

ABSTRACT

A STRATEGY TO ENHANCE CHRISTIAN LIFESTYLE OF NOMINAL
CHRISTIANS IN DUDI SDA CHURCH, KENYA

by

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ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Master of Arts in Pastoral Theology Project

Adventist University of Africa

Theological Seminary

Title: A STRATEGY TO ENHANCE CHRISTIAN LIFESTYLE OF
NOMINAL CHRISTIANS IN DUDI SDA CHURCH, KENYA

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Date completed: July 2013

In my pastoral ministry as a church pastor, I have observed the lukewarm condition among members of Dudi Seventh-day Adventist church.

Such a lifestyle has given rise to nominalism which has hindered joyful worship services, sincerity and faithfulness among members of this church. This realization motivated the researcher to develop a Bible-based strategy to enhance Christian lifestyle of nominal Christians in the Dudi Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The researcher was motivated by the two views which are: working for God and having a living relationship with Him. Since these two values were evidenced in the lives of Martha and Mary respectively, the response Jesus gave in regard to these worshippers repudiates not only a mere outward expression of working for God, but also an intimate relationship with Him. At the same time such an intimacy must be expressed in a believer's outward activities including regular church attendance, liberal giving for God's course, caring for other peoples' needs and other good works

done in appreciation for the free salvation given on the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The end results are new birth in Christ and converted hearts whose effects are seen in the actions of the beholders as Jesus allegorically compares such a lifestyle with the wind as indicated in John 3:8.

The same strategy is expected to capture attention of every believer who expresses outward faith in a nominal sense but denies a lifestyle that is in harmony with the biblical precepts. Church leadership in the Adventist movement is also expected to revitalize its system to the biblical tone without wavering so as to show out the right path. Since the call to live according to God's Word embodies everyone under the sun, there is a dire need to shun nominalism and embrace the will of God that bears a keynote for safety into the kingdom.

Adventist University of Africa

A STRATEGY TO ENHANCE CHRISTIAN LIFESTYLE OF
NOMINAL CHRISTIANS IN DUDI SDA CHURCH, KENYA

A Project

Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in Pastoral Theology

by

Ogayo Luka Otieno

August 2013

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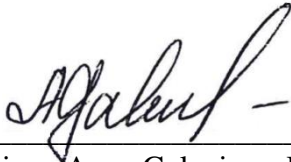
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Dedication

I dedicate this work to the almighty God who enabled me to go through this taxing and strenuous exercise that was too expensive for both my mental and financial strengths. It has been through God's bidding that I have seen these successful ends.

I also dedicate it to my dear and honest wife who was able to encourage and stand by me from the beginning to the end of the four years' long journey of stressful moments. The same applies to my dear children who would not grumble over daily self-denial lifestyle that inevitably characterized my inner family circles during the entire course period. I salute my dear mother who incessantly stood awake in hearty supplications and solicited every means for the success of this work. I say words of congratulations for all that you have done.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

KJV	King James Version
NAS	New American Standard
NIB	New International Version (UK)
NRS	New Revised Standard Version 1989

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Through careful analysis and synthesis of the biblical texts which outlines Christian principles, it has been exciting to realize the benefits one achieves when he or she lives according to them. In the same trend of study, I discovered dire damnation on those whose lifestyles are contrary to Christian principles but merely manifest nominal lifestyle in their religious activities. In essence, for the last few years, I have spent several hours exploring contradictions that exist between Christian lifestyle and nominalism. The fundamental truths exhumed during this process are worth emulating. The principals given in this research paper have planted in me a process of advancement and intensification in faith. While it is impossible to recognize all those whom God has used to touch my life in the process of writing these chapters, some few entities and special individuals will be mentioned.

It is with undisputed regards for the Kenya Lake Conference Executive Committee that empowered me both morally and financially. The recognition goes to Elder Eliazar Muga whose chairmanship sensitized the entire Dudi district membership into a successful financial support towards this worthy course. Much regard is due to Elder Philip Owili who ungrudgingly assisted me in data collection that brought to light great truths which otherwise would have remained concealed.

I appreciate the family of elder Samuel Adwa whose powerful encouragement in the Lord proved to be a viable resource that propelled my vigor headlong endeavor into this research. The same gratitude extends further to my able instructor Dr. Anna Galeniece, whose wise counsel and guidance enabled me to read and write this project in its orderly manner. Congratulations for the wisdom that God has bestowed in you.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The enhancement of nominal Christians into biblically-based Christian lifestyle could be regarded as one of the most pertinent current duties for true Christians. Nominal Christian conditions may be viewed from different perspectives. A dictionary definition of nominal is “being such in name only; so-called; putative.”¹ Further definition from the Oxford dictionary categorizes nominal status into three main ways: “as a role or status existing in a name only, a price or change far below the real value or cost, a quantity or dimension, expressed but not necessarily corresponding exactly to the real value.”² The above definitions refer to price of items, measurements of objects, and convey grammatical connotations.

In reference to the Bible, nominal Christian lifestyle is viewed as a mere form of Christianity devoid of the true Christian principles. On nominal Christian lifestyle, Breese asserts that it:

Refers to those who call themselves Christians, but who are not the real thing. They are Christians in name only, but they constitute what probably can be called the most common form of the Christian religion in our time. It even may be suggested that nominal Christians far outnumber the real thing.³

¹Dave Breese, “Nominal Christianity- A Destiny Newsletter,” [www.http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/nominal](http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/nominal) (19 August 2012).

²(Oxford University Press © 2013), <http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/English/nomi> (19 August 2012).

³Dave Breese, www.bbcmorehead.org/ndex.php?id=535 19 (August 19 2012).

The major concern here is to expose the dangers of nominal Christian lifestyle and to call Christian world and more precisely Dudi Seventh-day Adventist Church (SDA) members to embrace true Christian lifestyle.

The Background of Dudi SDA Church

Dudi SDA Church began as an isolated group of believers who were called the 'saved' because of their lifestyle. These people received God's word from pioneer Evangelists who visited this region in 1912. These converts, who were later baptized, decided to leave their various homes one after another and settled together in an isolated piece of land. Their movement was necessitated by their desire to separate themselves from their fellow clansmen, who had various traditional ways of life, in order to embrace a full Christian lifestyle.

They established a Sabbath School in which both spiritual and mental development could be achieved at their new environment. Their Christian lifestyle became a beam of light that drew many people into their group. Their temperate life standard and zeal for God's work became a striking point in the entire village. These members brought both their strength and resources together for church activities and outreach needs. Their Christian lifestyle became above reproach and their new settlement was praiseworthy named as the 'home of the saved.' However, after some time, some of them started moving back to their former homes and joined their former clansmen in their traditional ways of life but would come on Sabbaths bringing in their tithes and offerings. This homeward trend continued, and those who had come from far built their homes on the nearby plots not far away from the church ground. In essence, the church remained a place to be visited only on Sabbath days and on

midweek prayer meetings. Thus, the knowledge of God was slowly mixing up with traditions of men and their former vibrant Christian lifestyle became lukewarm.¹

The true Christian lifestyle diminished gradually among some members who manifested their worship in tradition but not according to the Scriptures. The meaningful worship was aligned to traditional ways of life and this later resulted into a nominal Christian lifestyle. However, their worship through tithes and offerings did not fade off to an extent that those who would wish to miss a Sabbath worship could still send their offerings for the course of God's work.

Statement of the Problem

About 40-50 percent of Dudi SDA church members are not committed to Christian lifestyle revealed in the Scriptures, even though they are involved in church activities and outreach activities through their financial support. The above cited percentage was reached based on the number of members who are spiritually committed to the biblical discipline against the total membership of Dudi SDA Church. The nominal Christian lifestyle has misrepresented the Scriptures among the newly baptized and other members because what nominal Christians profess in church is not what they practice outside the church. Their influences impact those who do not belong to any church but feel that Christian examples should be emulated. However, they find it difficult to do so because nominal Christians are always with them in their secular activities. Although some efforts have been made in terms of seminars, teachings and counseling through Church departmental activities to address this issue,

¹ Lukewarm in this is a state of spiritual condition which is neither cold nor hot.

there is still a dire need to develop comprehensive programs to enhance Christian lifestyle of these nominal members.

Purpose of the Study

This study aims at developing a Bible-based strategy that will enhance Christian lifestyle of nominal Christians in Dudi SDA Church. This will enable them understand the biblical requirements for a Christian lifestyle. This program aims at strengthening the newly baptized members so as to be established on the strong foundation of the Scriptures. This is to make them active Church members so that they may create a good reputation that will draw many people into the church of God.

The Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is that nominal Christians in Dudi SDA Church will be able to find clear understanding of their duty to uphold Christian lifestyle by heeding God's word revealed in the Scriptures. When this program is properly understood and practiced, the entire Dudi SDA Church will become actively involved in following the Bible as the word of God and they will be able to walk uprightly within the divine will of God.

Delimitation

This project is confined within applied theology attempting to draw Biblical views on enhancement of Christian lifestyle of nominal Christians. This will include the principles from Adventist literature that are vital for enhancement of Christian lifestyle of nominal Christians. However, other ideas will be borrowed from the literature of other writers. The major details of this research will concentrate at Western Kenya region-Nyanza province, Rachuonyo South District, Kakelo Location, Kakelo- Dudi Sub Location, and subsequently Dudi SDA Church.

Methodology

In this research, the following four steps will be followed. Chapter 1 will reveal brief background of the Dudi SDA Church showing how Christian lifestyle emerged in this region and how it gradually degenerated with some members leading nominal Christian lifestyle.

Chapter 2 will explore Biblical concerns on nominal Christian lifestyle with an aim of exposing the desired Christian lifestyle revealed in the Scriptures. It will also disclose the unbecoming traits of nominal Christian lifestyle in the Bible that should be shunned.

Chapter 3 will describe the background of Dudi SDA Church and present the findings from the surveys that will be done through questionnaires and personal interviews. Other details will be exhumed through looking into church records, plus other related documents aimed at establishing facts about nominal Christian lifestyles.

Chapter 4 will deal with the preparation, implementation of the strategy and evaluation of the entire process in order to establish whether there is a change in the lifestyle of nominal Christians or not. To achieve this goal, a designed Bible based Christian lifestyle program will be in place for thorough seminars that will be conducted so as to come out with a changed lifestyle in Dudi SDA Church.

Chapter 5 will provide the summary of the whole project with conclusion and recommendation statements.

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL BASIS ON ENHANCING CHRISTIAN LIFESTYLE OF NOMINAL CHRISTIANS

Nominal Lifestyle in the Old Testament

The genesis of nominal lifestyle in the Old Testament can be traced from the perspective of the intrusion of sin that took place after God had declared everything He had created to be good. Goodness was the original order of every entity and thus nature was wholesomely very good, as indicated in the last verse of Genesis 1. However Satan managed to inculcate doubts in the minds of Adam and Eve. By so doing, Adam and Eve were weakened to an extent of ushering in the unnatural traits of evil inclinations.

In this respect many people are swayed by the power of evil influence, as they doubt the validity of orderliness and goodness of everything that God had put in place. Instead, they accept human theories, which in real light disguise the devises of the evil one. In essence, the whole world has been marred with evil. According to Cotten, “the opening book of the scripture does not view evil as natural. Instead it regards evil as unnatural...It may have become the norm, but evil is still not something that God intended...It is always in the minority though thoroughly

permeating our existence.”¹ Nominal lifestyle gets its roots from this perspective of doubts and it extraordinarily permeates its existence in many people contiguously by the means which Cotten refers to as “common cold,” for he states that: “Health is natural for each of us and disease is unnatural; however contracting the common cold twice a year is the norm. Even though it is not natural to have the sneezing, wheezing, coughing, congestion sore throat, fever and headache are associated with the disease.”² In the like manner, nominal lifestyle is equally associated with several symptoms that need to be taken seriously lest they affect the whole Christian system. Human race tend to say that nominal lifestyle is God’s problem. More precisely, they attribute it to God with a claim that they have nothing to do about it. However it is a sin problem which is associated with the humans’ rebellion against God’s precepts. Nominal lifestyle can be seen in the light of mild or strong opposition against God’s properly constituted order of worship and leadership worthy among the professed believers. While there is need for people who can stand firm on the right precepts and give direction under all circumstances, nominal lifestyle leads people into taking no proper stand.

Nominal lifestyle is a non-respecter of persons and so it extends its ravaging pangs into all classes of peoples and races. It wrecks people from lower levels of responsibility up to the outermost levels of high responsibility and calling. One of the most outstanding manifestations of nominal lifestyle among the Hebrews in the Old Testament is the case of Aaron and golden calf where this renowned priest took the feelings of the people without making a proper stand. This act resulted into his severe

¹ Richard W. Cotten, *When God Sheds Tears, a Christian Look at the Mystery of Suffering* (Hagerstown, MD, U.S.A.: Review and Herald, 1993). 23.

²Ibid.,

censure. It is revealed in the Old Testament that nominal lifestyle yields discontent among believers and it gives rise to murmurings among leaders and members alike. Such kind of feeling is manifested in the lives of leaders like Miriam and Aaron whose influence affected the entire assembly of the Hebrews.

Leaders of high responsibility and honor, those who serve from God's appointments, are not safe from the danger of nominal Christian lifestyle. In this respect Korah, Dathan and Abiram exposed themselves conspicuously as expressers of discontent with the order of governance and hence doubted the credibility of those who were in the position of leadership even though they were also entrusted with sacred responsibilities as stated by E.G. White that:

Korah, Dathan and Abiram first commenced their cruel work upon the men to whom God had entrusted sacred responsibilities. They were successful in alienating two hundred and fifty princes who were famous in the congregation, men of renown. With these strong and influential men on their side, they felt sure of making a radical change in the order of things. They thought they could transform the government of Israel and greatly improved it from its present administration.¹

The Old Testament reveals nominal lifestyle of believers as a life full of envy for powers and positions. Through the use of influential devices, nominalism drive men and women into their damnations as witnessed in the lives of Korah, Dathan and Abiram including their associates. This is evidenced in their envious and lustful acts against Moses. White asserts:

Korah was not satisfied with his position. He was connected with the service of the tabernacle, yet he desired to be exalted to the priesthood. God had established Moses as chief governor and the priesthood was given to Aaron and his sons. Korah determined to compel Moses to change the order of things, that he might be raised to dignity of the priesthood.²

¹Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church Vol.3* (Washington DC, U.S.A.: Herald and Publishing, 1872-1875), 344.

²Ibid.,

Disobedience and unbelief which are pertinent components of nominal lifestyle are able to lead people into great losses and pains. While in the beginning God gave His law to mankind as a means of attaining happiness and eternal life, nominal Christian lifestyle which is Satan's device has created incessant attempts to thwart the purpose of God's law hence lead men and women to misrepresent its teachings and belittle its importance. His master stroke has been an attempt to change the law itself, so as to lead men to violate its precepts while professing to obey it.¹

When the word of God is disobeyed, the result becomes terrible losses. Such like events find their explanation in the episode of Jonah, a prophet sent by God to warn the Ninevites. His failure to comply with the standard of the errand exposed him to great pains and more so to his co-travelers who suffered heavy losses even though they were totally ignorant of what had transpired in Jonah's relationship with God (Jonah 1:1-3, 5).

The researcher can therefore attest that nominal lifestyle respects no boundary as it affects even priests of noble calling in the caliber of Jonah whose prophetic predictions had been fulfilled when he spoke according to the word of God.² Nominal lifestyle invades even the most gifted personalities in the status of Solomon, the wisest and the richest king ever. Having attained nominal lifestyle through unsanctified marriages, which led him to stop relying upon God for wisdom; King Solomon's later life became painfully dull. God desires a continued Christian lifestyle walk with His people. He delights in those who will rely on His counsel as Ellen G. White indicates:

¹Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings* (Washington DC, U.S.A.: Review and Herald, 1917), 179

²2Kings 14:25

All the sins and excesses of Solomon can be traced to his great mistake in ceasing to rely upon God for wisdom, and to walk in humility before him--- The lesson for us to learn from the history of this reverted life is the necessity of continued dependence upon the counsels of God, to carefully watch the tendency of our course, and to reform every habit calculated to draw us away from God. It teaches us that great caution, watchfulness, and prayer are needed to keep undefiled the simplicity and purity of our faith.¹

The Old Testament exposes several instances where wrong influences have led renowned men into nominal lifestyles. This may be due to the influence of solid majority who seem not to care about right living which is in harmony with the Christian standards. Instead they enjoy what is called 'life' at its fullest on earth with a continued cultural fixation on hedonism in the name of enjoying every flash filled moment to its fullest.²

However, Solomon being the wisest king challenges McFarland's assertion alluded to nominal believers' lifestyle which takes hedonism course of worldly pleasures devoid of God's precepts. He points out in his conclusive statements that life can only be meaningfully enjoyed when one puts God in the central position of whatever he or she does. He finally submits to the power of God and states that:

There is nothing better for a man than to eat and drink and tell himself that his labor is good. This also I have seen that it is from the hand of God. For who can eat and who can have enjoyment without Him? For to a person who is good in His sight He has given wisdom and knowledge and joy, while to the sinner He has given the task of gathering and collecting so that he may give to one who is good in God's sight. This too is vanity and striving after wind. (Eccl 2:24-26, NAS)

This shows that nominal Christian life is but vanity and the most required standard of Christian living is total dependence upon God. The above-cited instances of nominalism in the Old Testament confirm abhorrence and damnations as the end

¹E. G. White, *SDA Bible Commentary* Vol. 2, (Washington DC, U.S.A.: Review and Herald, 1953), 1031.

