sowing and Sewing Mission’ (Chapter Four) employs curses on ‘enemies’, particularly witches and other malignant evil forces, as well as on any person or institution that is against the ministry. To the leader such ‘enemies’ frustrate progress either spiritually or physically or in both ways.

The ‘Jesus the Healer Ministry’ (Chapter Five) uses imprecatory prayers to eliminate evil spirits in the child-occult initiates who are agents of retrogression and take people’s life-forces. The ‘Freedom Ministry’ (Chapter Seven) advocates both spiritual and physical elimination of the witches and occult practitioners. On the physical aspects, it asserts that many of the perpetrators are hiding in the church claiming to have been converted. They are rather using the church as an umbrella but continue to take life-forces.¹³ The ministry advocates lynching the agents once they are detected because they always wreak havoc on the young and old in the society.¹⁴ Besides, some of them will continue to resist conversion and wander from one *Gidan Addu’a* to another. The ones claiming conversion cause ‘spiritual skirmishes’ but come back to the church disguised as genuine Christians.¹⁵ They are, therefore, a threat and nuisance in the society. People will not be at ease and enjoy success, prosperity, protection or security until such evildoers are eliminated by whatever means.

All the Charismatic lay leaders of the ministries cited above draw their argument from selected Old Testament Scriptures that posit elimination of witches (some versions of the Bible use the terms ‘sorceress’, ‘wizard’ or ‘familiar spirit’, ‘sorceries’, ‘sorcerers’, ‘necromancers’, ‘fortune-tellers’ and ‘spirit mediums’.) To the Charismatic lay leaders, the perpetrators had to be eliminated to serve as a deterrent to others who intended to engage in the practice. The Charismatic lay leaders advocate for wellbeing and serenity in the society. However, the belief in physical elimination underscores a stern belief. The elimination of ‘witches’ or ‘occult initiates’ is tampering with the dignity of human rights. It is by law, irrespective of status, an infringement on the right to life.

¹³ Freedom Ministry, Group Interview, 2 February 2012.

¹⁴ Freedom Ministry, Group Interview, 2 February 2012.

¹⁵ Freedom Ministry, Group Interview, 19 February 2011.

9.4 Medication versus Prayer-healing

Most of the leaders of the movement (Chapters Four, Five, Six and Eight) draw from their ‘spiritual experience’ and advocate abstention from medication and reliance solely on divine healing. In Chapter Seven, some early advocates of faith healing are cited in this regard. In contrast, only one evangelist (see Chapter Six) upholds medication alongside prayers. Taking medication alongside prayers or depending solely on divine healing is a contention among the ministries. Four ministries reject and discourage their members from taking medicines.¹⁶ Nevertheless, they are quite sympathetic towards biomedical treatment only on the basis of attesting and confirming the healing already received. They all vehemently oppose herbal medicine and brand it a ‘satanic agent’. They argue that herbalists all consult spirits before the collection, preparation and application of the substances. For example, Musa Emmanuel Dantani and Bitrus Samaila explained this, citing various Scriptures: Matthew 11:28 enjoins Christians to come to Jesus; Acts 4:12 teaches that there is no other name given except Jesus for deliverance and healing; and 1 Peter 5:7 reiterates God’s care for His children.¹⁷ In their view, going for medication in whatever form indicates therefore a lack of vision and a lack of faith. Moreover, sickness is considered a spiritual problem that needs a superior power to avert.

The leaders share with Christ Apostolic Church (CAC) which developed from ‘Precious Stone [Diamond] Society’ that was formed within the Anglican Church Missionary Society (CMS) in response to the 1918 influenza epidemic.¹⁸ At that time, medications employed to avert the situation proved ineffective. As a last resort, the group renounced all medication and relied solely on divine healing.¹⁹ After its affiliation with the British Apostolic Church, it broke away because the missionaries failed to rely solely on divine healing but were, rather using quinine to prevent malaria.²⁰ Joseph Ayo Babalola of the CAC continued to teach about

¹⁶ Heart Sowing and Sewing Missions; Voice of Prayer-Healing Miracle; Jesus the Healer Ministry; and Prayer and Healing Ministry.

¹⁷ Musa, Interview, 8 February 2012; Bitrus, Interview, 22 February 2012.

¹⁸ G.O.M. Tasié, ‘Christianity in the Niger Delta’ Ogbu O. Kalu (ed.), *The Nigerian Story: Christianity in West Africa* (Ibadan: Daystar Press, 1978), p.382; E.O. Babalola, *Christianity in West Africa: An Historical Analysis* (Ibadan, Nigeria: Book Representation and Publishing Company, 1988), p.240; Samuel Oyinloye Abogunrin, ‘Preface’, *Biblical Healing in African Context: Biblical Studies Series*, No. 3 (2004), p.ix.

¹⁹ Samuel Oyinloye Abogunrin, ‘Preface’, in *Biblical Healing in African Context: Biblical Studies Series*, No. 3 (2004), p.ix; Babalola, *Christianity in West Africa*, pp.239-240.

²⁰ Babalola, *Christianity in West Africa*, p.245; Harold W. Turner, *History of an African Independent Church (1) The Church of the Lord (Aladura)* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), pp.31-32; Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History*, p.98.

relying on divine healing and rejecting all medication.²¹ Isaac B. Akinyele also refused to take medicines from 1926 until his death in 1964.²²

The four Charismatic lay leaders of the *Gidan Addu'a*, like the CAC leaders, Babalola and Akinyele, reject medication because they think that taking it will weaken faith in Christ's ability to heal. The rejection of all medication is a stern belief. Denigrating medication equally relegates the power of God to a lower status as He endows people with skills and wisdom in addressing issues related to ill health. Many of my respondents, especially ministers from the Evangelical bodies in Wukari, unanimously maintain that God had nowhere prohibited medications. Notwithstanding that, the church leadership always advises patients and their relatives to avoid any treatment that requires divination, sacrifices and rituals. It is worth stating here that the resentment of some faith healers, including the aforementioned *Gidan Addu'a* Charismatic lay leaders, is based on the herbalists' assertion that they inherited their profession from ancestral spirits or cultic deity in designated situations – dreams, vision, trance, vocal utterance – and at specific places – deserts, forests, mountains and groves. To the herbalists, that is a means of raising the efficacy and potency of the medicine in the eye of the health seeker. This should not however be generalised. Even if such a practitioner inherits a problem from whatever source, as claimed, it is not impossible to turn the whole element toward Christ for godly use. This is because God is not only the Creator and Owner of creation, but He has created nature for the good of humankind.

9.5 Spiritual Experience as Participation in the Word of God

Spiritual experience and the Word of God are soul mates and not antitheses. Since spiritual experience is not at variance with the written Word of God, it is therefore wrong to dichotomise spiritual experience [if genuine] from the written Word of God. Biblical characters who genuinely experienced God expressed it in affirmation. The *Gidan Addu'a* Charismatic lay leaders, depending on whatever experience they may be having – visions, vocal utterances and dreams – see themselves in line with the Word of God. This is why during their worship sessions enough time is given for testimonies by any who feel they have

²¹ 'The Christ Apostolic Church' in Ogbu Kalu (ed.), *The Nigerian Story*, p.282; Babalola, *Christianity in West Africa*, p.241.

²² E.A Ayandele, 'The Aladura Among the Yoruba: A Challenge to the Orthodox Churches' in Ogbu Kalu, *The Nigerian Story*, p.385.

experienced God. Of course, emotions lead people into series of experiences, ending in high self-esteem and acclaimed spectacular experiences. The problem, though, is that the ministries do not create space for examining the fruits of the testimonies that are given. Most of the Charismatic lay leaders are of the view that anything that has to do with spiritual experience needs not be queried. Thus, the common slogan is: 'He that experiences the Spirit knows it'. Questioning the validity of spiritual experience is a denial of God's power and an enquirer may face the wrath of the Spirit.