²Alex, McFarland, *The 10 Most Common Objections to Christianity* (Ventura, Calif, USA: Regal Books, 1982), 160.

result save for those who changed course and attained the right precepts as outlined by God Himself. However, there are also cases of nominal Christian lifestyle in the New Testament.

Nominal Christian Lifestyle in the New Testament

There are several instances in the New Testament that reveal nominal Christian lifestyle. In all these, the end result proved fatal, except for cases where the affected changed course. For example, nominal Christian lifestyle is revealed in the life of Caiaphas, a Jewish high priest who served in this office during Jesus' time. His nominal lifestyle is expressed in the corrupt system in his priesthood.

As the high priest, Caiaphas led a group of priests who were entrusted with responsibilities of carrying out moral judgment and mediatory work between believers and God. However, he is presented as the last priest who served to end the whole system of Jewish priesthood which had become corrupt and devoid of God's connection, for they had hated what was right and instead clung to selfish ambitions. Moreover, *The SDA Bible Commentary* states that

Virtually Caiaphas was no high priest. He wore the priestly robes, but had no virtual connection with God. He was uncircumcised in heart, proud and overbearing; he proved his unworthiness ever to have worn garments of high priest. He had no authority from heaven to occupy the position. He had no ray of light from God to show him what the work of priest was, or what the office was instituted.¹

In the like manner, those who confess their faith in Christ and in essence call themselves disciples of Him, but deny the principles laid upon them for pure walk with Christ suffer the same misconnection with the heavenly authority. Thus, it can be said that: "The nominal Christian calls himself a Christian, may even be religious, but

¹"Mathew" *SDA Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein Vol. 5 (Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A.: Zondervan, 1956). 1101.

does what he wants rather than the Will of God.”¹ This depicts nominal Christian lifestyle which does not give full honor and glory to God. Such a lifestyle deprives the beholder the true benefits one needs to have in such a high calling. Besides, it creates a barrier between the believer and his Master who in essence endeavors to use one’s talents and abilities for the advancement of His kingdom.

Similarly, the New Testament reveals Judas as one among the twelve disciples whose character represents nominal Christian lifestyle. An unstable Christian lifestyle has two variables which are in opposition with each other—outward and inward working. According to *SDA Bible Commentary*, the commentator writes that:

Judas was with Christ through the entire period of the savior’s public ministry. He had all that Christ would give him. Had He used his capabilities with earnest diligence, he could have accumulated talents. Had he sought to be a blessing, instead of a questioning, criticizing, selfish man, the Lord would have used him to advance His kingdom. But Judas was a speculator. He thought that he could manage the finances of the church and by his sharpness in business get gain. He was divided in heart... He refused to give up the world for Christ. He never committed his eternal interest to Christ. He had a superficial religion and therefore speculated upon his Master and betrayed him to the priests, being fully persuaded that Christ would not allow Himself to be taken²

This superficial religion depicted in the nominal Christian lifestyle of Judas is profoundly manifested in the life of wavering members of the Christian church as seen in the New Testament. Those who have not yet fully committed their knowledge into the hands of the Master for the advancement of His Kingdom are busy dividing their efforts both for the world and the church. At such a point, one reaches a point of nominal lifestyle whose end result is total loss both in this world and in the world to

¹Pradeep Emmanuel Stephen, “TheNominalChristian,”<http://www.comprehensivechristian.com/The-Nominal-Christian-comprehensivechristian.com.asp> (19 August 2012).

²“Mathew,” *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol.,5 (Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A.: 1956), 1101.

come. This idea is manifested in the life of Judas who lost all earthly pleasures and only ended up in the wrath of suicidal death. It is therefore an honest requirement that those who live nominal lifestyle be turned fully to Christ's shaping and modeling so as to attain the faithful walk with their Master.

Another instance of nominal Christian lifestyle in the New Testament is illustrated in the man Simon who got converted to Christian religion. Satan had kept in him certain traits which he would not wish to forget, even though he had embraced Christianity. His conversion led him into baptism. Afterwards he walked with the apostles and marveled at the wondrous work of God as revealed Acts 8:13. Nevertheless, his nominal Christian lifestyle is manifested in his strong monetary desire other than the spiritual aspect. Simon understood conversion and the gift of the spirit in the context of acquisition of gold and silver without sincere desire to overcome sin (Acts 8:18-19). He therefore opted for an easier means to obtain 'spiritual powers' than accepting self-denial mode of Christianity.

It was at this point that Peter took the initiative to rebuke in Simon that nominal lifestyle which directed his thought to reduce God given powers in his mission into a matter of financial gain. The book of Acts states the following,

But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! "You have no part or portion in this matter, for your heart is not right before God. "Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray the Lord that if possible, the intention of your heart may be forgiven you. "For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bondage of iniquity. But Simon answered and said, "Pray to the Lord for me yourselves, so that nothing of what you have said may come upon me. (Acts 8:20-24, NAS).

Simon, whose pre-conversion lifestyle indicated acts of sorcery, was able to stand tall in these acts as a man of unique powers. He drew a number of people onto himself and they believed in him as one endowed with great powers from God. It is expressed that Simon had to leave all the worldly passion and falsehood in order to

embrace real powers from God which descends upon those who are truly converted. To allow such desires as that of Simon would render him a nominal member in the initial stage of this newly born church hence Peter exhorted him for repentance. In the like manner, it is manifested in the New Testament that there are such-like personalities whom Jesus met in the Temple giving offerings. They were willing to use their financial strengths on church affairs as an exhibition of their wealth without true repentance from old traits of their previous lifestyle. At the same time, others would be interested in church affairs in order to experience financial gains and other material benefits as explained in the life of Simon.

The New Testament gives another account on nominal Christian lifestyle on the aspect of general church membership as revealed in the gospel according to Luke. It states that: "And someone in the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me"(Luke12:13, NAS). This individual took Jesus' powers as a means to enrich his selfishness. His attitude benumbed the spirit of true discipleship and instead esteemed self-gratification and maintained a thought on worldly gains rather than viewing the church as a family destined to eternal inheritance as stated that: "To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1Pet 1:4). Such a nominal position gave this man a different dimension as expressed by E.G. White that:

He could appreciate that ability of the Lord which might work for the advancement of his own temporal affairs; but spiritual truths had taken no hold in his mind and heart. The gaining of the inheritance was his absorbing theme. Jesus the King of glory who was rich yet in our sake became poor, was opening to him the treasures of divine love. The Holy Spirit was pleading with Him to become an heir of the inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away.' 1 Pt. 1:4 He had seen evidence of power of Christ. Now the opportunity was for him to speak to the great teacher, to express the desire uppermost in his heart. But like man with muck rate in Bonyan's allegory, his

eyes were fixed on the earth. He saw not the crown above His head. Like Simon Magus, He valued the gift of God as means of worldly gains.¹

Thus the New Testament gives out plain instances of nominal Christian lifestyles which do not work for the advancement of God's kingdom, but rather cherish worldly gains. Such like dimensions are revealed as corrupt means of worship which do not archer a worshipper on the sure rock of salvation, but instead expose one into the danger of eternal loss incase true repentance is not realized.

In the light of these few examples of nominal lifestyle of believers gleaned from the Old and the New Testaments, the results in the research may affirm valid reasons for pronouncing a call for change into true religious traits which conform to the Christian standards. In both Testaments, nominal lifestyle is condemned and those who clang to it suffered certain fatal penalties which did not merely narrow on them alone but extended even to their families and the community at large. But those who changed course and embraced Christian lifestyle experienced the joy and peace which came along with the contrite heart. Based on the magnitude of pending dangers, it is necessary in this research to explain how nominal Christian lifestyle develops in the life of Christians.

Development of Nominal Christian Lifestyle in the Lives of Christians

Since every believer comes from a given community and has an experience with certain set rules within his or her society setup, a Christian lifestyle which they grasp demands in them some amount of growth. Due to these diversities, a converted member is faced with two grand values which are cultural practices from where he or she comes from and Christian teachings or values he or she enters into. The idea that

¹ Ellen G. White, *Christ Object Lesson* (Washington DC, U.S.A.: Review and Herald, 1900), 253.

Christian values usher in a new development on the already established cultural beliefs requires patience and readiness to learn and cope up with new standards. Because Christian values are destined to shape cultural practices and shed spiritual light on them, there is need to embrace these spiritual lights.

However, when Christians mingle these two values, the end result is a nominal status that develops into a lifestyle which is of a mere matter or form of Christianity without the actual Christian value. This idea gains its stronghold and develops mostly when religious leaders embrace movements which recognize the dignity and autonomy of the cultures of the nations that began to grow from the late nineteenth century. Although the calls to respect traditional cultures above Christian ones were mild in the sixteenth century, by the middle of the twentieth century, more and more calls were being made to respect the cultures of the non-Christian nations, calls by missionaries and popes alike.¹

Such calls and emphasis on the need to strengthen cultural practices side by side with Christian practices give rise to nominal Christian lifestyle. This mediocre state creates no proper distinction between religious beliefs and cultural practices. To this effect, Prophet Elijah marveled at the wavering conditions of the Israelites when he realized that they had not taken proper position on which particular practice to stand for as the Bible indicates that: "And Elijah came near to all the people and said, "How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him." But the people did not answer him a word." (1Kings18:21).

Even though a good deal of Christian history testifies no distinction between traditional cultures and Christian beliefs, to embrace beliefs in the Christian God

¹StumlmueLLer, C. P. Carroll, *The Collegeville Pastoral Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (Minnesota, U.S.A.: Liturgical Collegeville, 1996), 672-3.

meant abandonment of cultural ways. This reached its heights in the nineteenth century especially in Africa.¹

On the same tone, there are other factors which lead to the development of nominal Christian lifestyle as can be gleaned from African Traditional writings. Such writings promote cultural practices in co-relation with Christian practices as worthy models which lead believers to Christ. Besides this, the fact that Christian practices are destined to shed spiritual light on the cultural practices is alluded to the African context, which can be seen in a proverb that states: “rain beats a leopard’s skin but it does not wash out the spots.”² This shows that African Traditional practices hardly give way to the intended changes brought about by Christian practices. Similarly, the above-alluded statement is expressed by Jeremiah: “Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots? [then] may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil”(Jer13:23). It denotes impossibility of one’s effort to change oneself but rather on the ability of Christ who is the only effective change agent.

This concurs with what Isaiah 55:11 says about the word of God for it works to bring changes when it takes root in human hearts. The ultimate result is spiritual growth as stated by Ellen G. White:

The germination of seed represents the beginning of spiritual life and the development of plant is a beautiful figure in Christian growth as in the nature so in grace; there can be no life without growth. The plant must either grow or die. As its growth is silent and impeccable, but continuous, so its development of Christian life may be perfect yet if God’s purpose for us is fulfilled, there will be continual advancement. Our opportunities multiply, our experiences

¹ Stumlmüller, C. P. Carroll, *The Collegeville Pastoral Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, 672-673.

² Sammy, R. Brown, *Africa’s Roots in God* (N.Y, U.S.A.: Hempstead, 2010), 72.

will enlarge and our knowledge increase. We shall become strong to bear responsibility, and our maturity will be in proportion to our privileges.¹

The fact that there are statements that advocate for the co-existence of African cultures side by side with Christian cultures fosters the development of nominal Christian lifestyle. Brown in his edition *Africa's Roots in God* points out that: “Despite the fact that Africa had and still has certain cultural practices that are similar with Christian Culture should not be taken as a tool to destroy Christian lifestyle but rather be accepted as models which lead believers to Christ--the ultimate reality of our faith and tradition.”²

On this very point, nominal Christian lifestyle develops greatly with faithfulness in the name of keeping our cultures and worshipping the same God. Similarly, nominal Christian lifestyle develops due to churches reluctance to point out sin by calling it by its right name. Church officers, including the ministers of the gospel, fall in the trap of not pointing out evils in the church most probably due to fear of becoming unpopular to church members. According to Watts: “Jesus who came from God filled with love and compassion did not hesitate to point out evils in men and women who were outwardly good and of scholarly value like Nicodemus.”³ The detailed episode is exposed vividly in the gospel of John where Jesus directed this renowned officer in the Roman government to the unwavering truth for a rebirth by water and spirit as one of the entry conditions into the Kingdom of God.⁴

¹Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons* (Washington, D.C.U.S.A.: Review & Herald, 1900), 65.

²Sammy R. Brown. *Africa's Roots in God*, 72.

³Ralph S. Watts, *Revival and Reformation*, ed. Donald E. Mansell (Washington DC, U.S.A.: Review and Herald, 1974),

⁴John 3:1-5, NAS

There ought to be a change in one's life both in attitude and through outward expressed deeds. When these two faculties are turned to the will of God, one's life will show plainly the distinction existing between nominal lifestyle and true Christian lifestyle. Consequently, one may be able to shun nominal Christian lifestyle and acquire true Christian lifestyle. By such a change, one would be able to acquire the status of a true Christian, a situation which Len explains in the following words:

A Christian is one who accepts the call to discipleship and whose life is shaped by that call. The process is called conversion or transformation. Jesus' call (Mark 1:15) is a call to repentance, to change. It requires a change in one's identity and basic orientation towards one's life. --- The call to Christian conversion is the call to become a person of good character. Accordingly, a person of good character is one who is engaged in the process of conversion, and so takes responsibility for his or her actions and has the capacity for healthy life giving relationships.¹

Nominal Christian lifestyle is a mediocre standard of a lifestyle which is referred to in the Old Testament as indecisiveness (1Kgs 18:21) and in the New Testament as Luke warmness (Rev 3:16). Therefore there is a need to suppress the development of nominal Christian lifestyle by grasping a change for Christian lifestyle both inwardly and through outward actions. Since inner thoughts are expressed in action and may not be hidden, the same applies to nominal Christian lifestyle, which will not stay hidden but is revealed plainly in the lives of Christians.

Manifestations of Nominal Christian Life

Nominal Christian lifestyle is manifested in the lifestyle of those who are without proper or outstanding belief. Since human kind was created in the image of God, as stated in the first chapter of Genesis, being like God ought to be the ultimate

¹Sperry Len, *Transforming Self and Community* (Minnesota, U.S.A.: Liturgical Press, 2002), 70.

goal of life. The same is expressed as holiness¹ and any denial of such dignity deny the existence of God.

So when one chooses to live between two options—living between honor and dishonor of the sole God—one manifests nominal Christian lifestyle which results in worshipping God through cultural traditions.

Worshipping God and Practicing Traditional Beliefs

Worshipping God in traditions is spelt out in cultural practices which involve changes in times and conditions of life such as seasons, fertility, pleasure, protection of family health, and wisdom which are aimed to serve both human needs as well as divine. In the like manner, such kind of worship extends to a point of setting up certain rules about worship that elevates traditions of men above God's divine will. Some biblical examples can be seen in the way Israelites attached greater value on the brazen serpent than on the power of God which it represented. This trend continued for several years after Moses, up to the period of King Hezekiah who took up reform programs in Israel to abolish traditional forms of worship which actually made them turn away from God. The Bible reveals that:

And he did right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father David had done. He removed the high places and broke down the sacred pillars and cut down the Asherah. He also broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for until those days the sons of Israel burned incense to it; and it was called Nehushtan. He trusted in the LORD, the God of Israel; so that after him there was none like him among all the kings of Judah, or among those who were before him (2 Kgs 18:3-5, NAS).

This kind of worship was abolished by Hezekiah who brought in reforms in Israel for the worship of the only and true God of Israel. Despite all these, the blood of animals which was pointing out to the precious blood of Christ is still being used by nominal Christians, to an extent of keenly using them on gender basis. This can be

¹Stumlmüller C. P. Carroll, 672, 673.

seen during funerals among the Luo community. When a woman dies, a female goat is slaughtered by the members of her parents' family and a female animal must be slaughtered by her husband's family as a ritual. The same applies in the family of a male person. A male animal is slaughtered when a man dies for the purpose of the same act. This practice includes some of the professed Christians and non-believers for the continuity of the community. It is therefore evident that sacrifices of old are still in force along with the grand truth made complete on the cross of Jesus.

Nominal Christians appear to have lost sight on the difference between the types and the antitypes revealed in the entire Bible. Hence, they stick to the old practices and give less attention to the reality of salvation, accomplished on the cross by Jesus Christ. High attention is given to the blood of beasts while little appreciation is given to the precious blood of Christ shed for the salvation of human race.

God desires that human beings be made free persons able to choose to grow in His image. When such growth is not realized in the life of Christians, their worship of God will be revolving around human set of rules and regulations devoid of honor of God. This idea is explained by the cry of Elijah who remains a contender of God's supremacy when he declared before the people the need to choose one opinion in worship as indicated in 1 Kings 18:21. Christ Himself made the same outcry when He called His people to cease from worshiping God in traditions of men. The Bible explains Jesus' displeasure with human forms of worship as He stated: "How be it in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of God, Ye hold the tradition of men as washing of pots and cups and many other such like things ye do" (Mark 7:7-8).

On the whole, the idea that God has manifested Himself through traditions of men should be treated as a matter of great theological concern because nominal

Christians have turned the same into a continuous trend of traditional way of worship. These same trends have taken stronger sense in worship to an extent that instead of glorifying God, the cultural practices and traditional norms, which work contrary to spiritual norms, are esteemed above principles of God. In the same manner, nominal Christians develop a means of approaching God with gifts of sacrifices as a way of making Him happy.

Appeasing God

Nominal standards of life carry with it apostate lifestyle, which is not in harmony with the Christian standards of life. In several occasions, nominal Christians like apostate Israel of old, opt to approach God with different gifts in a bid to conceal their wrongs with God. This can be alluded to the saying in Luo language which says “goyoNyasayegiguok.” This statement gets its direct translation in English as “beating God with a dog,” and this precisely means bribery. Such like devices were revealed by prophet Micah, as Judah and Israel in their apostate condition would approach God with inquiries like: appease

With what shall I come to the LORD and bow myself before the God on high? Shall I come to Him with burnt offerings, with yearling calves? Does the LORD take delight in thousands of rams, in ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I present my first-born for my rebellious acts, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? (Mic6:6-7, NAS).

The inquiries above are destined to appease God most acutely so as to avert His revenge on the sins of Israel. In the like manner, nominal Christians resort to appease God through different kinds of offerings and sacrifices without making steps into the means by which humanity can be in harmony with God. Nominal Christians treat their tithes and offerings as a way of furthering God’s work, but their practical lifestyle is directly in conflict with the mission of the church. This can be witnessed in the Prophet Samuel’s rebuke to King Saul by stating that the Lord has no delight in

burnt offerings and sacrifices, but in obeying His voice. Thus obedience is better than sacrifice and to listen is better than the fat of rams.¹

It is in this light that the Israelites were urged to express their godliness in their daily walk with God other than self-pretense displayed in their offering modes which included even human sacrifices. Prophet Micah extends the call for repentance on humility, for this will accord the nominal house of Jacob a true walk with God. Thus Micah responds in the tone of the old counsel given by the Lord God to the Israelites through Moses His servant by appealing to the Israelites to embrace justice, love mercy and to be humble². This concurs with the words of the Lord that Moses had reiterated several times to the Israelites during their wilderness journey. He called their attention to serve the Lord through total submission of their souls, hearts, and to reverently keep His commandments and statutes for their good?³. The required standards of worship are explicitly revealed on the strength of knowledge of God and His decrees in the commandment of true love for God and for fellow human beings; a statement which Jesus repeated to the erring Jews and Pharisees plus the teachers of the law of His time.

The fact that God owns everything demands in human race a gift of a contrite heart full of thanksgiving and obedience to His commandments. Without such elements in the character of a worshipper, all the giving and sacrifices are in vain. It is on this strength that Jesus Christ spoke through His prophets of old and said, “Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of

¹1Samuel 15:22 NAS

²Micah6:8 NAS

³Deuteronomy 10:12, 13NAS

the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams” (1 Sam 15:22). In this respect nominal Christian lifestyle, which is somewhat compacted with religious giving as means to appease God, is called upon to repent and come to God wholly on the basis of faith in Christ. Nominal Christian lifestyle is likened to the Jews whom prophet Isaiah branded as rulers of Sodom and Gomorrah due to their sinful lifestyle against the Lord but continued in sacrifices to appease God.¹ It follows that even the prayers of unconsecrated heart turns out to be an abomination to the Lord.

Consequently, the Lord speaks out through the prophet to caution the appeasing approaches to the Lord devised by nominal believers’ lifestyles as stated in Isaiah 1:10-17 in which the Lord negates the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of the goats. However, the Lord delights in right doings and correct judgments. This was Jesus’ effort to correct corrupt practices among the believers and leaders of God’s Church before and during His time. The same sentiment from the Savior’s voice should transcend down to our time in which Christians cling to forms instead of beholding Christ Himself.

This calls humanity to focus on God and to follow His divine precepts so as to walk in harmony with Him. It is on this account that Christ came upon this earth calling attention of His people directly to Himself in order to shun appeasing devices but rather become thanks givers for what He has done in their lives. Thus the mediatory work is not rested upon items but upon Christ Himself.

It is therefore futile to put an item in the name of sacrifices, tithes and offerings between the erring humanity and God as a means to avert God’s wrath

¹Ellen G. White, *The Desire Ages* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1940), 590.

concerning sin which comes along with acts of nominalism. Precisely, this is an example of false belief in one's own righteousness which is a clear manifestation of nominalism. Even though calls are made on humanity to honor God with every part of their body, nominal Christian lifestyle majors on the honor expressed by words of mouth without the involvement of consecrated hearts. In essence, they only give God a mere lip service.

Giving God a Lip Service

While it is true that God has given humanity the gift of speech to enable them tell the wondrous acts of God to others, it is desired that what they tell about Him comes from the faithful and genuine hearts. Therefore, what one expresses in speech for glory of the Lord should be what has saved his or her heart. Nevertheless nominal Christian lifestyle leads people not only into a heartless honor of God but also into a verbal glory which bears no spiritual strength. The same predicament was pronounced by Prophet Isaiah who denounced such kind of trends in worship as stated that “for as much as this people draw near me with their mouth and with their lips do honor me and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men” (Isa 29:13, KJV).

Therefore, it is not of an outward expression of God's glory that counts but that which comes from a converted heart. Nominal Christian lifestyle is based on the level of speech which does not conform to the standards of God's word. For a meaningful co-existence between God and His people to be realized, humanity must be doers of God's will. To this effect Moreland argues about God and the meaning of life and asserts that:

If one adopts the moral point of view...he ascribes to normative judgments about actions, things and motives...He seeks to form his moral views in a free,

unbiased, enlightened way...Submits to and seeks to promote the dictates of normative, universalizable morality in a mature, unbiased, impartial way¹

Meaning of life is gained when one obeys the word of God, for humanity exists to do God's will. God's desire for us is to acquire moral values that guide co-existence and these are engraved in His commandments. While it is extremely hard to examine human hearts, Jesus who is the designer of human hearts once said that all that a human being does comes out of his/her heart and so he/she shall be known by the actions thereof. Hence when moral principles abide in the heart, moral actions will be displayed out of the same.

During His time on earth, Jesus displayed what was in His heart in speech and actions. Luke reports this effectively during Jesus' conversation with two disciples on their way to Emmaus as he states, "And he said unto them, what things? And they said unto him, concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people" (Luke 24:19,KJV).So with only lip service to God, without involving a contrite heart, even prayers made in such a gesture will prove fruitless. Worshipping God in this manner does not bring any healthy relationship between the believer and his or her God. Since it is true that human beings must use the mouth and the tongue to express in words the glory of God, there is a dire need to do the same in truthfulness from the heart. David speaks on this point, "I cried to Him with my mouth, And He was extolled with my tongue. If I regard wickedness in my heart, The Lord will not hear" (Ps 66:17-18, NAS).

In the like manner when God is approached through a heartfelt search, His promise that He shall be found ready to minister for human needs will not fail: "And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart" (Jer.

¹J.P. Moreland, *Scaling the Secular City, A Defence of Christianity* (Grand Rapids, U.S.A.: Baker Books, 2007), 113-114.

29:13, NAS). In this respect, whatever is conveyed either in speech or deeds should advance the truth and the Kingdom of God for the salvation of this perverted humankind. Merely giving God a lip service does not count in worship. It is therefore necessary that all pains are taken to heed God's precepts and also express them in deeds and words in daily walk with Him in order to shun nominal Christian lifestyle which majors on lip service. However, nominal Christian lifestyle still leads people into different categories of falsehood.

Nominal Lifestyle and Falsehood of All Kinds

Since nominalism is a state of no proper stand and it only depicts a matter of mere name, nominal Christian lifestyle embodies falsehood of all kinds. The nature of this falsehood embraces all humanity. Thus, falsehood traits of nominal Christian lifestyle do not have bounds but pounce on the young and old alike. It creeps even on the ministers of the gospel who are ordained to proclaim the whole truth of salvation to the erring world as outlined in the Bible but fear to speak the biblical truth to their members lest they become unpopular with the majority.

However, there are some few individuals who remain faithful to the Bible and would want to know the truth. This can be revealed in a conversation, which took place between a military chaplain and some soldiers who wanted to know the biblical truth about the existence of hell. McFarland brings out this conversation as;

For several weeks on the field, the two soldiers listened to their unit chaplain explain away many points of the Bible which was disturbing to them. The chaplain's modern twists on theology were beginning to affect many of the soldiers who formerly had a robust faith... Eventually in the conversation, the subject of hell came up. The chaplain began, 'God is love. Eternal punishment and hell for centuries have been spoken of in too literal sense.' 'So you're saying that you don't believe in hell?' one soldier asked. 'No, I don't,' responded the chaplain. The soldiers began to walk away from his tent. 'See you both at the services Sunday?' the chaplain called out. 'I doubt it,' one of the men said. The chaplain looked surprised, 'Why not?' With childlike faith

and consistent logic, one soldier answered, ‘Think about it chaplain. If there is no hell, we don’t need you. And if there is hell, we don’t want to be misled.’¹

When falsehood has gained root in those who are entrusted to explain the true concept of the word of God, they indulge themselves in misleading theological issues which lead church members into uncertainty and confusion. Some of the church members will opt to stay home without attending church services which they find to be full of theological heresies. This episode shows that there are some faithful members who are devotedly craving for truth, but they thin out spiritually for lack of the same. This is because the biblical truth is presented in falsehood by those who are entrusted with the duty to instruct people in the way of truth. Hence, there is a dire need for those who are entrusted with the obligation of teaching the Word of God to come out of falsehood and to explain the Scriptures faithfully to all human races in order to drive away nominal lifestyle both in them and in the church members.

Prophet Jeremiah expounded much on falsehood of all kinds which comes about due to nominal Christian lifestyle. He cried out in protest against nominal ways of life, which both the priests and the people of Israel were practicing even right in the Church. It is stated in the Bible that: “For both prophets and priests are polluted; Even in My house I have found their wickedness, declares the LORD” (Jer. 23:11, NAS). Even though they were in a condition of disobedience, they continued in their pride and complacency in the Temple of the Lord. To this effect, Jeremiah the Prophet spoke to the entire assembly of Israelites warning them on the need for reform by amending their ways and deeds. This was designed to enable them practice justice between a man and his neighbor so as to desist from their oppressive acts towards the

¹Alex McFarland, *The 10 Most Common Objections to Christianity* (Ventura, California, USA: Regal Books, 1982), 160.

aliens, orphans, widows, shedding of the innocent bloods and to abhor other gods in order to dwell in the temple of God forever.¹

The Temple of the Lord would not be treated as a place of refuge for wrongdoers but rather a place where they would humble themselves and learn principles worthy for their salvation. Instead, they had invented their own human ways of worship without depending upon God's principles outlined in the Scriptures. Nevertheless, nominal Christian lifestyle displays falsehood of all kinds and lifts human devices above divine authority. It is upon this divine true relationship that human beings would be able to shun falsehood and relate with God and in turn relate well with one another according to the original plan of God for the human family. Such a true relationship in worship will foster original purpose for which it was established. This is due to the fact that the church is the ultimate family designed to accomplish God's plan for the salvation of the entire world. However, falsehood traits existed among the Israelites of old and this prompted prophet Jeremiah to denounce those who cherished it. The prophet pointed out their sin in terms of lies, theft, murder, adultery; false swearing and idolatry but they would still come into the house of God in complacency.²

In this respect, God's displeasure against human invented ways of worship is revealed clearly as He sternly states that His house of worship is not 'a den of robbers' for all mankind. Since God is not pleased with nominal Christian lifestyle and He rebukes it sternly, it is necessary for Christians to flee away from such kind of worship. Persistence in the same entails adverse effects in the life of the beholders.

¹Jeremiah 7:2-7NAS

²Jeremiah 7:8-11, KJV.

The Effect of Nominal Christian Lifestyle on Human Life

Nominal Christian lifestyle renders a worshipper into a status of spiritual destitution in that his or her worship remains but a form of regulated program and has no bearing within the heart through the Spirit of God. In the like manner, a worshipper will not be in a position to experience the power of the Holy Spirit of God in his or her daily walk as a Christian or as a church member. Again, it exposes human lives to a mechanical kind of worship full of envy and all kinds of evil practices. This prompted God's rejection to such worshippers as it is explicitly revealed in Psalms in which the psalmist declared abhorrence of God to vain mastery of His statutes and taking of His covenant at the face value without total submission to the discipline of His word. The vices cited include deceit, slander, association with thieves and adulterous. Even though God has remained quiet over these nominal practices, His silence does not mean approval of the indecisive worshippers but He will surely rebuke them right in their faces.¹ When a portion of church members acquire and remain complaisant in such a nominal kind of worship, the entire church membership will be affected by their lifestyles since human beings belong to one another in the light of spiritual walk.

The Effects of Nominal Christian Lifestyle on Church Members

A strong church membership depends on the spirituality of each and every individual church member. Hence, when human lives have turned away from the Lord, church members will not live according to the Word of God. Instead, they will treat the Word of God with contempt. In the like manner, their lives become fatigue and the result is repeated sermons and exhortations with no repentance at all.

¹Psalms 50:16-21, NAS

This trend of non-spiritual revival that begins with the church leaders affects the entire membership, resulting into dwindling membership growth. What ensues is a routine cold congregational service without meaningful worship as alluded to in Isaiah 28:7-13 where confused state in worship is expressed. The same idea is emphatically expressed by E.G. White when she states that manifold teaching needs to be given so that the Lord's guidance may be followed at all points that conforms with God's judgment but not human meaning.¹ However, Donald speaking about true meaning asserts: "The inescapable fact is that meaning and truth are indissolubly related. Meaning is an awakening to the truth, which is God's will and purpose for our lives. Meaning is truth finding its way into the thinking faculties of human beings. Meaning is truth penetrating human existence and utterly transforming it."²

This result into centripetal church growth in that baptism becomes a matter of family obligation as it concentrates on the children of the already existing church members coupled with the perpetual rebaptism of the continual backsliders. This concurs with the trend in Dudi SDA church. In essence, the real meaning of conversion and repentance along with power instilled in the life of a believer are lost completely. Nominal Christian lifestyle extends adverse effects even to non-church members.

The Effect of Nominal Christian Lifestyle on Non-Church Members

The unwillingness for non-churched people to join the church is due to the characters of the professed Dudi SDA church members who do not walk in the

¹Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1923), 419-420.

²Donald G. Bloesch, *Christian Foundation-A Theology of Word & Spirit* (Downers Grove, Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 1992), 104.

standards and the principles of the church. Instead of being receptive and yield to the power of the Spirit of the Lord, they compare themselves with the already churchd and find no difference since they meet with the nominal Christians in their secular activities, pubs, night clubs, witchcraft involvements which is an act of idolatry, etc. It is out of these weaknesses that non-church members fail to see the value of the church and they take chances to jeer its members hulling different kinds of insults.

In this respect, they throw resentment words in resistance like, “Nothing, go away, we have not seen the difference.” When this statement is translated in Luo language, it reads “Onge, dhimabor; ok wane pogruok.” No wonder that Jesus warns His followers to remain as high as the light to the world lest their light prove no worth among non-believers. This conforms to the standards of nominal Christian lifestyle as it makes non-church members jeer the name of the Lord, as the Bible states, “For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you” (Rom 2:24, NAS). These negative effects of nominal Christian lifestyle not only affect non-Church members alone, but also the entire community with its denominational diversities.