The 'spiritual experience' is common among both primal religious practitioners and the prophet-healers of the new religious movements. This is because both share in the reality of spiritual encounter. Furthermore, many biblical characters passed through spiritual experiences. For example, Peter experienced God's manifestation of the Law, the Prophets and their fulfilment (Matt.17:1-4; 2 Pet.1:16-21). This experience had a great impact on his ministry. Paul had a wonderful conversion experience on the road to Damascus (Acts 9) and visited the third heaven (2 Cor. 12:1-4) and this also strengthened his message (Acts 17:2-3; Acts 28:23). In the OT, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Elijah, Elisha, Ezekiel, Daniel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Jonah and many others had spiritual experiences. None of them separated their experiences from the Word of God.

Despite the participation in the spiritual experiences recorded in the Word of God, one needs not lose sight of the idea that the mental process of humankind is conceptualised in such a way that spirits could influence thought, emotions and actions.²³ These spirits fall into three categories: those from God, those from the devil and those from within oneself. One can fall prey to false spirits – either an evil spirit or one's own spirit. This happens when dreams, visions or voices are always upheld as coming from God and held to unwaveringly. To determine the genuineness of the spiritual experience, one needs to judge it by its effects on one's emotions, thoughts and behaviour. Genuine spiritual experience leads to more concern about spiritual matters, greater spiritual discipline and changes in behaviour for good.²⁴ This experience may be known to have developed from a godly source – God working through Jesus Christ or the Holy Spirit. A study from a psychiatric discipline reveals that voices and visions may occur as part of mental illness as well as spiritual experience. They may be

²³ Rachel Julian, 'Spiritual Discernment in Psychiatric Patients', *Journal of Religion and Health*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (Summer, 1987), pp.125-130 (125).

²⁴ Julian, 'Spiritual Discernment in Psychiatric Patients', p.126.

hallucinations, especially corporeal, imaginative or intellectual.²⁵ Besides, spiritual experiences need to be examined according to their religious and cultural expressions. This would help determine whether or not the practitioner is still using the old sources of spirits and deities. Hence, participatory involvement in spiritual experience accompanied with the Word of God does not detract from an examination of the genuineness of the fruits of the said experiences.

9.6 Emphases and Tendencies

Attempts were made by Western observers to classify new religious movements in Africa based on the characteristics that distinguished them from others. This classification was not generally accepted because of the attempt to import the Western thought process.²⁶ Andrew Walls argues that there are some difficulties with classifying Africa's new religious movements: 'Sometimes the movements develop towards a classical type of Christian affirmation, sometimes away from it'.²⁷ Moreover, 'they remain in one guise or another; adapting the old goals of protection and power, frequent interventions of the transcendent world in the phenomenal world'.²⁸ Like Bengt Sundkler, Harold Turner, Adrian Hastings, Allan Anderson and Andrew Walls,²⁹ I prefer to classify the indigenously initiated movement under study on the basis of its emphases and inherent tendencies. The practices and emphases of this movement are characteristic of the early prophet-healing movements. The *Gidan Addu'a* movement can thus be rightly seen as a 'prophet-healing movement'.

First, prophet-healers always claimed to have had a unique and spectacular divine visitation which generated their vocation. All the Charismatic lay leaders who founded ministries under the *Gidan Addu'a* claimed to have passed through certain spiritual experiences before they

²⁵ Julian, 'Spiritual Discernment in Psychiatric Patients', p.128.

²⁶ Bengt G.M. Sundkler, *Zulu Zion and some Swazi Zionists* (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), pp.306-308.

²⁷ Andrew F. Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in Transmission of Faith* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books/Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), p.113.

²⁸ Andrew F. Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission and Appropriation of Faith* (Maryknoll: Orbis books/Edinburgh: T& T Clark, 2002), p.122.

²⁹ Sundkler, *Zulu Zion and some Swazi Zionists* (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), pp.306-308, Harold W. Turner, *Religious Innovation in Africa: Collected Essays on New Religious Movements* (Boston, Massachusetts: G.K. Hall and company, 1979), p.80-82; Adrian Hastings, *A History of African Christianity 1950-1975* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p.69; Allan H. Anderson, *African Reformation: An African Initiated Christianity in the 20th Century* (Trenton, NJ/Asmara, ERITREA: African World Press, 2001), pp.12-15.

started their ministry. We can deduce from William Wade Harris who toured the Ivory Coast (now Côte d'Ivoire) and western Gold Coast (now Ghana) in 1913 and 1914, respectively. It is reported that while Harris was in prison in 1910 on the charge of instigating an anti-government revolt, he experienced a trance-visitation of Angel Gabriel; he 'saw' Moses, Elijah and Jesus and spoke with them; and he 'experienced the Holy Spirit descending on his head and all over his body as ice and he spoke in tongues'.³⁰ In that experience, it is claimed, God told him that He would come and anoint him (Harris) and he would be His (God's) prophet. Garrick Sokari Braide had a similar experience. He had been known to be 'a seer of visions' and had unusual healing power since 1908, before his conversion to Christian faith in 1910. However, in 1912, he had a 'visionary experience' while taking communion. That experience set the foundation for his vocation (healing ministry). In a similar vein, all the Charismatic lay leaders under study claimed to have had such a divine visitation as discussed in their life history (Chapters Three to Seven).

Second, prophet-healing movements generally stress that 'God speaks directly'. The prophet-healers stress having 'heard the voice of God'; having seen 'a vision of Christ', and sometimes in a dream.³¹ They do not assume that the voice, vision and dream are self-authenticating. They believed strongly that God reveals his will to people through such means.³² Walls observes that in their practices, they use methods characteristic of the diagnostic systems of the traditional African practitioners. They however demonstrate more effective power than those of the traditional practitioners. They seemed to oppose traditional practice, but basically only in theory.³³ Walls' view is true of the *Gidan Addu'a* evangelists, all who, except for one, vehemently opposed the traditional medical system because, according to them, both the purveyors and the medical system are 'satanic agents'. From my interviews and observations, the Charismatic lay leaders concerned were generally opposed to following the traditional healing processes, let alone employing the methods of the African Initiated Churches (AICs) and Pentecostal-Charismatics. Rather, the divine impartation was

³⁰ Kwame Bediako, *Christianity in Africa: The Renewal of a Non-Western Religion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), p.92; Isichei, *The Religious Traditions of Africa*, p.198. He had suggested that Liberia become a British colony rather than be ruled by Americo-Liberian settlers. He pulled down the Liberian flag and planted the Union Flag. Alan H. Anderson, *African Reformation: Africa Initiated Christianity in the 20th Century* (Trenton, NJ: African World Press, 2001), p.70; Haliburton, *The Prophet Harris*, pp.30-32, 35; Cephas Narh Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana* (Zoetermeer, The Netherlands: Uitgeverij Boekencentrum, 2002), p.67.

³¹ Andrew F. Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History* (Maryknoll: Orbis books/Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2002), p.129.

³² Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History*, p.130.

³³ Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History*, p.123.

the new dawn guiding them to chart a new course of healing the deeply felt needs of their clientele. To obtain this healing, they had to engage in a power encounter to avert misfortune. But in their expressions, they always borrow Pentecostal terms like ‘spiritual warfare’, ‘exorcism’ and ‘deliverance’.

Third, they employ the traditional African worldview that makes the connection between sin-suffering and confession-healing. The Charismatic lay leaders in most cases encourage their clientele to confess known and unknown sin and faults, and to renounce any cult objects in their possession that might have been the cause of their misfortune. These to them are common factors for effective healing. Their belief and practice are similar to those of the early prophet-healers. For example, Harris encouraged his followers to confess their sins and repent, destroy the old religious cult objects³⁴ and believe in Jesus Christ.³⁵ In the same vein, Braide’s movement focused on spiritual warfare against cult objects, confession of sins, putting absolute faith in the sufficiency of Christ, as well as engaging in strenuous prayer and fasting.³⁶ He believed that people would find peace in the new faith (Christianity) only if they lost faith in the old cultic objects. Braide perceived that Jesus Christ was the living power, while other gods were obsolete. This persuasive message led many converts from the traditional religion who were healed, to bring out their cult objects and burn them publicly.³⁷

Fourth, prophet-healers do not always establish a church at the early stage of their movement. None of the Charismatic lay leaders of this movement claimed that their ministry was or would be a church. Their converts usually attend the church of their choice. They would recommend a church for their converts only on request. They plan their programmes to take place on weekdays, but go back to their church affiliations for worship on Sundays. The Charismatic lay leaders generally claim that they are raising souls for their church affiliations. In a similar vein, it is generally affirmed by scholars that Harris and Braide did not establish churches of their own, although their movements were short-lived. Their converts joined churches of their choice for further instruction in the faith.