The Effect of Nominal Christian Lifestyle on the Community

Christian lifestyle is supposed to be a beam of light destined to illuminate the sin-broken communities and lead people to the biblical truth. It is also the duty of the Christians to handle the weakness of the community as Majawa states: “In order to come up with genuine reconciliation, then weakness and failures should be acknowledged in humility and conversion of heart. To accept ones weakness and those of others is the very opposite of sloppy complacency. It is not a fatalistic and hopeless acceptance.”¹ However, nominal Christian lifestyle revealed among Dudi

¹Clement Majawa, *African Christian Reconciliation* (NRB, Kenya: Creation Enterprises, 2009), 138.

SDA church members coupled with unfaithfulness to their various gifts have contributed to spiritual rigidity among the various denominational leaders and other community members. Majawa adds that: “If the people are not faithful to their gifts, then they harm the community and each of its members as well.”¹ God in His wisdom expresses His concern for those who persist in nominal Christian lifestyle, as He uses Ellen G. White to warn this last generation.

Ellen G. White on Nominal Christian Lifestyle

Ellen G. White reflects on Revelation 3:15 in which God declares His rebuke to those who worship without the zeal of His holiness upon them. God who understands the motive and the innermost feeling of people declares, “I know your works” (Rev3:15, NRS). It is based on the fact that there are no hidden secrets in the eyes of the Lord God. It is at this point that Ellen G. White speaks in vision and says, “I was shown that the follies of Israel in the days of Samuel will be repeated among the people of God today unless there is greater humility, less confidence in self, and more trust in the Lord God of Israel, the Ruler of the people.”²

This conforms to the behavior of the nominal Christian lifestyle, which is built on speech and several religious practices without true glory to God. The reference made by E.G. White regarding Israel in the days of Prophet Samuel conforms to the nominal Christian lifestyle in Dudi SDA church. This is due to the fact that much effort is put on tithes and offerings, including several revolving religious festivals,

¹Clement Majawa, *African Christian Reconciliation*, (2009), 138.

²Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1923), 464.

without giving full trust in the Lord. Instead, the trust is given to self-gratification and pride over positions in the church and family status.

The same is evidenced among the youth who attend church services, but their lifestyle betrays the course of Christian walk. Ellen G. White was moved by the Spirit of God to make the same point plain before the youth of her time who professed to follow the way of the Lord in form but not through contrite and committed hearts. Thus she pronounced a stern warning declaring her sorrows to the many youth who professed religion but did not have any knowledge of a change of heart and no transformation of character. They did not realize that it is a solemn thing to profess to be a Christian. And by so living such a nominal lifestyle, their Christian lives were entirely inconsistent with a religious frame of mind. She added that if they were of that number who is indeed the sons and daughters of God, they would not be filled with nonsense and jokes but rather would have a mind that is intent upon having the heaven prize as they reject firmly every wrong attempt concerning religious things.¹

The same warning is pertinent to the youth in Dudi SDA church that lives nominal Christian lifestyle. They take lightly Christian matters, which are of great worth, but embrace patterns of the youth who have not made a step to Church. Instead, they are drawn to the pattern of young people in the world.

Likewise, nominal Christian lifestyle gets its way into the minds of leaders with greater responsibilities of trust. While they are expected to display trust in the Lord, uphold church standards, nominalism in their lives twists the ideal traits of Christian lifestyle they are expected to express. Instead, they compromise church standard in order to embrace worldly pattern. Ellen G. White speaks stern warning

¹Ellen G. White, *Messages to Young People* (Hagerstown, MD, U.S.A.: Review and Herald, 1930), 266.

concerning leaders of God's church who embrace nominal standards by following worldly pattern as they dispense their duties. She writes,

Those employed in any department of the work whereby the world may be transformed, must not enter into alliance with those who know not the truth... We must obey the orders that come from above... Suggestions made by those who know not the work that God is doing for this time, will be such as to weaken the power of the instrumentalities of God. By accepting such suggestions, the counsel of Christ is set at naught.¹

There is a need for the leaders of God's church to shun all elements of nominal Christian lifestyle as they carry the burden of trustworthy leadership entrusted upon them without mixing standards. Church members are not certain on which standards to cling due to wavering standards displayed by the church leaders. If church leadership will not comply with the Christian standards, nominal lifestyle will make them typify the Rabbis of Jesus' time who spoke with doubt and hesitancy, as if the Scripture might be interpreted to mean one thing or exactly opposite; hence involved their hearers in greater uncertainty because of the unspecific stands they displayed. This was contrary to the way Jesus presented biblical truths.²

However, leaders of God's church should stand firm in their calling and test worldly standards by the Word of God. If those worldly standards do not meet biblical standards, they must be discarded. This conforms to Ellen G. White's statement in reference to the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy stating: "sanctify the Lord of hosts Himself; and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread." 'To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.' Isa. 8:11-13, 20. The world is not to be our criterion. Let the Lord work, let the

¹Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1915), 322.

²Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1940), 253.

Lord's voice be heard.”¹ It is evidenced that nominal Christian lifestyle pounces on Christians at their different levels of understanding, faith and leadership. It therefore destroys the amicable relationship which should exist between God and His people. It is indicative to call for reformation in regard to the biblically stipulated principles worthy of true Christians. Having a clear picture of the theological approach against a Christian nominalism, it would be beneficial to look at the context of Dudi SDA church with the view to bringing into light its environmental structure along with the historical background of this Church.

¹Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches of E. G. White*, (Mountain View, CA :), 322.

CHAPTER 3

DUDI SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

As was indicated in Chapter 1, the researcher managed to obtain the details of the background of Dudi SDA Church from surveys through personal interviews, questionnaires, and church records. Other related documents aimed at establishing facts about nominal Christian lifestyles were also considered. Although some of the above areas have not been exploited fully, personal interviews have been done in an effective level and church records have been obtained. It is out of these evidences that the context of Dudi SDA Church with its related details have been written.

Dudi SDA Church's Context

The surrounding circumstances of Dudi SDA Church can be explained in terms of the past and present events. These are revealed in the existing infrastructures and other natural phenomenon which form part and parcel of Dudi church's context. The church is surrounded by SDA sponsored schools. These schools are Dudi Girls High School, Dudi Primary School, Ober Secondary School, Ober Primary School and Ober Boys Boarding Primary School. In its larger context are God Ber Secondary/ Primary Schools, both on the same compound and same land parcel and Ranena Primary School.

The Church has expanded into what is currently known as Dudi Mission Station, which encompasses Dudi, Apondo, Kojwach, Kakelo and Kokwanyo Church Districts, with a total number of 48 Churches. The above stated church districts began

as small Church groups initiated by those who lived together at Dudi Church ground--the home of the “saved.” The believers who moved back to their former clansmen and continued in faith fostered these Church groups and through their efforts, these Church groups grew up and expanded later into several Churches which have formed all these five Church Districts.

However, there were those who left the home of the “saved” and joined their clansmen in their traditional ways of life. These wayward practices were drum dancing, alcoholism, eating of the forbidden foods, polygamous marriages, idolatry, fornication and adultery, including wife inheritance. On this account, some of the wayward fellows, who cherished syncretism, embraced Roman Catholic faith. It allowed liberal lifestyle devoid of any restriction on foods, drinks, and moral restrains on traditional festivals such as after birth, death, planting and harvesting rituals.

In order to make sure their faithful would not come back to the Adventist church, they started Gangre Catholic church/Primary School that has already given rise to Gangre Mixed Secondary School. Their existence was geared to counteract Adventism and what they called its ‘strict’ Christian lifestyle which seemed to be a threat to the traditionalists and the liberals of their time. There are also some advantages related to its geographical setting that has attracted inhabitability and co-existence.

The Geographical Setting

The Dudi SDA church is located in the land where agricultural activities are supported by the available volcanic type of soil. There are also plenty of fruit bearing plants in the category of mangoes, oranges, bananas and avocado and other food staffs which encourage human inhabitation in this region.

There are various types of grass available are Elephant grass, Nippier grass and Kikuyu grass used by dairy cows of both indigenous and artificial origin. The rivers, which water this region, are Mikai, Orinde and Awach. All of them flow from Kisii highlands. There is marked high fertility of the land packed with rich yields. Due to often rainfalls, this region has two successful crop seasons. Poverty level is, therefore, reasonably lower in the hardworking families. This has enhanced human inhabitability of this region hence prompts an adventure to probe their lifestyle historically.

The Historical Background

The historical background of Dudi SDA Church has a direct bearing with the coming of a white missionary evangelist by the name Carskallen who reached Kendu-Bay in 1906. This is a Luo territory of the Southern part of Nyanza with the headquarters located in Kisumu city. This south Nyanza forms a component of the Western Kenya region. In a wider scope, the Luos form part of the 42 tribes in Kenya and they are the third largest ethnic group in the Republic of Kenya.¹

On his arrival to Kendu-Bay on a motor boat from Kisumu, Carskallen was attracted to a plateau named Ogango hill. He met elder Hongo who was a clan leader serving under the chieftainship of Orinda Were. Orinda Were was the chief of Kaduong' currently known as Karachuonyo constituency whose constituents are over 153,829 people, based on the data of the 2009 census.

Carskallen's desire to meet Hongo and Orinda Were was to get the protection available through chief's power and also to use the chief's influence to reach his subjects. Carskallen's request to erect his tent at the Ogango hill was granted by the

¹See Kenyan map in the Appendices, Appendix 3.

chief. He then embarked on both spiritual and mental trainings which culminated in the rise of Gendia church and Gendia Primary School. The church as an institution has expanded into what is currently known as Kenya Lake Conference Headquarters with 58 pastoral districts. The mental dimension has equally developed into Gendia Boys' High School and Gendia Primary School.

Evangelist Barker joined Carskallen later and, being a very influential man, he stayed shortly at Gendia and later moved southwards for evangelistic expedition. He reached a region called Kandaya which was later re-named 'Mumbo' – a title given to the home of the chief known as Oyugi Ochola. This central name 'Mumbo' got renamed Kasipul by Chief Gedion Magak to maintain the original name of the son of Rachuonyo known as Sipul. Kasipul has expanded into the now existing Kasipul Kabondo constituency, whose population is estimated at 217,192 persons. Evangelist Barker made friendship with Oyugi Ochola with hopes of reaching his clansmen.

However, Chief Oyugi Ochola directed evangelist Barker to a place known as Nyahera which is at the border between Luos and Abagusi. The chief took Barker's initiatives as a means to bring the two unfriendly neighboring tribes together through the intended establishment of a church and a school.

Nevertheless, the clan elders of this region feared the missionary influences and motives, thus they redirected him to a hill known as 'Pakla' – a dry rocky area. This area was inhabited by wild beasts, snakes, witch doctor and wizards. They intended that this missionary would be killed either by wild animals, snake bites or bewitched through mystical powers of wizards. At the same time, they wished Barker would kill the wild beasts and snakes and render 'Pakla' highland a harmless place.

Despite all these hidden schemes, Barker went to 'Pakla' and amidst all these difficulties; he managed to eliminate snakes and wild beasts with the aid of the newly

converted natives. The wizards and witch doctors contended with him as they would surround Barker's tent with dead snakes among other magical acts. But each time, Barker would collect these magical elements and burn them in the witness of all his contenders and the villagers without experiencing any of the intended damnations.

Due to these marvelous manifestations, many people got converted and were enrolled into Sabbath School classes to acquire both spiritual and mental knowledge. Among these converts were the magicians who surrendered to the will of God while others still regarded Barker as another greater magician with unknown mysterious charms. In essence, many people left their traditional ways of life and grasped the Christian lifestyle. This culminated into the establishment of a church in Pakla and as a result of the added membership a full mission station came into existence. The Pakla hill was renamed Wire hills. Barker later moved towards the eastern part of Wire and reached Dudi plains and met Owuocha Awino who was the area assistant chief.

By using the influence of elder Owuocha Awino, evangelist Barker established a church and a school for both spiritual and mental developments. This idea was welcomed by Owuocha Awino who was attracted to Barker's teachings but found it difficult to leave his traditional ways of life. However, as a sign of friendship and acceptance, Owuocha Awino extended his hospitality by serving Barker with a traditional meal which they ate together as they sat on traditional stools near a big granary.

Despite the fact that Owuocha Awino was a traditional chief and polygamist with four wives, his friendship with evangelist Barker led him to give Barker his son Kirongo and his nephew Odete to be trained on spiritual and mental matters. These two young men became the first converts. Their willingness to enroll in a Sabbath School class for both mental and spiritual development won the confidence of

evangelist Barker and his companions who made several missionary visits to encourage them. Through their continued faith and the concerted efforts of Owuoch Awino, these two young men became pioneers of Dudi SDA Church.

The Pioneers of Dudi SDA Church

Evangelist Barker first intended to take these young converts of Dudi region to Wire where he had established a church, but due to the warm welcome he received, he decided to send teacher evangelists from Wire to minister and teach at the home of Owuocha Awino. Since the chief's home was feared, Barker advised him to set a piece of land in isolation away from his home. This was ceremoniously done in the presence of the villagers who gathered to witness what the missionary evangelist intended to do. The first two young men, Kirongo and Odete, stood forth as a pulling force to both the young and the elderly ones who were attracted to the new teachings about God and the learning procedures brought about by the missionaries. A structure was built which served both as a church and a school for the new converts.

Although Kirongo and Odete were young unmarried men, they built their houses near this structure to avail themselves to the teacher evangelists. Their stay around was also to protect their newly built homes and the church from invading forces of traditionalists both young and old who would not want any foreign teaching to destroy their cultural practices. Their movement to stay in the isolated piece of land and the new lifestyle they grasped influenced their cousin Zephaniah Awino, who also moved and joined this newly built isolated home.

This was followed by the movement of monogamous families who came with their children expanding Sabbath School membership. The first moved families were Isaac Nyang'aya, Elisha Nyang'aya, Patroba Obiero and Modicai Magak. The messages of their new lifestyle went through the entire villages and many other family

members were drawn into their camp. With the influx of these married families, there was a big number to be taught by teacher evangelists who were sent from Wire Mission Station. Both the church and school family expanded greatly and the inhabited region became known as the home of the 'saved.' These families grasped new teachings and the Christian lifestyle brought by evangelist Barker and his co-teacher evangelists.

The Pioneers' Teaching and Lifestyle

The teachings of the pioneers introduced a lifestyle destined to separate the faithful converts from the former traditional ways of life. In the light of the pre-existing traditional norms, the pioneers' teachings emphasized total refrains from the many contentious traditionally ceremonial issues.

Contentious Traditional Issues

Among the contentious traditional issues were the afterbirth rituals attached to a single born and the most strenuous to a twin born. The twine born ushered in quite elaborate, strict, cumbersome ritual. It was equally unbearable even among the concerned. Death and the mystical powers associated with it also possessed major challenges. At the same time, a marriage was also a big issue that caused unexpected enmities and even deaths between the contending families, societies and communities.

In the light of these examples, the missionary taught and brought into practice Church-wed marriages devoid of quarrels and rough treatment of the brides that characterized traditional marriages. Their teachings inculcated respect in both parties involved in marriage as there would be no wrestling and other traditional trials to measure up the worthiness of both the brides and bridegrooms. They emphasized the non-existence of the living dead for which traditionalists had based their beliefs and

laid strict ritualistic rules for the safety of the community. Childbirth was taught on the strength of God's blessing and a thanksgiving would be taken to the Lord's house indiscriminately. Hence, the dedicatory prayer was performed without traits of traditional rituals. In the like manner, the pioneers instilled the adherence to proper diet leaving out unclean food, dead animals and drinking of animal blood in a liquid form or clotted and cooked respectively. At the same time, they emphasized refrains from alcohol, smoking of all types of tobacco and any caffeinated beverages.

The traditionalists also explored the area of traditional festivals profoundly expressed after harvesting periods and after burials. Such were characterized by traditional brews, drum beating and costumed dancers. They also denounced guitar playing, traditionally organized musical instruments which encouraged dances both at night and, even to some extent, during the day times. These dances invited competitions resulting in the winning and the losing teams. They also exposed both the young and old in both fornication and adultery respectively. These were devastating cultural practices though were treated as regrettable lifestyle among the traditionalists. Those who had joined the new settlement became free from such practices as their lifestyle changed to the pattern of the new ideas and their teachings yielded remarkable results.