³⁴ Isichei, *The Religious Traditions of Africa*, p.199; Isichei, *A History of Christianity in Africa*, p.287.

³⁵ Bediako, *Christianity in Africa*, p.92.

³⁶ G.O.M. Tasié, ‘The Church in the Niger Delta’ in Ogbu Kalu (ed.), *Christianity in West Africa: The Nigerian Story* (Ibadan; Daystar Press, 1978), pp.323-328 (326); Isichei, *A History of Christianity in Africa*, p.287.

³⁷ Isichei, *A History of Christianity in Africa*, p.287; Ayandele, *Holy Johnson: Pioneer of African Nationalism, 1836-1917*, p.356, 358.

Fifth, prophet-healers know the worldview of their society and/or followers. That is why they easily employ their clientele's worldview and make their messages meaningful and relevant to their deeply felt needs. This is one of the factors that make new movements influential, thrive and burgeon. All the Charismatic lay leaders under study knew the worldview of the Jukun society and its inherent problems; they knew the ineffectiveness of the traditional models in halting the social menaces. In their gospel engagement, they recognise the reality of evil with its mechanistic effects, but they believe that a Supreme and living power is able to avert their negative conditions. These all made their message relevant to the indigenous society more than that of the early ministers of the mission-founded churches. A similar scenario happened with Harris who demonstrated his knowledge of the African worldview to the Ivoirians and western Gold Coast communities during his evangelistic tours. He demonstrated that the God of the Bible was more powerful than all the cultic deities, spirits and ancestors.³⁸ Also, Braide who came from parents who were adherents of traditional African religion knew the ineffectiveness of cult objects in addressing the felt needs of the society. That was why he launched a crusade against cult objects,³⁹ believed to have been the sources of the breach in societal fortunes. In contrast, the living power of Jesus Christ was able to bridge fortunes.

Prophet-healers often claimed to have an ability to heal without the aid of medical systems. For example, Bitrus Samaila, like Braide,⁴⁰ heals without the help of the medical system.

9.7 Challenge and Impact

The *Gidan Addu'a*, a prophet-healing movement, is attempting to address the aspirations of African Christians through spiritual encounters. The rise of the movement is based on the spiritual experiences and conviction of its founders. On the one hand, the movement attempts to challenge the mission-founded churches to seriously consider the culturally deep-seated concerns of the members and to endeavour to provide an adequate response. It is also an attempt, on the other hand, to adequately convert indigenous categories for a relevant

³⁸ Haliburton, *The Prophet Harris*, pp.2-3, 47; Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, p.69; David A. Shank, *The Prophet Harris, the 'Black Elijah' of West Africa* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), pp.154, 172.

³⁹ Isichei, *The Religious Traditions of Africa*, p.199; Isichei, *A History of Christianity in Africa*, p.287.

⁴⁰ E.A. Ayandele, *Holy Johnson: Pioneer of African Nationalism, 1836-1917* (New York: Humanities Press, 1970), p.356

understanding of the Christian faith. In short, the movement emerged to challenge the existing doctrinal tradition of ‘no concern’ to address the members’ felt needs and to chart a new course of indigenising faith using traditional techniques. This is what Walls describes as an ‘open universe’ (no frontier between natural and supernatural) and a ‘closed universe’ (frontier between natural and supernatural).⁴¹ In the former, Africans believe in the interaction between the secular and the spiritual with frequent interventions of the transcendent world in the phenomenal world. In the latter, there is a clear frontier between the secular and the spiritual. The prophet-healing movement favours the former, drawn from the traditional African worldview, while the mission-founded churches prefer the latter, drawn from Western Enlightenment Christianity.

The question is, how does this movement endeavour to meet this desired goal? This study reveals that the Charismatic lay leaders employ the people’s worldview on the multiple aspects of transcendence, where life is perceived to exist in the crossfire between malevolent and benevolent powers, with human beings at the centre being impacted negatively. Drawing from this they taught that most (if not all) incidents and events are spirit-caused. As Walls observes, the prophet-healers of this movement always attribute social stress and economic strains to demonic powers – principalities and powers.⁴² They always teach about the continuing sway, and/or the reality and dynamism of evil mechanisation. They give their clientele an assurance of God’s living power, which is capable of alleviating their miseries to bring about success, positive possibilities and material prosperity, protection and security of life. In a similar vein, although William Harris acknowledged the presence and role of the spirits, he strengthened the faith of the Ivoirians on the fact that God’s power surpasses that of divinities, spirits and ancestors.⁴³ Garrick Braide in the Niger Delta region allayed the fears of the people as he encouraged them to disregard their cult objects because they were not effective. Rather, they were to put their faith in the sufficiency of Jesus Christ.⁴⁴ The *Gidan Addu’a* Charismatic lay leaders, like Harris and Braide, always attempt to allay the fears of their clientele, promising security, protection and the provision of God. To the health seekers,

⁴¹ Andrew F. Walls, ‘Christian Scholarship in Africa in the Twenty-first Century’, *Journal of African Christian Thought*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (December 2001), pp.44-52 (48-51).

⁴² Walls, ‘Christian Scholarship in Africa in the Twenty-first Century’, p.50.

⁴³ Gordon M. Haliburton, *The Prophet Harris: A Study of an African Prophet and his mass Movement in the Ivory Coast and Gold Coast, 1913-1915* (London: Longman, 1971), pp.2-3, 47.

⁴⁴ Tasié, ‘The Church in the Niger Delta’, p.326; Elizabeth Isichei, *A History of Christianity in Africa: From Antiquity to the Present* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1995), pp.286-287 (287); Elizabeth Isichei, *The Religious Traditions of Africa: A History* (Westport, London: Praeger, 2004), p.199; E.A. Ayandele, *Holy Johnson: Pioneer of African Nationalism, 1836-1917* (New York: Humanities Press, 1970), p.356, 358.

the ministries have faster and more immediate solutions than the docile and complacent evangelical churches. This is similar to the affirmation of Braide's followers in the Niger Delta. They saw that Braide had calmed their fears of malignant forces and witchcraft; his ministry had produced quick and visible results and the magnitude of healed diseases surpasses both the biomedical and traditional medical systems. In contrast, Western Christianity prayed to an unseen God and had yielded no visible results; fears of malignant forces and witchcraft were not calmed and diseases and afflictions were not cured.⁴⁵ In Wukari, many people – from top government officials to the very low in the society – are bypassing the evangelical ministers, thereby consulting the Charismatic ministry's lay leaders to address their felt needs. The movement is seen to have contributed positively because it addresses the culturally deep-seated needs which seemed to have been ignored by the CRCN ministers. The preaching and exhortation of the Charismatic lay leaders are pragmatic, and relate to felt needs for security, protection and success in life. The Charismatic lay leaders interpret the Bible literally with a strong application on the living power of God.⁴⁶ Most of them have little Bible knowledge, yet they attempt to be Christocentric in their interpretation and application of Scripture. Even when they are preaching from the Old Testament (OT), they try to stress Christ as the major character of the text and living power. They often draw Christ into a 'jack box' of all sections of the Bible. Still, the heart desires of their members are perceived to have been met. To their members, there is the need to draw Bible characters to express God's encounter with malignant mystical forces. They preach from selected passages about specific characters; for example, in the OT they focus on biblical characters such as Moses, Joseph, Joshua, Samuel, Elijah, Elisha, Jeremiah, Isaiah and more, where they engaged in power encounters. In the New Testament (NT), they concentrate on the Gospels, especially the miracles and in the epistles of Paul, especially on the principalities and powers, as well as the spiritual gifts. Even when they are expressing the pre-Christian thought, their messages hinge on the living power capable of providing physical and spiritual security, protection and success in life.⁴⁷ This gives the members psychological, emotional and spiritual relief. The movement is burgeoning because the messages are perceived as

⁴⁵ Ayandele, *Holy Johnson: Pioneer of African Nationalism, 1836-1917*, p. 359.

⁴⁶ Observation, Wukari, Freedom Ministry, 9 October 2009 & 17 February 2012, Wukari; Observation, Wukari, Voice of Healing-Prayer Ministry, 18 February 2010 & 5 February 2011; Observation, Wukari, Prayer and Healing Ministry, 12 October 2009, 21 & 23 September 2011 & 9 October 2011.

⁴⁷ This shares the perspective of the Western prosperity gospel with its focus on appropriating physical health, material prosperity and success. This is the thrust of the prosperity gospel led by E.W. Kenyon, taught by William Branham and popularised by Kenneth E. Hagin. This has been discussed in some detail in Chapter Seven.

providing ways of escape from depression, despair and retrogression. Hence, the members are perceived to have been satisfied and their fears are allayed.

The methods of the Charismatic lay leaders are similar to those of African traditional priest-healers, AICs prophets and Charismatic faith healers. The Charismatic lay leaders altogether take seriously the actions of mystical forces on life experiences. They claim that it is a 'new dawn' where God wants to touch all souls irrespective of status, gender, race and age. The Charismatic lay leaders draw their membership from across denominations, mission-founded churches and Pentecostals alike. The members believe that the ministries are adequately addressing pertinent issues wilfully ignored by mission-founded churches. There was a time when health seekers did not go to medical practitioners, whether they were herbal or biomedical. This was the time that Joel Hammajulde's ministry seemed to be recessing, disintegrating and dying out. Health seekers were patronising the other four ministries under study. On some occasions, a few traditional leaders called the other four Charismatic lay leaders to their palaces for prayers.⁴⁸ In a few cases, it was reported that some village heads brought out their cult objects and burnt them (see Chapter Five). But there is hardly any record to show that they eventually converted to the Christian faith. It is possible that the rulers only wanted the malignant forces threatening their lives to be countered. It is also possible that the rulers were trying to see the potency of the living power that the prophet-healers were professing. On the whole, the Charismatic lay leaders became more popular because there was never a time that traditional rulers called CRCN ministers to their palaces specifically for prayers, until the emergence of the *Gidan Addu'a* movement. The membership of CRCN dwindled, and some ministers, in an attempt to deter their members from patronising the ministries, used the pulpit to condemn the prophet-healers. That generated a further dwindling in their numbers and they therefore stopped the castigation. Thus, the prophet-healing movement became popular because the prophet-healers not only know the worldview of their society, but they also recognise the reality of evil in the society. Hence, their messages include the interpretation of dreams, nightmares, omens and witchcraft. Besides, they tend to be Christocentric, placing Christ, the living power, above cultic divinities and objects. Moreover, the Charismatic lay leaders were readily available and accessible to health seekers for prayers. In contrast, some of the CRCN ministers did not even know the homes of their members, let alone visit them.

⁴⁸ The leaders of Voice of Healing-Prayer Ministries and the leaders of Prayer and Healing Ministry.

The CRCN ministers interpreted dreams, nightmares and omens as mirage, imagination, fantasy and superstition. Sometimes they use Western scientific means to interpret dreams, visions, nightmares and omens. In their view, such incidents are signs of impending sickness or anxiety about social stress and economic strain. Whenever either of those signs happens, it comes with reversed and frightening results to the victim. The CRCN ministers would sometimes offer a docile prayer and ask the health seeker to go and seek medical attention, admonishing the client to exercise contentment for what he or she possesses.⁴⁹ Their worship (preaching and teaching), life and practice often ignore the majority of issues related to spiritual conflict. The sermons focus much on holiness and conversion,⁵⁰ whereas sermons on power encounters were rarely preached.

The emergence of the *Gidan Addu'a* prophet-healing movement is therefore a challenge to the CRCN, and possibly, to other mission-founded churches to reconsider and appreciate the reality of evil and the threats of mystical forces and to make efforts to tackle them. It is also a call to reshape their messages to touch on issues beyond holiness and conversion. Mainstream issues such as dreams, nightmares, omens, witchcraft and occult powers are brought into worship, life and ministry. These are issues of daily life experiences of power encounter. The members experiencing such conflicts live and have their being in the phenomenal world. The church is an integral part of the phenomenal world within which the 'cross fire' is taking place. These issues need not be glossed over as nonsensical.

The *Gidan Addu'a* prophet-healers, in spite of their popularity, influence and commitment, equally exhibit some questionable characteristics and fraudulent practices. First, the claim of 'spiritual elitism' has led many Charismatic lay leaders not to heed the admonition of the elderly. For example, Musa Emmanuel Dantani, Patience Nuhu and Martha Sabo resented the spiritual admonition of the church leadership on the need to reconsider their practices. Musa, for instance, claimed that God informed whatever he did and therefore no one should meddle in his affairs with God. Martha, on her part, failed to bring her ministry to the church because the 'Spirit' deterred her from doing so. This led to their suspension, discipline and litigation. Even now, Musa's ministry is under surveillance by security agents. For it is considered one

⁴⁹ Rika, Interview, 13 December 2010; Angyunwe, Interview, 10 February 2011; Ikyumbur, Interview, 13 November 2010; Parah, Interview, 23 November 2010; Dan-Bature, Interview, 13 December 2010; Bawa, Interview, 8 February 2011; Nathaniel Iliya, Interview, 12 December 2010.

⁵⁰ Ahima, Interview, 31 January 2011; Ajaver, Interview, 25 October 2009; Gani, Interview, 17 November 2010.

of the movements that cause revolts in the society. Drawing from Walls' kingdom test, each of the movements that sprang up from within Christian churches attempts to trace its origin back to Jesus Christ. They claimed to have emerged to bring reformation or renewal or revival to what the evangelical church had failed to address. If the Charismatic lay leaders really draw their source from Christ, it is required that they hearken to their leadership's admonition to consider amending their methods. A person who is genuinely guided by the Holy Spirit for a God-oriented mission or task is required to exhibit humility. If such is lacking, then the 'spirit' may have come from foreign sources. Such spirits are bound to break the peace and harmony in the family and the entire society.

God graciously bestows *charismata* to people for serving and building up the church. This was the contention between Samuel Johnson and Garrick Braide in the Niger Delta. Braide claimed to have received power from his spiritual experiences and carried out unusual practices. He claimed to be the Second Elijah predicted in Malachi 4:5,⁵¹ accepted unprecedented reverence,⁵² dispensed his bath water for its healing virtue and disregarded Johnson's admonition. Johnson, who had earlier concurred with and acclaimed Braide's unusual healing, reversed his attestation and support for Braide and his movement. He saw Braide as a heretic who had committed the unforgivable sin against the Holy Spirit. He treated Braide's followers as false converts who did not know the content and implication of the new faith they were professing. Rather, they were nominal Christians who only held to the cure they obtained. He insisted that it was unhygienic to use water Braide had bathed in for its healing virtues and concluded that the devil had entered Braide.⁵³ The colonial government charged Braide with excesses, extortion and evoking nationalist feelings aimed at extirpating the white man's rule in the Niger Delta. He and his followers were arrested, fined and imprisoned.⁵⁴

Drawing from Walls' church test, it is not the popularity or public influence of a movement that is important, but its contribution toward building up the church or congregation. Moreover, whenever Christ ceases to be at the centre of any faith movement, it is bound to cease, recede or die out. Braide's movement fuelled dissension in the society. This is quite similar to the untold social problems that some of the prophet-healers under study are

⁵¹ Ayandele, *Holy Johnson: Pioneer of African Nationalism, 1836-1917*, p.357, 361.

⁵² Ayandele, *Holy Johnson: Pioneer of African Nationalism, 1836-1917*, pp.359-361.

⁵³ Ayandele, *Holy Johnson: Pioneer of African Nationalism, 1836-1917*, pp.360-361.

⁵⁴ Ayandele, *Holy Johnson: Pioneer of African Nationalism, 1836-1917*, p.362.

causing. There are uncountable cases of witchcraft accusation and its consequent victimisation, stigmatisation, discrimination, traumatising and ostracism.