The Results of the Pioneers' Teachings

The Pioneers' teachings and their lifestyles yielded church weddings beginning with the first two young converts, Kirongo and Odete. This was followed by another young convert, Zephaniah Awino, who also married in the church. It became a positive gesture to the local youths, who later joined the church and subsequently sealed their marriages the same way. Matters of hygiene and healthy lifestyle became a big pulling force. It was evident that children born in the home of

the 'saved' survived terrible diseases which ravaged many young ones in the homes of the traditionalists. Increased intellectuality among the children of the 'saved' in a remarkable way attracted others who had no option than to take their children to Dudi Sabbath School both for spiritual and mental trainings. Thrilling Christian songs and hearty prayers marked their everyday gatherings.

The most striking point was how the Spirit of God was working among them. This could be explained in the mysterious resurrection of Hellen Achola Magak, one of the believers who had moved to stay at this new home of the 'saved.' Having been declared dead, and the burial was scheduled after three days, she mysteriously resurrected when the wrapped body was being lowered to the already prepared grave. This young lady had only one son and, after her resurrection, she gave birth to five sons and two daughters. Three of them became officers in the private sectors; two became teachers and one of them retired recently as a pastor having worked as a district pastor, field executive director and Voice of Prophecy director at East African Union headquarters.

This glorious incident took place in 1930, the year when the church had been fully organized. It attracted enormous community members to join the home of the 'saved' with the knowledge that God was really working in their midst. Their lifestyle was open and was able to call sin by its right name. Such openness to shun sin would be followed by free repentance and confession whenever one was found on the wrong. They were also ready to do the work of God sincerely and faithfully without force or pressure. Freewill offerings towards God's course and hospitality characterized their way of life. As a result of the Christian lifestyle expressed by these pioneers, many traditionalists, including some of the magicians within Dudi community, were attracted and assimilated into the church. However, as this new

community of believers began to increase in number, it started experiencing spiritual problems. This resulted from the traditionalist and the magicians who joined the church basing their conversion on what other knew about God but did not change their worldviews on their former mysterious norms. What ensued were wrangles between the authority of the Bible and the power of traditions. The same struggle marks the current situation of the church.

The Authority of the Bible and Traditional Practices

Since pioneer evangelists used the Bible as the only source book for spiritual growth and social order. Hence, the converts' daily lives were guided basically by the principles from the Bible. The Bible stood out conspicuously as the only standard book of all others even though the traditionalists also had their practices for their existence. However, it would be a pity for one who could not find in the Bible a rich supply of thought and rule of conduct for a successful community. The most outstanding traditional norms did not find any tangible support from the texts read by the pioneers. In essence, the Bible entails principles unmatched to human traditions. The way these pioneers conceived the power of the Bible agrees with ideas of Arthur W. Pink who mentions that any neglect of the biblical instructions and its authority would render the community of believers into sudden overwhelming catastrophic events.¹ On the other hand those who had left their traditions and embraced the rule of the Bible went on prospering and faced no calamity for having done so. On the whole, the Bible became the only book to live and die by with its words of wisdom kept in the minds and in the hearts.²

¹Arthur W. Pink, *The Divine Inspiration* (Michigan, U.S.A.: Malloy Lithographing, n.y.). 144.

²Ibid.,

Therefore, biblical texts were memorized as a rule for true discipleship and the demands of these important passages were practiced in daily lives of the faithful. With these passages in memory, the grip of traditions got lesser and gradually gave way to the principles of the 'Book' among the believers. Baptisms were conducted on the basis that the potential candidates had mastered the principles of the Bible and were able to express them in their daily lives including giving for the advancement of the gospel. This was intensified through series of lessons the candidates had to take in order to be tested for baptism. However, there are contrasting lifestyles exposed by current church members.

The Contrasting Current Lifestyle

The current lifestyle of Dudi SDA members can be explained in the way some members got attracted to the world and left the home of the 'saved' back to their former clansmen. At the same time, some others left to their various places of origin and established churches which are currently church districts like Apondo, Kojwach, Kokwanyo, and Kakelo. Those who went back to their clansmen were enticed by their desire to have big plots of land away from the Church compound. However, some of them left the church compound and built their home on the nearby plots not far away from the church. At the same time, others felt it was good for them to marry many wives. Church compound had become a place to be visited mostly by elderly people only on Sabbath days' worship and mid-week prayer gatherings.

To the surprise of the church members, church weddings became almost extinct cases among the current members rendering marriages back to traditional system. Polygamous marriages were cherished to the extent that they became a pattern of church growth as the children born in these families were baptized through influence of their parents. Fornication and adultery formed part of the current church

board agendas as children born out of wedlock were dedicated into the church as their single parents were being removed from the church register and later re-admitted through rebaptism. There were cases of widows engaging monogamous members of the church into illicit marriages leading them into waywardness. The rule of the Bible had diminished among the church members to an extent that only few individuals were able to recite few memory verses without difficulties and the demands of such passages were rarely practiced.

The above-presented picture describes the past and the current situation of the Dudi SDA Church. Moreover, the present baptisms are not upon the serious Bible classes each Sabbath and about mastery of the biblical texts. On the contrary, people are simply called for baptism in order to meet the target put in place by the conferences without taking into account their future spiritual stability.

At the same time, vibrant inspiring Christian songs and hearty prayers have gone to the lesser degree as members embrace secular songs they listen on the radios and watch on television or videos. These are rampant both in their places of work and at individual homes. The personal devotional life has diminished to an extent that each and every person fears to take the offer of leading in public prayers. This has paralyzed the art of enjoyment from variety of gifts that may bind the church hence worship service remains as a duty of few individuals. The mingling up of traditional beliefs exercised by the traditionalists and the Christian beliefs of the 'saved' has given rise to Luke warmness and intemperance. The current situation is a liberal church which has a mixture or combination of different beliefs and practices opposed to the Christian lifestyle of the 'saved' which was characterized by biblical principles as traditional ways of life diminished among them.

Syncretism in Dudi SDA Church

The mingling of traditional beliefs and Christian lifestyle of the former believers simply brought about a combination of different beliefs in Dudi SDA Church. Such differences have established fears with undisclosed motives among church members. This is due to the fact that among church members are those who still believe that the dead are actively participating in the spiritual worlds and must be appeased. Thus animals are slaughtered during the deaths of a female and a male person respectively.

The after deaths rituals go on secretly as survived family members of the deceased still prepare food offered for the glory of the dead and serve them along with other normally organized meals so as to clear up their after death ritual meal obligations. This is done in secret because of the fear that part of the church membership who no longer believes in such rituals may find out and subsequently recommend censure on those who indulge in such practices. Marriages are done privately among those who believe in witchcraft lest both the bridegroom and the bride die on the wedding day or other misfortune sticks on their marriage. Open church marriages remain special cases among those whose faith is strongly grounded on the biblical principles. The same trend of different beliefs interferes with the giving pattern towards God's course. Both tithes and offerings are not faithfully returned by the rich people in Dudi SDA Church in fear that their earnings might be known and become victims of witchcraft.

At the same time, the giving has been likened to bribery to God since some members believe that by so giving their motives and open sins will be averted. Calls for giving to appease God are rampant among the Dudi church members. Thus systematic benevolence has given way to ceremonial days and weeks in the sense that

weekly giving has been suspended to special occasions. Such occasions are first day of the year, dedicated weeks of prayers and the camp meetings. During these celebrated days and weeks, members try to increase their giving to avert God's wrath over their unfaithfulness during other months and weeks they skipped in the course of the year.

Wife inheritance remains a matter of great concern among members who feel strongly that a widow must be ritually cleansed in order to be free to visit their neighbors and even to be allowed to join their in-laws in their grieving moments. However, amidst these cumbersome situations, there are still those who have never drifted from the faith and are standing as examples of the right messengers of God among His people.

The Character and the Lifestyle of the Faithful

There were varying responses towards the work of the missionaries and the subsequent faith manifested by those who remained obedient to the Christian lifestyle. The first converts who were taught how to read and write became elders in the church and would welcome evangelists sent from Wire Mission Station into their homes. They also led them into various homes for spiritual encouragements to both the members and those who had not been converted. They would suffer scorn from some of the unconverted people who would tell them that they risked not having hens, for the mission evangelists would feed on the eggs leaving hens with nothing to hatch. Nevertheless, these elders prospered both in wealth and health. They also became preparatory teachers in the church schools. Through the effort of the church, the most able ones were taken to Kamagambo Mission School where they were trained as teachers-evangelists. Most of them changed their carriers and became successful pastors.

Out of these privileges, their children got access to the best education of that time and subsequently got employed in church as teachers, accountants and nurses. Some of them got employments in the government and private sectors and as a result they became opinion leaders. Currently these homes stand as clear testimonies of faithfulness in the midst of the young and old. Stories of how these homes ever reached their current status have impacted many people positively even though some of the natives still stand on the opposing side as they cling to their traditional ways of life mingled with mere church attendance devoid of adherence to the sound biblical principles. It is out of these factors that a questionnaire was conducted to establish the underlying truths. For the sake of getting true report, the researcher appealed for honesty and sincerity from all the respondents. The detailed questionnaire is provided in the Appendices, Appendix 2 for more information. Its' analysis was also conducted in order to bring out the varying age groups that took part in this research.

Analysis of the Questionnaire

A questionnaire was administered in a Luo-speaking church. Although it was written in English, the translation was done in Luo language to enable the respondents understand it and give their faithful responses. The analysis of the same is given in tables 1, 2 and 3. Table 1 represents varying age groups beginning with the youth who were below 18 years up to adults of 61 and above who were able to understand the meaning of this program. Table 2 shows the number of different sexes that took part in this exercise while table 3 represents their marital status.

Personal Profile

Table 1. Age Group of the participants

Below 18	18-30 yrs.	31-40	41-50 yrs.	51-60 yrs.	61 and Above
15	32	20	25	30	10

Table 2. Gender.

Male	Female
22	110

Table 3. Marital Status.

Married	Single	Widows	Inherited	Divorced	Separated	Widower
90	26	58	8	2	2	1

With these varying age groups, sexes and marital conditions, there was need to investigate other dimensions which were suspected to pose similar variations as has been witnessed in the preceding tables-A, B, and C. The two major areas examined in this section are: (1) Dudi SDA church's religious background and (2) Dudi SDA Church's profile.

Religious Background

The following tables were tabulated to show the composition of the members with their diversified religious backgrounds as indicated in table 4.

Table 4. The denominational background of Dudi SDA Church

Born in SDA Church family	Convtd from Catholic Church	Convtd from Anglican Church	Convtd from Pentecostal Church	Convtd from African Divine Church	Convtd from Salvation Ministries	Convtd from African Friends Church	Convtd from Lutheran Church	Convtd from New Apostolic Church
108	10	3	4	1	1	1	2	2

Their year of baptism ranges from 1950-2011. Those who could remember their rebaptism background were 96 out of the 132 interviewed members.

The church workers who participated in this exercise are shown in table 2.

Table 5. The church workers interviewed.

Adventist Pastors	Evangelists	Elders	Deacons	Deaconesses	Church Clerks	Treasurer	Personal Ministries director	Stewardship director	Sabbath School Superintendent	Other Departments
2	3	4	5	8	2	1	2	1	4	12

Their office tenure ranged from nine months to two years for the longest in service due to yearly church elections. It was necessary to know those who knew their roles as Adventist Christians. The results tabulated are given on the table below:

Table 6. The knowledge of one's role in the church

Those who knew their roles as Adventist Christians	Those who participated in this exercise	The percentage against the total number
32	132	42%

An interview conducted on the Knowledge about the 28 fundamental beliefs realized the scores as given in the table below:

Table 7. The knowledge about 28 fundamental beliefs.

Those who knew all of them	Those who knew just a few of them	Those who had no idea about them
4	73	55

The Knowledge about the following selected fundamentals was tested: The Remnant church and her mission, the Laws of God, marriage and the family, the Lord’s Supper, marriage and the family, Sabbath observance, Christian behavior, death and resurrection, and the Church as a community of believers. The following results were recorded as can be seen in the table below:

Table 8. Believe and practice of the 28 fundamental beliefs

Those who strongly believed and practiced them	Those who knew little about them	Those who had no idea about them	Those who gave no response
21	54	18	39

Since wavering participation in the Lord’s Supper was noted in the survey conducted in the membership register, a specific case was taken and the results in the table below were realized:

Table 9. Participation in the Lord's Supper

Regular partakers	Occasional partakers	Non partakers
33	57	42

Due to the fact that 42 people out of the 132 members interviewed recorded non participation in the Lord's Supper, it became necessary to investigate the reasons behind it. The various reasons presented are stated in the table below:

Table10. Reasons for non-participation in the Lord's Supper

Inherited widows	Those who got married outside church	polygamists	Those who gave no reason	Percentage
10	7	5	20	55%

The major problems that came out clearly were marriages and human families. Issues about immorality related to the body as the temple of the Lord was tackled. Regarding previous involvement in either fornication or adultery the results were tabulated as in table 11.

Table 11. Morality levels of the participants.

Those who had involved themselves in either fornication or adultery	Those who had not involved themselves in either fornication or adultery	Those who gave no response
38	29	65

Marital status of the 132 participants was looked into in this exercise and the responses were noted as recorded in the table below:

Table 12. Marital conditions of the participants.

Monogamous marriages	Polygamous marriages	Inherited widows by married individuals	Those who gave no response
33	45	8	7

The dual practices of both Christian and traditional religions witnessed in the church prompted the researcher to explore the difficulties that might have been experienced by members in such a combination. The result of the scores among the 132 participants is listed in table 10.

Table 13. Individual experiences with mixed beliefs.

Those who had experienced the difficulties that exist in the combination of Christian and traditional ways of life	Those who had not experienced the difficulties that exist in such combinations	Those who gave no response
33	22	77

The results in the table above were analyzed in order to establish the possible effects that might arise from such dual practices. Among the many effects listed by those who had experienced the difficulties that exist in the combination of Christian and traditional ways of life were: guilt conscience resulting into non-church attendance, weakened faith, and confused status of indecisiveness.

A survey done on church service attendance every Sabbath revealed the outcome stated in table 14.

Table 14. Church attendance survey.

Regular church attendees	Occasional attendees	Ceremonial worshippers	Those who gave no response
54	60	4	14

Due to the existence of organized church standards on Christian ethics, it was necessary to probe church's life in relation to such standards. The following results were scored as listed in table 15.

Table 15. Church standards

Those who had served under church discipline	Those who had not served under church discipline	Those who gave no response
60	47	25

Those who had served under church discipline gave various reasons including marriage outside church, Sabbath breaking, family wrangles characterized by both verbal and physical fights, idolatry associated with Luo traditional rituals, and adultery culminating into traditional inheritance of widows. The reasons for giving tithes and offerings were also investigated and the results recorded are shown in table 16.

Table 16. The giving of tithes and offerings

Those who give tithes and offerings as a means to worship God in gratitude	Those who give tithes and offerings as a means to appease God	Those whose giving are based on calls made by church workers
62	50	20

Investigation was done on the areas the participants would wish to learn and know more about. Some of the most desired areas are listed in table 17.

Table 17. The areas of interest for more learning

The Laws of God	The sacredness of the Sabbath	The body as the temple of the Lord	The Christian behavior	Marriage and family life	Faithful stewardship
27	25	25	20	17	8

The question about the preferable learning approach was articulated through the following scores indicated in the table below:

Table 18 The preferred learning approaches.

Through seminar	Through small group discussion	Through one to one Bible discussion	Those who gave no response
68	32	26	6

After dealing with the data shown on the tables above, it was deemed necessary to give a brief description of the background of Dudi SDA Church and its desired future existence.

Dudi SDA Church's Profile

In order to establish the period Dudi SDA Church has existed in this region, a survey was conducted which gave out the results stated in table 19.

Table 19. Dudi SDA Church's lifespan

Those who scored the correct period	Those who tried but failed	Those who did not try at all
30 people (99yrs since 1913)	72	30

The role of the church was understood as enhancing peace and unity based on the Laws of God, preaching the everlasting gospel and calling the wayward back to the fold. This could be possible when church members have Bibles and take serious Bible studies. In order to establish the truth about those who had Bibles and took time to study it, a survey was conducted and the results realized are given in table 20.

Table 20. Those who have Bibles and study them regularly

Those who have Bibles and take time to study it regularly	Those who have Bibles but take no time to study it regularly	Those who do not have Bibles and are not taking time to study it
20	32	80

Investigation on whether the church was taking responsibility to nurture new members was also done and the results were tabulated as shown in table 21.

Table 21. Nurturing in Dudi SDA Church

Those who said nurturing was done	Those who said there was no nurturing done	Those who gave no response
65	5	62

However, the mode of the nurturing methods was responded to as shown in table 22.