The movement under study tends to have an economic agenda. For example, Musa Emmanuel Dantani (Chapter Four) teaches that tithing is meant for him (the leader) who is then accountable to God in constant intercession for his members. He diverts the tithes that are supposed to go into his church's coffers to himself. Joel Hammajulde (Chapter Seven) sells anointing oil to his clients; it is believed to be the source of healing. The same applies to Martha Sabo (Chapter Five) who has several elements and objects (handkerchiefs and necklaces) claimed to be the main sources of healing. Both Charismatic lay leaders charge their patronisers exorbitant costs. The ministries have become an avenue for economic gain. Drawing from Walls' gospel test, it is required that every Christian movement make the gospel and the salvation of souls its priority. Once the practice of a Christian movement does not involve reaching souls for God's salvation, it ceases to be a profitable gospel agent. This movement is rather geared towards wooing, extorting and exploiting the gullible, all in the name of God.

Moreover, Musa's imprecatory prayers involve crying out, jumping up and down, falling down, as well as crawling and rolling on the ground. Martha's acclaimed spiritual impartation always displays unusual expressions such as hiccups, frenzy and shivering, sweating, hysteria, convulsing, frailing and writhing, as well as speaking in esoteric language. These practices are explicitly characteristic of the mediumistic practice they inherited from their bloodline. They show an adherence to the old sources (mediumistic spirits) that minimises the acclaimed new source (Jesus Christ). Martha's so-called 'spiritual impartation' led her to violate an eleven-year-old girl, which constitutes an abuse of the human right to life. Patience has carried out a similar practice of witch accusation (Chapter Six) where she chained and beat children aged fifteen years and below who were allegedly accused of being 'child-occult initiates' diminishing life forces in their families. This has several social implications on the purported child-occult initiates (children) and witches (cutting across ages). For example, it breaks down families and causes disharmony in the society. Ultimately, what these ministry leaders claimed to have been called for becomes mere self-esteem, personal preoccupation and obsession.

9.8 Prospects and Future

Although it is difficult to predict the future of the *Gidan Addu'a* prophet-healing movement, it is possible to deduce its future from its present status. It is also possible to recognise from the present some issues that may possibly emerge in the life of the movement. My examination of the information gathered about this movement has foreseen both the advance and recession of the *Gidan Addu'a* in the immediate future. The God-centred Charismatic lay leaders and their ministries (despite their lapses) may prosper. But the counterfeits that target monetary gain – offerings, thanksgivings, tithes, and seed sowings – will disintegrate. It is possible that the *Gidan Addu'a* whose leaders co-opt their co-workers into their practices will survive whenever the initial leaders pass on. In other words, the survival of the ministries will be assured if the Charismatic lay leaders operate in an ‘inclusive democratic’ manner (work in team). This is because personal dialogue with a few co-officers of the various ministry leaders revealed that almost all of them desired that God would continue to empower their leaders in all ramifications so that they too would share from their leaders. The belief is that as long as God empowers the leaders, their colleagues will eventually be empowered through the leaders. They desire to receive a transfer of power from the leaders. All the Charismatic leaders and their co-officers, as well as their grass-root members, believed in the continued advancement of the ministry into the immediate future. Although none of the Charismatic lay leaders admitted that his ministry would be an independent institution with its doctrine and polity, a few of them started exhibiting characteristics of established institutions. For example, the ‘Freedom Ministry’ (Chapter Seven) and ‘Voice of Healing-Prayer Ministries’ (Chapter Eight) are gradually shifting from being ‘prayer homes’ to being ‘prayer centres’ and raising structures (see Appendices 18 – 22).

Conversely, some of the *Gidan Addu'a* may decline if the leaders continue to operate in an ‘exclusive professionalised’ manner, failing to co-opt the potentials of their co-workers into their practices. For example, a few co-officers of the ministries left the ministries because of internal dissension between them and the leaders as a result of power tussles, financial gains and lack of spiritual empowerment. The leaders always engage in ‘exclusive operation’. It is reported that the leaders concerned failed to reveal some of their beliefs that led to their expressions. Some revealed to me that they have worked with the Charismatic leaders for some time, yet there has been little by way of spiritual impartation to heal the sick as the leaders are doing. These allegations cut across the existing ministries under the auspices of

the *Gidan Addu'a* movement. If such allegations are true, the ministries concerned may finally disintegrate and erode away.

Still, the movement may also decline if the present trends of untold social problems persist resulting in victimisation, trauma, discrimination and stigmatisation. It will also cease if Christ is not at the centre and the gospel of salvation is not sustained. It will cease if the CRCN leadership realises the need to assimilate into its worship, life and practice crucial aspects of the 'spiritual experiences' and practices in sympathy with the evangelical tradition. The decline is therefore subject to the sensitivity of the CRCN leadership to the hope and aspirations of its members.

Respondents from both older and a few newer evangelical ministers and elders altogether foresee more of recession. They see the future of the movement as bleak and precarious. From 2006 through 2008, a few ministers of the CRCN took radical measures to discourage their members from patronising the *Gidan Addu'a* movement. They blatantly used the pulpit to rebuke, castigate and condemn the Charismatic lay leaders and their ministries. While the radical approach was seeking to curtail their growth, many more *Gidan Addu'a* adherents flooded the ministries. At the same time, the church was diminishing in membership.⁵⁵ This latter development led most of the ministers who did not share this approach to become more cautious and diplomatic in speaking against the movement in the pulpit. They discovered that a wrong use of the pulpit could create rivalry. This is because no matter how bad the Charismatic lay leaders may be, they have their supporters in the church. Even more importantly, the church leadership needs to be more accessible to the Charismatic lay leaders by participating and observing the practices, as well as interacting with them. This may give room for spiritual oversight.

⁵⁵ This is the prototype of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements and the church reaction which resulted in the youth breaking away from the church in the early 1980s.

9.9 The Way Forward: Suggestions

The church needs to study the *Gidan Addu'a* movement, its roots and intended focus.⁵⁶ This movement, like others, generally wants its 'spiritual experiences' to be recognised and to be integrated into church worship life and be able to express itself in the community life.

The scenario of this movement is similar (if not the same) with the one that took place in Ghana (as reviewed in Chapter One). Cephas Narh Omenyo conducted an in-depth study of new religious movements that emerged within Ghanaian mainline churches. This study can serve as a good model to bridge the misunderstanding between this movement and the CRCN. In Omenyo's study, the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches in 1965 and 1993, respectively, inaugurated committees to study the trends of the new religious movements and made recommendations to their national church bodies on the issues of recognition.⁵⁷ The aim of the study was not to endorse the practices and extreme beliefs of the movements,⁵⁸ but rather to visit and address the groups periodically, offering constructive criticisms of their practices and extreme beliefs. The movements consequently became strong renewal and evangelistic teams in the churches.⁵⁹ The mainline churches granted recognition to the movements to safeguard them against schisms and to avoid losing their [the groups'] evangelistic fruits. The Methodist churches, for example, recognised them as 'fellowships in the church'.⁶⁰

The field data I collected on this *Gidan Addu'a* movement revealed that some of the CRCN ministers do not want to recognise them, let alone associate with them. Evaluation of the practices of the Charismatic lay leaders is generally based on reports from secondary sources (that is, second, third or fourth informants). The church had never engaged in participatory observation with the ministries. Most of the evangelical church leaders I interacted with admitted that 'I have never for once attended the ministerial programme of (...). But I heard that Mr. (...) or Mrs. (...) is saying (...) and doing (...). I do not want to go there because I feel that their beliefs and expressions are chaotic and at variance with biblical teachings.' If what such church leaders expressed was true, it is worth saying that it is not enough to 'hear'

⁵⁶ Pamciri, Interview, 16 November 2010; Ahima, Interview, 31 January 2011.

⁵⁷ Cephas Narh Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana* (Zoetermeer, The Netherlands: Uitgeverij Boekencentrum, 2002), pp.281, 283.

⁵⁸ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, p.282.

⁵⁹ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, pp.282, 284.

⁶⁰ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, p.284.

and then conclude. This is because it would be difficult to determine the genuineness of what is heard without making the effort to participate in their worship, observe their practices and listen to their expressions, and then probe into why they do this and that or are saying this and that.