Table 22. The nurturing methods.

Those who said that nurturing was a collective responsibility done by all members	Those who said that new members were allocated to church elders	Those who said that new members were allocated to individual church members	Those who said that a person was paid to nurture new members	Those who said that nurturing was done through small group ministry	Those who said that nurturing was not done at all	Those who gave no response
35	18	4	4	6	5	60

The respondents also listed some factors which were affecting church members' participation. These hindrances were stated as: Hypocrisy among church leaders and the entire membership. Pride has created a gap between the poor and the rich. Some members take the roll of spectators. Poor conducts of some members adversely affect both church members and the un-churched. And last but not least are worldview on traditional beliefs and superstition, coupled with poverty and influence of the new lifestyle trends.

As means to curb the above listed hindrances so that church members' active participation may increase, the respondents highlighted the following suggestions: (1) intensifying in-reach services—Living a Christian lifestyle in conformity with the biblical standards is taught among church members; (2) conduct continuous training to church members on biblical principles so that they may stay strong in faith; (3) visitations should be done to all members and Bible study be administered in every home; (4) involving all church members in both nurture and outreach activities; (5) to accept individual diversified differences and their parallel abilities. It is out of this analysis from the administration of the questionnaire and several oral interviews that

the researcher moved into design implementation and the evaluation of the programs concentrated in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

PROGRAM DESIGN, IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

This chapter is the core of this study and it is divided into three major sections which are program design, program implementation and program evaluation. Program design will concentrate on the Bible-based principles for enhancing Christian lifestyle of nominal Christians. This part forms the major task of the entire study. It is on this portion of the study that expounds several lessons to nominal Christian lifestyle, the newly baptized members and the entire church membership aimed at activating Christian lifestyle of all church members.

The second portion of this chapter deals with the program implementation. It is also intends to show the strengths of the lessons to the above-cited groups of people. Issues regarding attendance, mode of presentation and mode of the lectures including challenges experienced during the implementation are strongly highlighted here.

The third portion of this chapter is the concluding phase with program evaluation characterized by feedbacks from nominal members, newly baptized members, the Church elders/coordinators, entire church membership and finally the researcher's personal evaluation.

Program Design

The program was designed in a lecture form and presented through four modules. Preparation was done and a call was extended to all the participants. A brief

devotion was conducted followed by a prayer. Timeframe for the seminar was contracted and voted by all the participants. After this, each individual participant was given seminar materials, which aimed at enhancing Christian lifestyle of nominal members.

Enhancing Christian Lifestyle of Nominal Members

In order to enhance Christian lifestyle of nominal members, biblical texts were employed. This was characterized with Bible study on nominal Christian lifestyle. A topic was designed for each lecture that was to last for a period of four hours, including ten minutes' break after every one hour of continuous interactive lesson. The summaries of the lessons covered are outlined here below where the first lecture opened with oneness of God.

One God for a Lifetime

The main objective of this lesson is to impress in the minds of nominal Christians the biblical principles of the oneness of the Creator God who measures up to no other gods. This theme is intertwined with the dangers of indecisiveness. Some of the texts that were explored in details include 1Kings 18:21, Deuteronomy 6:4-6 and Isaiah 40:1-31 with emphasis on verses 25-31. The oneness God's and the sole responsibility of humankind to uphold this important element of faith was emphasized.

The need to stand firm in the faith of the true and the only one God without faltering like the indecisive Israelites of old was also expounded. The victory of God over the majesty of King Ahab and the fury of Queen Jezebel plus her prophets of Baal was discussed in the light of Prophet Elijah's faith in God. This lesson shows that wavering in between two opinions without taking a proper stand for the course of

God against opposing forces and demeaning agents, is tantamount to eternal damnation. The same lesson is designed to imprint courage to the faithful minority who will stand in loyalty to defend the honor of God, and like Elijah, they are able to win by His Holy Spirit.

In the like manner, this lesson is to extend a warning to humanity that they may desist from persistent refusal to stand for the only one God, the Creator. It is also to assert that the world is a battlefield and that the faithful remnant is at war to win against nominal lifestyle created by the evil one. A grand call is made to this effect as outlined in Deuteronomy 6:4-6 with emphasis in verse 4 on the oneness of God.

Again, it brings to light the first Commandment, as written in Exodus 20:3, which introduces God's oneness as He gives out the Decalogue. The knowledge of Him should be love oriented, and that He requires a wholesome love that involves spiritual being, physical abilities, mental knowhow, and intellectual powers to be in submission to His will. It also reiterates the fact that His will is engraved in the Ten Commandments which, when followed, make humankind walk in harmony with God for He delights to walk hand in hand with such people. This is destined to assert that no room is given to human laws based on traditional norms to work as either substitute or complements side by side with the Ten Commandments as desired by nominal Christian lifestyle. It emphasizes the idea of childhood training contextually the newly born as revealed in John 3:3, 5, depicting birth through water and Spirit. It is out of this important element of childhood, youth, and manhood training in faith that necessitates the need for teaching the newly baptized members on Christian Principles.

Teaching Christian Principles to the Newly Baptized Members

This is to inculcate the foundation of biblical precepts and faith oriented principles in the minds of the newly baptized members in order to gain a strong faith based foundation. An exploration of 2Peter1:19-21, Hebrews1:1-3 and 2Timothy 3:16-17 with regard to Bible teaching about its existence will enable the newly baptized members develop trust on the authority of the Scriptures as the only foundation of Christian faith. General survey was employed on other passages in the Bible with emphasis on the need for individual spiritual developments.

The idea of God's word being a lamp to humanity and a light to their feet became a point of focus to the newly baptized members who are just beginners in the spiritual walk. The beauty of God's word and the powers that it contain were captured in the Psalmist's proclamation of his high longing for the word of God that he treats as water that quenches spiritual thirst. Matters of healthy living based on the body-temple principle were tackled as a means to glorify God and expression of one's willingness to cooperate with one's Maker in care and tranquility (1 Cor6:19-20; 3:16-17; 10:31). Out of the stated preceding texts, adultery and fornication are emphatically outlawed and are treated as apostasy against God. This also puts forth a warning of pending damnation over the contraveners as stated in Hebrews13:4.

To impress the bearing between the physical body and the spiritual health several biblical texts were explored to ascertain how God wishes His people to maintain a balance between these two inseparable life-holding entities. One of them was from 3John2: "Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, just as it is well with your soul" (NRS). Emphasis on total body surrender as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God (Rom12:1-2) and subsequent submission to the will of God was presented to the newly baptized so as to understand

that there is no sacrifice other than their repentant hearts. This was to avert the tendency of superficial worship and appeasement of God; never conforming to the standard of this world (Rom 12:1-2) characterized by human traditional ways of life cherished by the nominal Christians.

To express the well prescribed God given healthy diet text from Genesis 1:29 was disclosed. This message was presented so that the newly baptized might not get entangled in the mess of indiscriminate feeding lifestyle that has benumbed their physical ability, mental and Spiritual powers.

Principles for memorizing biblical texts were also taught in a corporate learning forum where each participant was oriented on theoretical part of it and later all participants were involved in the practical training. Each person was asked to read aloud a verse of his or her choice five times and then a specified verse was also read in rounds for the same five counted times. The chosen key verse stated that: "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you" (Ps 119:11, NIB). Repetition was employed as one of the learning tools and the best way to engrave the verse into the memory of the participants. The following biblical texts were used in reference to body-temple principle: 1Corinthians 6:19-20; 3:16-17; 10:31. The state of the dead was also discussed as stated in Job27:3; 14:10 and Ecclesiastes9:5-6respectively for the learning purposes of the newly baptized members whose traditional backgrounds were grounded on the living dead. It was also deemed right to activate Christian lifestyle of the entire church membership.

Activating Christian Lifestyle of All Members

Based on the fact that nominal lifestyle gets into church members gradually as one fails to heed God's decree, which is contagious, it was necessary to activate Christian lifestyle of all church members as a corporate body. To safeguard church

members against irresponsible marriages and indiscriminate sexual involvements

seven biblical principles were outlined:

- (i). The principle of unity—complete and constant adjustments which should exist to strike unity...¹ (Amos3:3).
- (ii). The principle of interdependence—living for the support of each other... (Gal 6:2).
- (iii). Principle of endogamy—Marriage between believers and non-believers... (2 Cor. 6:14).
- (iv). The principle of monogamy (one husband and one wife). Polygamy only began with Lamech as an act of stubbornness. It is not God's will though He tolerated it... (Matt 19:5).
- (v). The principle of permanence—Lifelong union terminated by death of one of the partner... (Matt19:6).
- (vi). The principle of privacy—Leaving and cleaving as is instructed by God... (Gen 2:24).
- (vii). The principle of exclusivity-exclusively heterosexual covenant between one man and one woman... (Gen 4:1).

The state of the dead was handled as a deep sleep in total ignorance of whatever happens after the persons die, be they good or bad as it is indicated in Ecclesiastes 9:5. This was to counteract the traditional norms that are practiced by the nominal Christians in honor of the dead. Sanctity of the Sabbath was emphasized in the context of its being an everlasting institution as indicated in Isaiah 66:23. This training reached its climax with emphasis on growing in Christ, as stated in the church manual that:

No longer do we live in the darkness, fear of evil powers, ignorance, and meaninglessness of our former way of life. In this new freedom in Jesus, we are called to grow into the likeness of His character, communing with Him daily in prayer, feeding on His word, meditating on it and on His providence, singing His praises, gathering together for worship, and participating in the mission of the church. As we give ourselves to loving service to those around us and in witnessing to His salvation.²

¹Calvin B. Rock, "Marriage and Family" in George W. Reid, ed., *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000), 728-729. (Note that all following six points mentioned above are taken from the same book).

²*General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Church Manual*, 17th Edition, (Hagerstown, Maryland, U.S.A.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2005), 12-13.

After the seminar was successfully conducted, there was a need to test the understanding of the participants for the implementation of this program.

Implementation of the Program

This program was implemented in Dudi SDA Church. At the beginning of this project, between 40-50 percent of Dudi SDA church members were not committed to Christian lifestyle revealed in the Scriptures, even though they were involved in church and outreach activities through their financial support. This was noted by the researcher in the church membership statistical analysis on March of 2010. The researcher introduced this project to Dudi SDA Church in October, 2010. However, effective program implementation was conducted in a period of six months running between March, 2012 and November, 2012.

Based on the fact that nominal Christian lifestyle was misrepresenting the Scriptures among the newly baptized and other members, it prompted the researcher to engage church members into serious Bible study. The researcher sensitized the entire church membership in readiness for what was about to be done. In order to affect this program, the researcher administered a questionnaire that intended to establish facts about nominal Christian lifestyle and other lifestyle habits that hinder true Christian lifestyle. A special time was taken on a Sabbath day to gain the benefit of effective participation of the entire church membership so that every member would be able to attend. The researcher explained the content of the three-page questionnaire in Dholuo which is the vernacular of the then expected respondents. This was to gain their confidence in both their understanding of the concepts outlined therein hence giving room to non-English speakers to participate without fear and also to get the general idea of the research. A call for sincerity and honesty was made in prior to all respondents so as to achieve trustworthy results. Questions were allowed

in areas that posed some difficulties to the respondents and high principle of privacy appealed for to the participants as and on a reciprocal sense, the researcher promised to keep and maintain high confidentiality on every response.

The questionnaires were subsequently distributed at 10:30 am to every willing participant whose age limits ranged between 16 years to 61 years and above. An interval time was given before the divine service allowing them to read and respond. Later, the filled up questionnaires were collected back as people were leaving the church after the services that ended at around 1:00 pm. The questionnaire was later analyzed and the results of the survey are captured in Chapter 3 of this project. The implementation of the program was presented in various modes by lectures and group discussions, including questions and answers sessions.

The process of implementation was characterized by lectures, and, group discussions, including questions and answers sessions. As was stated earlier, the whole presentation was conducted in Luo language. The areas explored during these sessions are outlined in the following successive presentations characterized by several discussions about nominal lifestyle revealed in the Bible.

Nominal Lifestyle Revealed in the Bible

A presentation was done on the way nominal Christian lifestyle has been revealed in the Bible through the character of those who devised their own ways of worshipping God. The discussion began with the first two sons of Adam: Cain and Abel. The contrasting issues in their giving modes were discussed in the context of the book *Christ' Object Lessons*, page 152 in relation to Mathews 5:3, depicting Cain's self-commitment in Spirit requiring no cleansing, while Abel, lowly in heart, asked for mercy and came with the blood that pointed to the Lamb of God.

Hence, the Spirit of giving tithes and offering for the advancement of God's work was examined on the parameters of acknowledging Christ as the only sacrificial Lamb for the forgiveness of sin. This recognition purifies the hearts of the givers and makes their benevolent giving acceptable to God as the Bible says: "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt 5:3, KJV).

The appeasing devices practiced by nominal Christians were resolved to be of no use in terms of the ideal Spiritual conditions that requires a contrite heart willing to love justice, mercy, and to walk humbly with God. The text from Micah 6:6-7 has no value in the absence of true confession. It states, "Where with shall I come before the LORD...shall I come before Him with burnt offerings...Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams...shall I give my firstborn [for] my transgression, the fruit of my body [for] the sin of my soul?"

The similar idea was discussed in relation to the second Commandment forbidding idolatry which is the malevolence of nominal Christians, whose worldviews over the state of the dead and other forms of idol worship was discussed. Nominal Christians are driven into incessant sacrifices in respect for the dead before and after burial ceremonies. This was viewed as an act of idolatry and spiritualism. It was determined that the self-sacrificial act of Christ on the cross is the ultimate requirement for human salvation hence leaving no room for any other substitutes. Detailed reading assignments were given to all participants on several texts including: Nehemiah9:13, Exodus20:3, Exodus 15:11, Deuteronomy5:7, Psalms81:9, and Isaiah26:4.

The terrible nature of idolatry was expanded on the context of the repercussions God has bestowed upon it as it is stated in Deuteronomy 13:6-17.

Matters pertaining to falsehood of all kinds among worshippers were also discussed in depth. This was due to the fact that nominal Christians are not able to call sin by its right name but rather live in complacency, conducting regular Sabbath worships without true conversion. The main text for emphasis was taken from the book of Jeremiah 7:1-11, which was intended to expose the nature of nominal ways of worship that God abhors.

Misrepresentation of the Scriptures was also explored in the context of Psalms 50:16-20, where God's rebuke is expressed in a strong form to the nominal Christians whose lifestyles are not in harmony with what they profess before people. In essence, the picture they portray in their daily lifestyle contribute to total confusion among the un-churched who would otherwise emulate their ways of life and found their salvation in God.

Practical ways of worship devoid of mere lip service was appealed to emphatically, as written in the book of Isaiah 29:13 in which God declares human precepts as futile in regards to proper worship and honor humanity ought to give Him. The same idea was visited in the book of Mark 7:6-9 where Jesus, the harbinger of God's truth, declared worship that upholds human traditions above God's Commandments as egotism. Thus, having the Commandments of God on the lips alone and using human doctrines means nothing for human salvation. Jesus mournfully rejected such devices and He continually calls for reforms.

These readings were performed during the lessons and the same were given as carry home assignments. Each day began with the revision of the previous lessons characterized by interactive discussions from the participants. They took interactive opportunities to express their convictions on the awfulness of idolatry. They were also able to share their experiences on the dangers of nominal way of life that embraces a

combination of religious and traditional ways of life. Sessions for testimonies on the effects of nominal lifestyle were given, where the participants articulated how such conditions have been negating true Christian lifestyle in them and barely caused embarrassment and shame so that they would not attend church services joyfully. In essence, the participants were bold to express how the discussions had impacted them positively to an extent of defining their renewed attitude towards Christian lifestyles. However, there were some challenges that went side by side with the implementation program.

The Noted Challenges during the Implementation

Considering the fact that most Church members, including school going youth and employed adults do not get chance to attend church services during a week, there was poor attendance on Wednesday afternoon, as the program began in March 2012. The first lessons recorded 20-30 in attendance against the expected number that ranged between 130-200 that form part of the regular Dudi SDA Church membership. This prompted the researcher to reschedule time to Sabbath afternoons, which also realized just a little positive adjustment in attendance of between 40-50 people.

The final and the best time were scheduled for the slot from 10:30 am to 11:15 am that was arrived at through the consensus of the majority. The presentation offered at this time reached everyone in the church and it became popularly termed “hot encouragements.” In essence, this presentation encouraged punctuality at Sabbath school and high attendance in the normal lesson discussions.