Participation would yield several positive results: first, knowledge of the nature of the belief systems and expressions may lead to proper evaluation, and spiritual oversight. Like the case of Ghana, the charismatic lay leaders may not develop any interest in the programme organised by the CRCN leadership because they may not have much confidence in the ministers and the programmes they organise because of the 'spiritual elitism' and perceived marginalisation by the CRCN leadership.⁶¹ The CRCN leadership in its spiritual oversight can engage selected well-informed ministers for intermittent participatory observations and persuasive dialogue with the Charismatic lay leaders. Such informed ministers are to point out to them the apparent excesses, noting their call, vision and mission task in the light of the Scriptures.

Second, it is time that ministers mentored and raised younger ones who have the potential and gifts for the building up of the church. Each lay Charismatic leader should be attached to a mentor who will give continued spiritual oversight. This will curtail the incidence of the lay Charismatics breaking away from the parent bodies. The church leadership should identify the gifted lay leaders and co-opt them into church functions. Moreover, the church needs to create the space and opportunity for the genuinely gifted to function in the Evangelism and Mission Department. The need for theological studies may arise later, depending on the motivation of the lay Charismatic members. These measures will help the Charismatic lay leaders know that all the gifts of grace are meant for the building up of the church and should be exercised within the church.

Third, each *Gidan Addu'a* can continue to be where it is, but under the spiritual oversight of the church based on a relationship of dialogue and mutual understanding between the church and the Charismatic lay leader.

Fourth, the CRCN leadership would need to open up to the *Gidan Addu'a* movement, acknowledge their acclaimed spiritual experiences, appraise them in the light of Scripture and create a proper space for their functioning. Moreover, the church needs to engage in activities

⁶¹ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, pp.286, 288.

that focus on renewal: teaching, organising seminars and workshops on spiritual calling, visions, dreams, witchcraft, spiritual gifts and Christian ministries, as well as spiritual warfare/conflicts. The leaders would also have to make the power encounter issues relevant, concrete and applicable to life experiences. Indigenous categories such as dreams, nightmares, omens, witchcraft and occult powers, among others, should be discussed within the context of indigenous understanding and adequately applied to life experiences in Christian terms.

The mission-founded churches need to stand on the fact that the power encounter is real because of the ‘multiplicity’ of crossings in the transcendental realm as understood from the cultural milieu. However, only the living power of Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit – rather than ancestral spirits, cultic deities or other spirits – is capable of averting them. In other words, although they may acknowledge the existence of the old spirit powers, they should know that they are obsolete, limited and temporal, while the new power is active, supreme and perpetual, capable of transforming and restoring life experiences. This is because both believers and unbelievers are not cut off from the African cosmology of evil forces always at war with the good forces. The Reformed ecclesiology of the ‘church militant’ and the ‘church triumphant’ is analogous in explaining the power encounter in the African context. For example, as far as a person lives in this life, he or she is bound to pass through misfortunes. Similarly, as far as the church lives on earth, she is bound to face persecution. Therefore, the issue of ‘multiplicity’ of crossings in the transcendent could be developed from this local and simple way.

The CRCN leadership, and perhaps other mission-founded church bodies, need to understand that ‘spiritual experiences’ have been an integral part of the church’s life and mission. Peter Hocken explains this vividly: ‘The Spirit cuts both ways. It challenges the churches to open up to a movement of life that transcends historic divisions; and it challenges the renewal to take seriously the Spirit’s witness in the churches’.⁶² All mission-founded churches need to anticipate such experiences within their contexts and find ways of coping with them.⁶³ The mother churches need not suppress them because doing so has not been successful and their beliefs and practices cannot easily be rooted out.

⁶² Peter Hocken, ‘Charismatic Renewal in the Roman Catholic Church: Reception and Challenges’, in Jan A.B. Jongeneel, et al (eds.), *Pentecost, Mission and Ecumenism: Essays on Intercultural Theology* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1992), pp.301-307 (307).

⁶³ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, p.289.

The *Gidan Addu'a* movement tends to demonstrate the fact that the old powers are obsolete and the new powers have been activated. However, their practices have shown in several ways the tendency of fusing and blending the old and new orders. Sometimes, the new is used as an umbrella while the old holds sway. As a result, their perceived intention of indigenising faith using local categories for proper understanding is gradually taking a reverse route.

9.10 Towards a Theology of Power

The 17th to 19th centuries' 'Enlightenment' thought which glorified Rationalism (reason) and Empiricism (science) permeated the thought of Europe and North America. Rationalism teaches that reason, unaided by God's revelation, is able to understand the universe. Empiricism teaches that reality is what can be apprehended through the physical senses.⁶⁴ Enlightenment thought explicitly ruled out belief in the supernatural. This mind-set also coloured Western Christianity. As discussed in Chapter Two, the early Evangelical Mission bodies that came to Africa unconsciously took on the Enlightenment worldview in their mission engagements: education, mission and conventional medical science. The gospel proclamations were carried alongside belief in the frontier between the natural and supernatural worlds.⁶⁵ The worlds of spirits (supernatural) were excluded from the worlds of rationalism and empiricism. The reality of the devil and demons, witchcraft, evil spirits, dreams, visions, divine healings and worlds of power was rejected because these categories were perceived as figments of the imagination, fantasy and superstition.⁶⁶ In their mind-set there was no connection between the sacred and the profane. According to Andrew Walls, 'Enlightenment thought made the missionaries leave out some Old Testament and New Testament passages that record power encounters because they are outside the domain of their worldview', and 'their theology was reshaped to fit the "closed universe", the

⁶⁴ Burgess, *Times of Refreshing*, p.15.

⁶⁵ Jan Harm Boer, 'Science Without Faith is Dead', Part Two of Abraham Kuyper and Jan Harm Boer, *You Can Do Greater Things than Christ: Demons, Miracles, Healing and Science* (Jos, Nigeria: Institute of Church and Society, 1993), pp.77-102; Jan Harm Boer, *Missionary Messengers of Liberation in a Colonial Context: A Case Study of the Sudan United Mission*, (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1979), pp.449-456; Jan Harm Boer, *Christians: Secular-Yes and No: Studies in Christian-Muslim Relations*, Vol. 5 (Belleville, ON Canada: Essence Publishing Company, 2006), pp.151-157; Herman Gray, Email, 16 January 2011.

⁶⁶ Burgess, *Times of Refreshing*, p.16.

constituent of the Enlightenment worldview'.⁶⁷ The missionaries therefore had no space for the 'open universe', the constituent of the African worldview. The culturally deep-seated African consciousness, concerns, troubling anxieties and customs were left out. Walls continues that their theology could not deal with 'the daily acute theological issues' that African Christians faced. 'Great areas of African life were often left untouched by Christ'.⁶⁸ In particular, their theology does not fully confirm the mystery of evils which Paul calls 'principalities and powers'.⁶⁹ This meant that the early gospel brought by the missionaries met a diehard response in Africa.

Charles Kraft notes that the Evangelical Missions brought a 'powerless message to a power-conscious people'; and the 'God of power portrayed in the Scriptures seemed to have died'.⁷⁰ He asserts that the Evangelical missions failed to explore and appreciate the African 'experience' in Christianity as drawn from their primal societies. Similarly, Christian G. Baëta notes that 'the church did not take account of the traditional beliefs of the people, little effort was made to understand them and to know their basic hopes and fears...'.⁷¹ Gerhardus Oosthuizen corroborates Baëta's view and states that the 'African past has been ignored and no attempt has been made to penetrate it with the regenerative power of the gospel message...'.⁷²

African Initiated Churches (AICs) have set a model by developing an African theology that takes cognisance of the Old Testament and New Testament passages that related the power encounter. Since this is reminiscent of the African consciousness, there has been remarkable consideration of the implications of the theology of power (or confrontation or power encounter) in addressing African troubling anxieties.⁷³ This is because there are African theological questions to which Western sources have no answer. The Western theological books are becoming irrelevant in dealing with African daily life experiences. The indigenous

⁶⁷ Andrew F. Walls, Keynote address on 'Bible Translation and the Future of Christianity in Africa' at Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy and Bible Translation (GILLBT) @ 50 Conference, 20-21 September 2012, R.S. Amegashie Auditorium, Business School, University of Ghana, Legon. A Transcribed Oral Record. For a detailed discussion of this, see Andrew F. Walls, 'Christian Scholarship in Africa in the Twenty-first Century', *Journal of African Christian Thought*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (December 2001), pp.44-52 (48-50).

⁶⁸ Andrew F. Walls, 'Kwame Bediako and Christian Scholarship in Africa', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (October 2008), pp.188-193 (p.189).

⁶⁹ Walls, Keynote address on 'Bible Translation and the Future of Christianity in Africa', 20th-21st September 2012, University of Ghana, Legon.

⁷⁰ Charles Kraft, *Christianity and Power* (Grand Rapids: Vine Books, 1989), pp.4, 8-9

⁷¹ Christian G. Baëta, *Christianity in Tropical Africa* (Oxford: Oxford university Press, 1968), p.426.

⁷² Gerhardus C Oosthuizen, *Christianity in Africa* (London: C. Hurst and Company, 1968), p.4.

⁷³ Walls, 'Christian Scholarship in Africa in the 21st Century', p.50.

categories of thought and methods need to be employed in dealing with African life experiences.⁷⁴ Christ needs to be pragmatically introduced to touch every part of human existence: physical and spiritual. Walls concludes that the ‘Theology of power is the one that unlocks the basic meaning of supernatural, for example “Principalities and Powers”⁷⁵ and the theology that demonstrates how Christ overthrew and triumphed over the powers of the evil’.⁷⁶

Witchcraft, which used to be an issue in Europe in the 15th to 18th centuries, is now an African problem. What will the African churches do to mitigate this existential situation? It is time evangelical churches and African scholars endeavour to convert indigenous elements, use them and touch cultured-related problems, make the gospel of Christ speak to African situations. This is what the *Gidan Addu’a* seeks to do, although it veered off course in many aspects.

9.11 Conclusion

Africans generally conceive of religion as a system of power and life in constant relationship with the supreme source of power in the universe. In contrast, Western Christianity on the whole does not have such space for ‘power encounters’ as understood by African Christians because of the unconscious impact of the Enlightenment. Tite Tiénou suggests that it is high time that Africans ‘recooked’ and ‘rewarmed’⁷⁷ Western Christian theology to address African consciousness, concerns and fears. African Christians drawing from their primal spiritual worldview often emphasise the ‘power’ manifested in Jesus Christ’s victory over Satan in his ministry. However, confusion and ambiguities surround the African concept of ‘power’ if it is not adequately converted and when it is fused with the old, but not adequately expressed in terms of the new faith. The old source of power (spirits) may either hold much

⁷⁴ Walls, Keynote address on ‘Bible Translation and the Future of Christianity in Africa’, 20th-21st September 2012, University of Ghana, Legon.

⁷⁵ ‘Principalities and Powers’ are used with cluster of forms such as power, throne, authority, dominion, lordship and rule. See ‘Principalities and Powers’ in Robert Banks & R. Paul Stevens (eds.), *The Complete Book of Everyday Christianity* (Database WORDsearch Corporation, 2003), pp.795-801; Walter A. Elwell & Philip W. Comfort (eds.), ‘Principalities and Powers’, *Tyndale Bible Dictionary* (Database WORDsearch Corporation, 2000), p.1078.

⁷⁶ Walls, Keynote address on ‘Bible Translation and the Future of Christianity in Africa’, 20th-21st September 2012, University of Ghana, Legon.

⁷⁷ Tite Tiénou, *The Theological Task of the Church in Africa* (Achimota: Africa Christian Press, 1990), p.46.

sway over the new source of power (Holy Spirit) or the old power may operate under the guise of the new.

From my observation, it seems explicit that the efficacy of the power revolves around the personality and not the source through which the personality draws. In this case, the person who expresses spiritual experience becomes the power. This is one of the major theological flaws. Rom.1:16 adequately redirects us to believe that ‘the gospel is the power’.

On the other hand, the Western missionaries whose worldview neglects ‘spirit cosmology’ do not place much stress on power, but rather on the ‘servanthood’ which is manifested in the humble suffering of Christ in saving humanity. The extreme view held by most of the faith healers about the suffering of Christ is that His atoning work had brought forgiveness and salvation, as well as the healing of all diseases. It is left to the practitioners to appropriate them. Therefore, the issue of the on-going suffering of believers in Christ is misconceived and misunderstood. Moreover, faith healers, as developed in Chapter Eight, interpret the on-going suffering of believers as an entirely negative experience, a sign of spiritual failure or an impediment of spiritual fulfilment. This perception loses sight of the fact that the proclaimer is not the ‘power’ but only an instrument in the hands of the owner of power, God. In NT religiosity, the Cross constitutes a central paradigm and standard for Christian ministry. Denying suffering as part of the life experiences of a believer is unrealistic and presents a one-sided theology. This is where the faith healers stress the positive side of life to the neglect of the eventual negatives: presence of success, prosperity and fortune, but absence of failure, poverty and misfortune. The NT takes seriously both success and suffering. Charles Farah makes well the point as he challenges Kenneth Hagin on his one-dimensional approach to life issues. In his words:

What’s happened with the faith message is that we’ve told about the good things, but in telling only about the positive side, some people don’t even realize that the suffering side exists. Certainly, we are to emphasize the positive aspects of walking in faith because there’s victory in Jesus! But at one time or another, all of us suffer persecution, insults, and criticism that test and try us.⁷⁸

The study of the *Gidan Addu’a*, as a whole, reveals two basic views. First, the mission-founded churches consider ‘spiritual experience’ as self-acclaimed and self-imposed ideas

⁷⁸ Charles Farah, *From the Pinnacle of the Temple* (Plainfield: Logos International, n.d.), pp.151-152. For a detailed definition and discussion, see H. Hanegraaf, *Christianity in Crisis* (Eugene: Harvest House publishers, 1993), pp.259-269.

because of the over-spiritualisation by the Charismatic lay leaders. The spiritualisation of everything has cast a shadow on what they claimed to be inspiration from the Spirit. Their expression presupposes that they are rejuvenating traditional African beliefs and practices instead of converting them to make God's message much applicable. Their interpretation of some traditional categories, such as dreams, visions, vocal utterances and clairvoyance are just a way of revamping the old. They also employ traditional divinatory practices while claiming to have spiritual discernment before, during and after the arrival of their clientele. The church perceives their 'spiritual experience' as imagination, or hallucination, or fantasy and superstition. The church likened their beliefs and practices to traditional divination which always focuses on detecting evildoers and causing social unrest, and insists that their practices are syncretistic because they are blending the old religious life with the new faith. They are also clamouring for power and prosperity. If they were really called, as they claimed, they should have submitted to church mentorship and established their ministries within the church and with the consent of the church leadership.

On the other hand, the Charismatic lay leaders maintain that the 'spiritual experience' is the heart of their call, vision and mission. They consciously or unconsciously employ indigenous categories to respond to worlds of power: the devil and demons, evil spirits, witchcraft, occult powers, dreams, visions, vocal utterances, omens and other malignant forces. They are therefore handling areas considered to be outside the ministry of the church.

The aforementioned areas are perceived to have been ignored by the mission-founded churches. However, simply raising the indigenous categories is not enough as there is the need for them to be converted. This is where confusion and ambiguity lie. In the endeavour of the Charismatic lay leaders to interpret the life experiences of their clientele, they slipped into causing social chaos in their clients' families and in the society. First, witchcraft accusation or occult practice always exonerates one and condemns the other, especially the vulnerable women and children. This violates their human rights and dignity. The alleged 'witches' or 'occult initiates' are subjected to lifelong victimisation, stigmatisation, trauma, discrimination and consequent violence. The exorcists often use psychological techniques, especially hypnotism and mesmerism, and lead the purported perpetrators of evil to confess antisocial behaviour and nocturnal activities. Most of the confessions, as observed and heard, are not coherent. This is because those who 'confess' their evil deeds could not recall them after the exercise.

Some people may argue that the ‘victims’ were under the control of the ‘Spirit’ during the confessions. On the contrary, the Holy Spirit does not and will not cause confusion and commotion. Confession is only the tip of the iceberg of consequent social implications on the accused in the family and society. Their deliverance sessions in most cases involved or resulted in the breakdown of the family social structure, creating long-term hatred, jealousies and disharmonies in the family and society. The so-called ‘liberated’ victims are left with the adverse social impact. In most cases, they are susceptible to lynching, or murder, or secret killing by angry mobs at night or in broad daylight.