However, the Sabbath afternoon lessons still continued on every scheduled Sabbaths though with low turn-ups as has been indicated above. This program went on in successive weeks and months from March 2012 up to 24 November 2012, when it reached its climactic launching period.

Launching the Bible-Based Christian Lifestyle Program

It was deemed necessary to devote a specific Sabbath for the launching of this Bible-based Christian lifestyle program aimed at enhancing Christian lifestyle of the nominal Christians. The launching was destined to call upon the entire church to come back to the rule of the Bible. The theme was to measure every human activity with the authoritative standard from the word of God in the context of “It is written...” (Matt 4:7) and “How readeth thou...?” (Luke 10:26). The launching declared that every word and action should comply with the written Word of God since it is rich in every regulation for human needs as outlined in Isaiah 34:16. Those who violate the rule of the Bible have no light of the day, as described in Isaiah 8:20.

The climactic exhortation was made on the utter determination of the faithful ones who keep the Commandments of God and do not forsake their faith in Jesus as they cling to the Spirit of Prophecy (Rev 14:12; 19:10). The attendance on this audacious occasion was remarkably high and joyous. After this celebrative launching, the researcher went through the task of evaluation of the program.

Program Evaluation

Having gone through the process of implementation, the researcher took the task of evaluating the program. This was necessary for this research in order to establish whether the various categories of the participants really got the concept of the seminars and how ready they were to internalize them for the better growth of the church. The evaluation took a process of rescheduled meetings with the participants characterized by personal interviews in relation to the problems encountered as could be seen in the tables: 5, 7, 8, 9, and 10 indicated in Chapter 3 of this work.

Matters pertaining to church wed-marriages, which were long forgotten, were attended to and it was realized that the youth were gaining interest. They were willing

to get back to church wed-marriages having realized that it was the practice since the Dudi SDA church began in 1913. The willingness of both youth and adults were witnessed and can be attested to by the researcher as he officiated over a church wed-marriage in Dudi SDA Church conducted on 6 November 2011. The courage shown in the eagerness of this couple exerted a positive pull to many other youth into this same trend. The fear of bewitchment that hindered this practice was confessed by the respondents to have been counteracted by the successive lessons during the implementation programs, where idolatry was condemned on the account of the saving blood of Christ. This was succeeded by the willingness of the already married couples, who opted to solemnize their marriages in the church and subsequently obtain marriage certificates.

Another element concerning non-Bible reading and memorization of the biblical texts fostered in the implementation of the program were evaluated on the positive trend after the skills for reading and memorization had been discussed and tested. About 130 people out of 200 members involved in this program, which is 65%, were found to have developed interest in reading the Bible in contrast to poor results recorded in table 17 of chapter 3. There was a marked urge for owning a personal copy of the Bible. The members who engaged themselves in the reading and discussion of the Bible used it for both personal and corporate edification of the church. Hence, the almost extinct devotional life of the members was rekindled by the “hot encouragements,” which gave members the appetite for reading the Word of God that stands alone as the only standard for Christianity.

Leading out in public worship, which stood out as a problem, was reported to have changed on the positive sense. It was discovered that several members had developed interest in sharing their God-given talents because they had kept God’s

Word in their hearts. This confirmed the fact that due to lack of God's Word in a person's heart makes one a destitute of His messages to other people.

The experiences of bitterness, shamefulness and sadness that characterized the daily lives of some members, who had demonstrated a combination of the religious and traditional ways of life that prompted their perpetual absenteeism to church services, were found to be diminished. By the use of those who had experienced the awfulness of lukewarm conditions, one-to-one and small group Bible discussions were conducted in several homes. This adventure included private prayers for those who were confessing of being entangled in the web net of Luke warmness. This endeavor culminated into a marked improvement in church attendance for the guilt conscience that lived with the affected members had been alleviated by the power of God's Word.

Giving as a means to appease God characterized by sheer responses to calls made by church leaders as indicated in table 13 was confessed on account of ignorance of what ought to be done by the beholders. Members conceded knowledge of their personal responsibility to respond to God in thankfulness for what He has done in sustaining them both physically and spiritually. The acknowledgement of God's nature of bountiful giving was echoed in the voices of praises to God-given Son whose blood became the assured hope for salvation of human race. However, there were some other specific feedbacks that were received during this evaluation program.

Feedback from Nominal Members

Nominal Christians were specifically attended to in the process of the implementation of the program; and specific feedbacks from them were requested. In reference to the revolving rituals and traditional practices, which characterized the

lifestyle of the nominal Christians, reflected notable positive feedbacks. The killings of specific animals during funerals of either male or female individuals were viewed by the nominal Christians as acts of idolatry. Those who attended these reviving lectures and discussions submitted that their after-death festivities Christianized as liberal feeding of the many guests and family members of the bereaved were fulfillment of the traditional norms contrary to Christian standards.

The nominal members reported their traditional worldview attached to inescapable wife inheritance as a matter of corrupt system of dehumanization that should not be enforced among the professed Christians. In the like manner, nominal members pointed out that the fears about open church wed marriages attributed to bad omens were simply distracters from the honor of God, the author of marriage, with the notion that whatever God has blessed can never be cursed by human craftiness. The same predicament was discarded about fears connected with misfortune associated with liberal giving of tithes and offerings. Nominal members conceded having witnessed God's blessing to their neighbors who have continually given liberally to God's course without fears for being bewitched. Consequently, nominal members, who performed such negating practices, got illuminated by the Word of God to the positive trends. The standing position of the few faithful members in Dudi SDA Church attracted positive change of the lifestyle of the nominal members. There were also some feedbacks from the newly baptized members.

Feedback from Newly Baptized Members

The newly baptized members reported having been in ignorance to the standing biblical principles, since their baptisms were hurried events without proper orientation into the pillars of faith. They perceived the importance of Bible study principles championed during the implementation programs as the only true method

of inculcating faith in members. The idea about implementing Bible study class for the baptismal candidates before the actual baptism is done was reported on the positive sense by the newly baptized members, who went through the classes established during this program. They saw it as the only means that can work to foster true discipleship among Christians, whose faith will be held on the firm foundations grounded on the biblical principles.

The beauty of the body-temple analogy, explored during the implementation section of this research, created a beam of new light destined to impress a sense of purity in the lives of the newly baptized members. This was expressed on the tone of a joyous manner as a means of a new development in the faith. As a result, it became their desire to embrace true Christian lifestyle that emphasizes total submission to biblical principles as opposed to sensualist ideas based on following human preferences. Hence, the newly baptized members expressed their willingness to uphold the Bible as the only standard rule for both the faith and better physical guide for life. They also expressed their understanding on the obligation imbued in tithes and offerings as a means to propagate the gospel work to all ends so as to reach out to the perishing world devoid of fears of the on lookers. However, there were also some concerns from the church elders who took part in the process of the implementation of this program.

Feedback from the Church Elders

Since the program implementation was done through the participation of the church elders, their concerns were taken into considerations. It dawned in the minds of the church elders that their most esteemed responsibilities lie in nurturing program they dispense to the church members and more so to the newly baptized members. They reported a marked difference that existed between the members who went

through a pre-baptism class and subsequent post-baptism instructions under the assigned elders, individual church members and intensive happiness class. The unmatched maturity of such members was registered as a gesture for incessant training of prospective Christians in order to record eventual active church members.

The church elders also recognized their obligation to play non-partisan leadership role by handling each member according to his or her knowledge without any prejudice. This element counteracted the then existing realistic claims from some members who felt marginalized due to their background, knowledge, social status and economic abilities. The need to foster continual Bible study both at church levels and to respective individual members was reported by the church elders as a matter of great importance for its end-result is a compacted Bible-based Christian believer.

They also appreciated the embedded rule of the Bible as opposed to the traditional authority that exists in church leadership which revolves upon the regions, clans and submissiveness regardless to the standard principles. At the same time, there were also some responses from the entire church membership.

Feedback from the Entire Church Members

Following the involvement of the entire church membership in the implementation process which was characterized by interactive lectures and discussions, each and every member got the opportunity to express his or her ideas. They felt rejuvenated by the sweet words from the Scriptures, which rekindled new lights in them. However, they expressed their inability to cope up with the spiritual demands amidst their many daily duties and secular groupings for financial supports. Nevertheless, they conceded the call for self-sacrifice presidentially upheld by Christ.

The church members accepted the Bible-based strategy as the most appropriate device for the enhancement of Christian lifestyle of nominal Christians.

They also reported the vitality of the Bible as the only standard for Christian lifestyle as opposed to social standards cherished by nominal Christians. These prompted the researcher to engage into personal evaluation of this program.

Personal Evaluation

There followed the unavoidable need to express personal evaluation about the participatory implementation of this program. It was exciting to see the liberal participation of the entire church membership in their diversified Christian commitments. The success of the program was witnessed in the continually increasing number of the participants. This was due to the fact that each member was allowed to contribute to the many topics for the discussion freely without any pressure from both the positive and negative sides.

It was evidenced that most people are in ignorance of the church standards, and the biblical principles. The enlightenment given during the implementation created a major impact on the positive trend. It was on this strength that summaries and conclusions were made, as indicated in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The idea of engaging in this research as part of my learning in order to gain knowledge in the field of writing has impacted me positively. This is destined to sharpen and install in me the desire for advancement into the field of research and serious writing skills that will be of great help to the intended readers. It was also my delight to express my concerns on matters pertaining to serious Christian lifestyle and, at the same time, expose the evil associated with nominal Christian lifestyle.

Due to the contrasting issues that exist among Dudi SDA church members and the Luke warmness, I took the initiative to explore the existence of nominal Christian lifestyles. It came out vividly that nominal Christian lifestyle is a reality and it is out doing Christian standards which should be enforced and emulated by church members. Through personal interviews, it was manifested that the influence of Carskallen, a European missionary, the pioneers of Dudi SDA church lived and practiced true Christian lifestyle. In essence, they divorced their former traditional ways of life which were not in harmony with the biblical standards.

However, their vibrant true Christian lifestyle degenerated as Christian practices were mingled with traditional ways of life as revealed in Chapter 3 of this work. The same lifestyle gave rise to nominal Christian lifestyle cherished by about 50% of the total Dudi church membership. The differences in terms of spiritual and

social status that exist between the truly converted members and the nominal Christians stand as a pillar of Christian testimony admired by the onlookers, as manifested in Chapter 3.

However, there are several instances established in the literature review which expose damnations to perpetrators of nominal Christian lifestyles. The nominal lifestyle of Korah, Dothan and Abiram exposed their discontentment with the order of governance and hence doubted the credibility of those who were in the position of leadership, even though they were also entrusted with sacred responsibilities. The end result was an extraordinary death that consumed all of them, including their family members, since the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them all at once. The same predicament occurred in the life of Aaron who went into the feelings of the people without making a proper stand hence made a golden calf, an idol whose worship culminated into the death of 3,000 people, as indicated in Exodus 32:28.

In the like manner, the researcher went through literature reviews and confirmed several instances where true Christian lifestyle has created healthy relationships between the believer and his or her God. An example can be given in the relationship that existed between David and God in the context of his heartfelt faithfulness and through his sincere mouth and tongue expressions of the glory of God. This was pointed out in Psalms 66:17-18, as stated in Chapter 2 of this work. At the same time, God is always ready to redress His people who turn to Him, as was gleaned from the literature review in Chapter 2. The statement is given in 2Chronicles 7:14, that entails God's heeding, forgiveness, and healing. These promises are availed to those who will seek the Lord through contrite hearts and faithfulness. God's promise that He shall be found ready to minister for human needs will not fail. Such people are assured of finding the Lord, as stated in Jeremiah 29:13.

At the same time, the administration of the questionnaire confirmed cases of nominal lifestyle, based both on defiant determination and lack of proper orientation into the Bible. Bible study was regarded as the counteractive device to redress spiritual lapse that has characterized the lives of the nominal members. During the program implementation, the idea of meekness, humility and total submission to the will of God were vividly seen as the most attractive devices to theology. This would ensure true stewardship of everything God has entrusted to humanity. Shunning of every endeavor to idolatry was discussed and resolved as the only means to glorify God the Creator of heavens and earth, plus everything in them.

Concerning program evaluation, positive trends were scored on selected areas such as increased number on church attendance, Bible study, and public involvements in church activities. The giving mode which was characterized by exhortations from church leaders gave way to freewill giving based on the individual gratitude towards God's providence. The traditional practices involving the killings of specific animals during funerals, that characterized the lives of the nominal members, were viewed as acts of idolatry in contrast to the superficial liberal feeding of the many guests.

Similarly, church wed marriages have increased without superstitions of being bewitched or the fear of being followed by bad omen, as the few cases that have been conducted manifest joyful families. Based on the above-summarized factors, the researcher was led to some areas of conclusions.

Conclusions

This research was undertaken in order to probe the reality of nominal Christian lifestyle, the confusion it is likely to cause among church members and the adverse effects that it has with the non-church members. The outcome of this research was the authentic existence of nominal Christian lifestyle that has wrecked biblical

teachings rendering lukewarm standards devoid of honest faith. This kind of lifestyle was established as a major source for the damnation of its activists in the church system and in the secular world. It is in this light that this study was taken to find the remedies in the Bible.

Hence this study shows that a Bible-based strategy to enhance nominal Christian lifestyle can be a very effective tool to restore true Christian lifestyle among Dudi SDA church members. The idea behind this strategy is to create a favorable forum where church members may develop a liking for a Bible study in order that they may endeavor to get the true concept of Christianity. Consequently, nominal Christian lifestyle can find its remedy when one gets back to the Bible, which is the Word of God and the only rule for faith and practice. It was deemed necessary to put forth some outstanding recommendations which are open for further testing and screening under highly proven biblical principles.

Recommendations

As a matter of continuity and future spiritual development of the church, the researcher suggested the following recommendations:

- (i). That this research that has explored matters of nominal Christians' lifestyle be tried upon proven biblical principles to ascertain its validity and authenticity for use as the right mode for true Christian lifestyle.
- (ii). High recommendations are also given to proven zealous Christian theologians to review this research for further counsels so as to come out with fortified Bible-based principles worth emulating for the sake of eternity.
- (iii). That the whole of this written program could be adopted by the church administration and its leadership from the top most to the least in our Sabbath Schools in order to strike the point of distinctive value of the Seventh-day Adventist church and its mission to the world.
- (iv). The same recommendation is appended to the secular world leadership ethics which equally has a bearing with biblical principles so that truth and servitude may be manifested in humanity.
- (v). In addition, this proposal is advisable to the pastorate so that nominal Christian lifestyle may not find its roots in their midst.

- (vi). Similarly, this program is able to foster Bible-based principles among the pastorate that likewise will infuse the same to their parishioners for the true Christian growth.
- (vii). In the like manner, it is recommended that this program should reach every individual person regardless of denominational affiliation for the priesthood of all human races.

Summarily, when every legible entity uses this strategy, all including secular systems will be attracted to the noble traits exhibited in this research.

APPENDIX 1

The outlined details provided in this appendix were gleaned from Dudi SDA church's records for the benefit of the qualitative surveys administered by the researcher.

CHURCH BOARD MEETING HELD ON 12/1/2010

MEMBERS PRESENT

Pr. LUKE Ogayo
Harrison Aomo
Elazar Muga
Janet Aomo
Philip Owili
Josephine Omiti
Caren Aoko
Benjamin Orero
Margaret Ogal
Josiah Omiti
James Amino
Lucy Okech
Denish Amino

ABSENT WITHOUT APOLOGY

Penina Ochieng
Joshua Ngige
Phoebe Owili

Opening prayer: Denish Amino
Devotion : Pr. Luke Ogayo

MINUTES

CB MIN 01/1/2010 MEMBERSHIP AUDITING

WHEREAS, the board members were confirming membership, they reiterate the following as in active members - one hundred and thirty three (133)
ACTION: The group leaders, and elders from various groups to do follow up.

WHEREAS, the following were removed from the Church membership register, because of denying openly the faith as understood by the Seventh-day Adventist Church,

Tabilka Atieno malayo
Pouna Ombok - God's last Appeal
Perez Auma - Israel Nineve

WHEREAS, the following were removed from Church membership register, as they were seen drunk, and were not remorseful

Jacob Ocherig

Peter Ouma

Caleb Onyango

WHEREAS, the following were noted as first missing, they ~~await~~ for two year, trying to find them, Rosly Aoko, Benta AKinyi

George Omendi, Bernard Otieno, Dorrie Awuor

Emmaculate Owaga, Maurrie Amondi, Ruth A.

Onyango, Jackie Owuocha, Rehana Atieno,

Ruth Anyango, Lillian L. Otieno, Dorothy A.