Still, many of the alleged symptoms of spirit possession cannot stand the test of the concept of biblical possession. This is because the Charismatic lay leaders reconstruct the problem based on spontaneous spiritual experience, feelings, and emotions. A case in point is the uncritical examination of the testimonies given by the ‘exorcists’ and the ‘exorcised’, which encourages dubious people to deceive others with their exaggerated or fabricated testimonies. People who attempt to challenge some of the ‘questionable’ testimonies are either branded as sceptics or threatened with spiritual intimidation: ‘Touch not my anointed one’. This is a general warning never to attempt to fight the exorcist with one’s fist and never to condemn his words as false or misleading. Thus, the exorcists claim to have divine immunity and present their words as infallible. The implication is that even if the words would lead genuine people to doom, no one has the right to question them. Therefore, any experience that does not produce good fruits is void.

Moreover, the socio-economic factor in our society causes many people to begin prayer centres or prayer homes just for inexplicable purposes. This study has shown that only a few of such leaders committed themselves enough to undergo Bible training.

Besides, the over-emphasis of the Charismatic lay leaders which links all omens to the operations of malignant mystical forces leaves their clients with the lasting fear of being attacked anytime, anywhere and by anyone. Members critically observe the operations of nature and endeavour to give spiritual meaning to them. This has wreaked havoc on social development in the society. In fact, some of the elite fear to spearhead any development ‘venture’ in the society.

In this study, I have tried to discuss each ministry under the auspices of the *Gidan Addu’a* movement on its own merits. On the whole, the movement sought to address culturally rooted

questions. It takes the culture of the people into consideration, with its tendencies of dealing with related beliefs and threatening roles of mystical forces. It attempts to convert indigenous categories in Christian terms. It stresses that mission-founded churches consciously or unconsciously failed to appreciate ‘multiplicity’ in the transcendent.

However, the model of this movement is creating alarming social problems. The movement is generally obsessed with the activities of mystical powers directed against the members of the society. On the one hand, this makes the movement affirm the old order. Although, the Charismatic lay leaders of the ministries claim to have been charting a new course of indigenising the Christian faith, they exhibit some fraudulent practices which distort both traditional and Christian norms. Many of their followers who are tagged perpetrators of evil in one way or the other are neither accepted by their family, nor able to be part of the church. Yet there is only one gospel of salvation and it is founded on Christ. Therefore, any gospel that does not affirm the victory of Christ over principalities and powers, nor acknowledge that the Christ-event has turned the old powers towards God for a total overhauling of God’s creation, has no basis. The inadequate conversion may be due to the weakness or lack of Bible training of the Charismatic lay leaders. The indigenous categories are taken literally and spiritualised. Nevertheless, the attempt of the Charismatic lay leaders has brought a challenge to the mission-founded churches and has opened various challenging issues for reconsideration and theologising to make the biblical message address some of the seemingly untouched challenges of life.

Theological and historical works as well as oral expressions by both African Christians and a few Western Christians tend to blame early Evangelical Missions for failing to take into account the African religious consciousness. It is true that the early evangelical Christians inherited a worldview that neither experienced nor appreciated the worlds of spiritual power. Now that the worlds of power have become an issue of concern in Africa, and since the shift has occurred in the centre of gravity of Christianity (Europe and North America) to Africa,

Asia, Latin America and the Pacific,⁷⁹ it is time that Africans adequately indigenised the Christian faith. The cultural questions are affecting the lives of both believers and unbelievers. This is a task that African Christians need to pursue, touching the yet ‘untouched’ areas of life by the gospel. Walls admonishes us that

Africans need to involve intense discipline and consecrated thought on the scripture using indigenous categories of thoughts, indigenous ways or methods...and turning them towards Christ...Theology does not come from the study of the Library. Rather, it derives from the ordinary work, witness, and learning of Christ’s church and the Christians. The crucial thrust of theology is that of the transmission of the Word.⁸⁰

In a similar vein, Kwame Bediako suggested that African Christianity needs ‘to prune off some of the features of primal worldviews and sharpen them focusing, this time, upon Christ.’ For in African Christianity, ‘Christ is a living power... It is hardly surprising that the christologies that have emerged in African theology so far are predominantly “pneumatic”, presenting a Christ who is a living power in the realm of spirit’.⁸¹

Theological training in Africa needs to engage issues of the African ‘power encounter’. For example, it should address African concepts that were always linked to spiritual causality. There should be an African theological formation of clergy in the mission-founded churches. The training should provide for a Christian seminarian or future minister to be able to compare and contrast indigenous and Christian categories, as well as determine what is to be attested, how, why and on what grounds. Theological issues should be more practical because there are more African issues now for which Western theological works have no answer. Still, church worship, life and ministries or services all need to provide a varied forum that would deal with issues of spiritual power. The OT, part of the Gospels, the Epistle to the Hebrews and some portions of the Pauline epistles would be helpful here. These are

⁷⁹ David B. Barrett (ed.), *World Christian Encyclopaedia – A Comparative Study of Churches and Religions in the Modern World AD 1900-2000* (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1982); David Barrett, ‘AD 2000: 350 Million Christians in Africa,’ *International Review of Mission*, Vol. 59, No. 233 (1970), pp.39-54 (39-40); Andrew F. Walls, ‘Old Athens and new Jerusalem: Some Signposts for Christian Scholarship in the Early History of Mission Studies’ *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (October 1997), pp.146-153 (150-153); Kwame Bediako, *Jesus in Africa* (Oxford: Regnum Africa, 2000); Kwame Bediako, *Christianity in Africa: The Renewal of a Non-Western Religion*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh university Press/Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995), pp.126-151; J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, ‘The Church in the State: The Pentecostal/Charismatic Experience in Ghana,’ *Journal of African Christian Thought* Vol.2 No.1 (1998); David M. Beckmann, *Eden Revival: Spiritual Churches in Ghana* (London: Concordia Publishing House, 1975).

⁸⁰ Walls, Keynote address on ‘Bible Translation and the Future of Christianity in Africa’, 20-21 September 2012, University of Ghana, Legon.

⁸¹ Bediako, *Christianity in Africa*, p.176.

necessary to shed light on the role of divine inspiration in the process of diagnosing and discerning problems. They are crucial issues because sometimes it is difficult to distinguish between God's revelation and wishful thinking, or between discernment and hallucination. The mission-founded churches need to pay attention to traditional beliefs and fears, reflect on acute daily issues and provide adequate responses. The time of repressing and suppressing pertinent life-threatening issues is now history.

There are several opportunities for mainstreaming indigenous issues of power in church worship, life and ministries as well as in Bible training institutions. First, leadership in the evangelical church has shifted to the hands of Africans who have knowledge of their indigenous worldview and culture. Second, church Bible studies as well as Question and Answer sessions are opportunities for sharing cultural life-threatening issues. Third, some of the indigenous threatening issues need to be mainstreamed into the curricula of African Bible schools, Bible colleges, seminaries and theological institutions. Teaching should start from the indigenous understanding, and then move on to Christian understanding. Fourth, seminars, spiritual retreats and workshops should be organised quarterly on selected indigenous life-threatening issues. Fifth, theological colloquia should be organised with presentations on selected indigenous issues. Sixth, Bible training institutions should organise their students to debate on indigenous issues. Crucial African Christian scholarship is to appropriately employ African indigenous categories, turning them toward Christ, in order to interpret and correctly apply the Word of God to life experiences. This will advance the course of the gospel to touch all races and generations. This study therefore aims at stimulating further studies on the indigenisation of the Christian faith, commonly pursued by new indigenous religious movements, on the one hand, and on Western theology which has consciously or unconsciously failed to address issues of power encounters, perceived as foreign or outside its domain,⁸² on the one other.

⁸² Harold W. Turner, 'The Primal Religions of the World and their Study', in Victor C. Hayes (ed.), *Australian Essays in World Religion* (Bedford Park, SA: Australian Association for the Study of Religions, 1970), p.34.