Odera, Emily A. Daniel, Christine Adoyo, adh

Stephen Modi, Edward Owaga, Fred Ocherig, Joseph

WHEREAS, the following were removed from Church register because they gave birth out of wedlock. Benta A. Awino, Julia Obuya, Millicent Atieno, Nancy Anyango, Quanta Atieno, Ruth Odera.

WHEREAS the following were removed from church membership register because they married ~~at~~ outside Church policy, Gordon Amollo Olorde, Alice Akoth, Bernard Sila, Jael Awuor Omiti, Lawrence Onyango, ~~Hannington~~ Okech, Samuel Omenda, Nancy Anyango, Esther Juma, Sophia Onyango,

WHEREAS the following were removed from Church register because they ~~divorced~~, Monica Ojwang, Teresa Mkenia, Pamela Atieno,

WHEREAS the following were removed from Church register because they ~~Inherited~~,

Phoebe Obuya, Freddy Awino, Ezekiel Ouma

Brother John D. Olare donated 1,000/- for the opening of account. The ~~the~~ account is called community account at KCB)-Ogugis branch;

WHEREAS, Concerning the youth, the elder advised ~~the~~ youths as was passed in previous meeting, there's was no further discussion because the youth leader was absent.

CB MIN 24/19/2010: REVIEW OF CENSORED MEMBER

WHEREAS, the following were invited for prayer with board member Sisters, Silpa A. Owaga, Jane A. Owaga, Milka A. Otieno and Sarah A. Awino,

WHEREAS, they were visited in their homes for prayers and progress was realized, further explanation of church policies ^{was done by} Pastor

WHEREAS, member of board voted for them to join in holy communion in third quarter.

CB MIN 25/19/2010 TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP

WHEREAS, Vivian Adhiambo Odhiambo opted to transfer her membership from Dudi SIDA to Malkare central, board forward the above to business meeting

WHEREAS James Odhiambo and Silvia Odhiambo opted to transfer their membership from Dudi SIDA to Mariwa SIDA Church. Board forwarded the above to business meeting.

WHEREAS Job Charles Otieno opted to transfer his membership from

CB MIN 18/3/2011 TITLE DEED FOR THE CHURCH

WHERE AS, there was need for the church to have the title deed,

NOTED to be deferred to June 2011 because of other church commitment.

CB MIN 19/3/2011 REVIEW OF MEMBERSHIP

WHERE AS, the following names needed follow-up to be done and they ~~were~~^{were} about George Omondi, John Koko, Sara AKinyi, Emily Atieno, Dorine Anwar, Bernard Odhiambo, Damaris Auma, Rebecca Okech, Edith Amondi, June Ayoo, Rose Atieno, Mary Atieno, Quunta Atieno, Milka Aoko, Hyrine Atieno, Christine Odhiambo, Finia Juma, Edward Owaga, Emmanulate Owaga, Maurice Omondi, Phenny A-Otieno, Fredrick Odhiambo, David Okech, Betha Amollo, Jackline Owuocha, Judith odiwuor, Emmanulate Anyengo.

WHERE AS, the following, there were about is unknown Judith Adoyo, Evans David,

WHERE AS, the following have dual membership Lorna A-Kenedy, Emily AKinyi Moser Otieno, Voted for removal from Dudi membership.

WHERE AS, the following married out of Church policy Charles Onyango, Jabez Muga,

Kenedy Onyango, Noah Owiti.
WHERE AS, the named gave birth out of wedlock Ruth Aoko Odera, voted for removal
WHERE AS, the named was inherited Cornelia Achola, voted for removal,
WHERE AS, the following should request for transfer of names Moses A. Aomo, Damar Atieno, Caren A. Amollo, Erick Odhiambo, Salmon O. Ochieng.
WHERE AS, the named was noted missing for the first time i.e Erick Jakoyo

CB MIN 20/3/2011 APOSTACY

WHERE AS, brother Philip Owili married second wife, the church has no option but to drop him
ACTION: - Removal from church membership

CB MIN 21/3/2011 CONFLICT OF MEMBERS

WHERE AS, the following had dispute between them that's Benjamin Oreno and John Ogola,
WHERE AS, the mentioned each explain their problem to the board and they were remorseful. Pastor read the church manual and explained the policy,
WHERE AS, the mentioned were suspended from the meeting, as board members were consulting further, with the guidance of the pastor through reading the church manual.
WHERE AS, the mentioned were called back for the meeting, the book of Ephesian 4:29-32

was read and explained
WHERE AS, the two quarrel, this brings
disorderly conduct for the church.
ACTION: The board on behalf of the church
called for prayer together with the named; they
were then censured for 3 months, after the
expiration proper action shall be done.

Closing prayer: Pastor Luke Ogayo

Signed W. D. D. D.
Clerk

Date 21/5/2011

Signed [Signature]
Chairman

Date 21/5/2011

APPENDIX 2

In reference to the details given in chapters 1 and 3, the method of personal interviews and questionnaires were conducted to discover the background plus spiritual condition of Dudi SDA Church members. Consequently, the researcher appealed for honesty and sincerity from all the respondents in this research questionnaire.

Research Questionnaire

Kindly fill the following questionnaire and return the forms to Dudi SDA Church or to me in person. Your faithful response to this very important research will not only contribute to the academic success of this research but will also greatly profit God's church in order to live in readiness for the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[1] Personal Profile

[a] Age Group Below 18 years 18-30 years 31-40 years 41-50 years
51-60 years 61 and above

[b] Sex Male Female

[c] Marital Status Married Single Divorced/Separated
Widow/Widower Inherited/an inheritor

[d] Religious Background Born in a SDA Christian family Converted
from other denominations

[e] If converted from other religions, state your former religion Catholic
Anglican Pentecostal others—specify.....

[f] When were you baptized? State the year.....

[g] Have you ever been re-baptized? Yes No

[h] Church Worker Pastor Evangelist Accountant Teacher

Others, Specify.....

[2] Responsibility in the Church

[a] Do you have any office in the Church? Yes No [Tick one of the two]

[b] If you are a Church officer, tick the position you hold in the Church Pastor

Elder Deacon/Deaconess Clerk/Secretary Treasurer Personal ministry

leader Stewardship Sabbath School Usher Others—

Specify.....

[c] State the length of service in that capacity.....

(d) Do you know your role in the Church as an Adventist Christian? Yes No

If yes, what is it?.....

If no, why?.....

[e] Do you know all the 28 fundamental doctrines of the Seventh day Adventist

belief? Yes I know all of them I know just a few I do not know any of

them

(f) The remnant and its mission, law of God, Lord's Supper, marriage and the family,

Sabbath observance, Christian behavior, death and resurrection and Church as a

community of believers are some of the fundamental believes I strongly believe

and practice these doctrines I know little about these doctrines I do not

have any idea about these doctrines

(g) Do you participate in the Lord's Supper? Yes No

If yes, how often?.....

If no, why?.....

(h) Have you ever involved yourself in either fornication or adultery? Yes No

(i) Are you married? Yes No. If married, what is your marital condition?

Polygamous Monogamous Inherited by a married person

(j) Have you ever experienced the difficulties that exist in the combination of religious and traditional ways of life? Yes No If Yes, how does it affect your faith?.....

(k) How often do you attend church services on Sabbath? Regularly

Occasionally On ceremonial days such as: New Year, week of prayers and camp meetings.

(l) Have you ever served under church discipline? Yes No

If yes, on what account?.....

(m) Do you give tithes and offerings as part of your worship to the Lord? Yes

No

i As a means to appease God Yes No

ii Due calls made by the church workers Yes No

(n) What areas of Christian lifestyle would you like to know more about and grow in them? The Law of God The sacredness of the Sabbath Your Body as the temple of the Lord Marriage and family life Christian Behavior

Stewardship

(o) What is your preferable learning tool? To attend a seminar small group discussion one-to-one Bible discussion others

(Specify).....

[3] Church Profile

[a] How old is your church?

[b] What role does it play in your community?.....

[c] Does your church take responsibility to nurture the newly baptized members?

Yes No

[d] What method does your church use to nurture new members? By allocating a

new member to the church elders By allocating a new church member to

individual members Nurturing is done collectively by all church members A

person is paid to do nurturing work-a global minister is assigned to do this work

Through a small group ministry Nurturing is not done at all

[e] Do all church members have their Bibles?

[f] How many members are involved in reading and studying their Bibles?

[g] State factors that are affecting your church members in active participation in church work

1.....

2.....

[4] Give your suggestions

[a] What can be done to increase church members' active participation in church work?

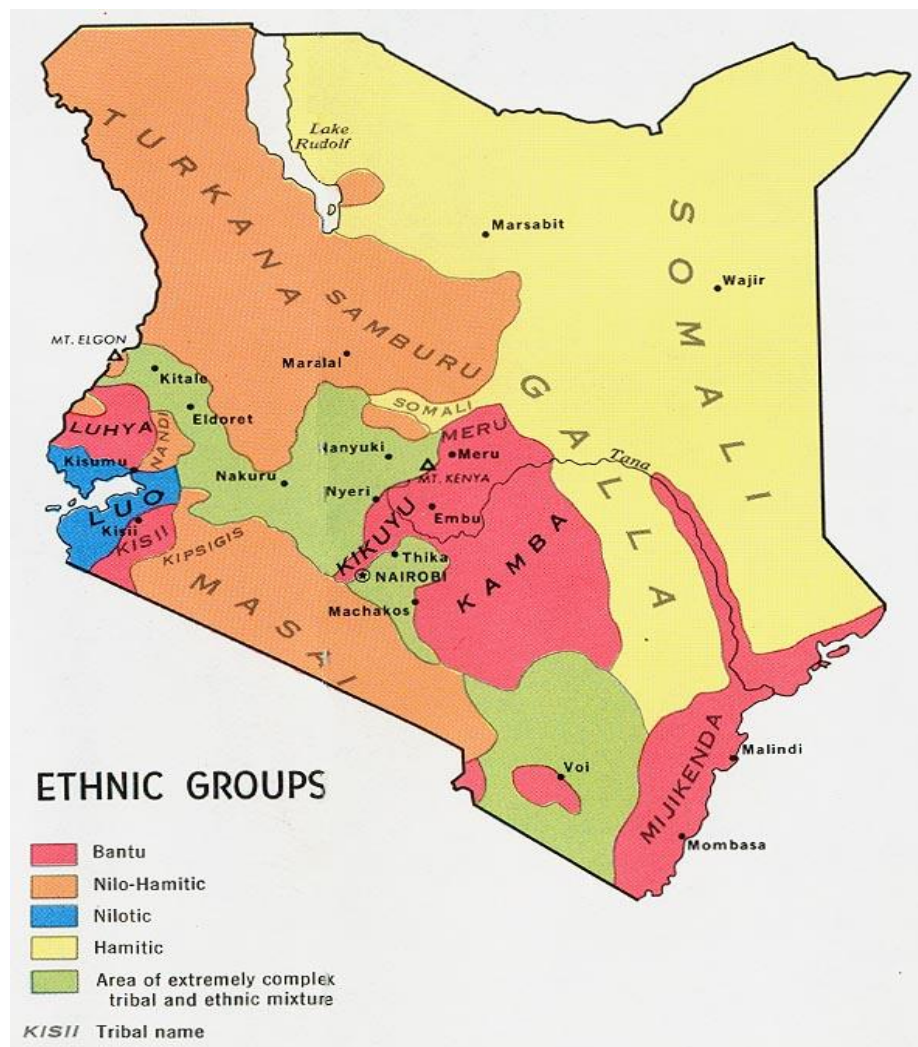
1.....

2.....

APPENDIX 3

Kenyan Map¹

The Kenyan map authenticates the Luos as one of the ethnic groups in Kenya whose high population concentrates on the western part of the country and their capital is Kisumu city. They are mainly known as the lake region Nilotes.



¹http://images.nationmaster.com/images/motw/africa/kenya_ethnic_1974.jpg, April, 12, 2013.

APPENDIX 4

The lessons covered during the implementation of this program are appended here for further references:

The main objective of this lesson is to impress in the minds of nominal Christians the biblical principal of the oneness of the Creator God who measures up to no other gods. This theme is intertwined with the dangers of indecisiveness. It was therefore indicative to explore the meaning of 1Kings 18:21 with regard to enhancing Christian lifestyle of the nominal Christians in Dudi SDA church. An exploration of other biblical passages both from the Old Testament and New Testament brought to light God's oneness and the sole responsibility of humankind to uphold this important element of faith.

The lesson impresses in the minds of the participants the dangers of unworthy speculations regarding God's personality that has been lessened due to human formulated theories regarding His nature of being one and the only God. It also emphasizes the need to stand firm on the faith in the true and the only one God without faltering in the manner of the indecisive Israelites of old who were under the majesty of king Ahab and the fury of queen Jezebel coupled with numbers of prophets of Baal against Elijah, the only one contender of God's course. This lesson shows that wavering in between two opinions without taking a proper stand for the course of God against opposing forces and demeaning agents, is tantamount to eternal damnation. The same lesson is designed to imprint courage to the faithful minority who will stand in loyalty to defend the honor of God, and like Elijah they are able to win by His Holy Spirit.

The message highlights the fact that departing from the knowledge of God, as the only one, is equaled to rejecting the right-doing that gets its grip on humankind, gradually culminating into self deception and blindness. Such kind of action works to affect the entire church membership. It declares that the Israelites of Elijah's time were dumb, for they uttered no word as Elijah challenged them to action. They were caught in the very act of deception. In the like manner, this lesson is to extend a warning to humanity that may desist from persistent refusal to stand for the only one God, the Creator. To assert that the world is a battlefield and that the faithful remnant are at war to win against nominal lifestyle created by the evil one.

The lesson exposes the grand call characterized with emphasis on oneness of God, as explicitly outlined in Deuteronomy 6:4-6. It also reveals the importance of repetition employed in the Bible as: "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God [is] one LORD" (v. 4). Again, it brings to light the first Commandment, as written in Exodus 20:3, which introduces God's oneness as He gives out the Decalogue. The knowledge of Him should be love oriented, and that He requires a wholesome love that involves spiritual being, physical abilities, mental knowhow, and intellectual powers to be in submission to His will. It also reiterates the fact that His will is engraved in the Ten Commandments which, when followed, make humankind walk in harmony with God for He delights in such people and would not leave them alone. This is destined to assert that no room is given to human laws based on traditional norms to work as either substitute or complements side by side with the Ten Commandments as desired by nominal Christian lifestyle. It emphasizes the idea of childhood training contextually the newly born as revealed in John 3:3, 5, depicting birth through water and Spirit. It is out of this important element of childhood, youth, and manhood

training in faith that necessitates the need for teaching the newly baptized members on Christian Principles.

Teaching Christian Principles to the Newly Baptized Members

This is to inculcate the foundation of biblical precepts and faith oriented principles in the minds of the newly baptized members in order to gain a strong faith based foundation. An exploration of 2Peter1:19-21, Hebrews1:1-3 and 2Timothy 3:16-17 with regard to Bible teaching about its existence will enable the newly baptized members develop trust on the authority of the Scriptures as the only foundation of Christian faith. General survey was employed on other passages in the Bible with emphasis on the need for individual spiritual developments.

The idea of God's word being a lamp to humanity and a light to their feet became a point of focus to the newly baptized members who are just beginners in the spiritual walk. The beauty of God's word and the powers that it contain were captured in the Psalmist's proclamation of his high longing for the word of God that he treats as water that quenches spiritual thirst. Matters of healthy living based on the body-temple principle were tackled as a means to glorify God and expression of one's willingness to cooperate with one's Maker in care and tranquility (1 Cor6:19-20; 3:16-17; 10:31). Out of the stated preceding texts, adultery and fornication are emphatically outlawed and are treated as apostasy against God. This also puts forth a warning of pending damnation over the contraveners as stated in Hebrews13:4.

To impress the bearing between the physical body and the spiritual health several biblical texts were explored to ascertain how God wishes His people to maintain a balance between these two inseparable life-holding entities. One of them was from 3John2: "Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, just as it is well with your soul" (NRS). Emphasis on total body

surrender as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God (Rom12:1-2) and subsequent submission to the will of God was presented to the newly baptized so as to understand that there is no sacrifice other than their repentant hearts. This was to avert the tendency of superficial worship and appeasement of God; never conforming to the standard of this world (Rom 12:1-2) characterized by human traditional ways of life cherished by the nominal Christians.

To express the well prescribed God given healthy diet text from Genesis 1:29 was disclosed. This message was presented so that the newly baptized might not get entangled in the mess of indiscriminate feeding lifestyle that has benumbed their physical ability, mental and Spiritual powers.

Principles for memorizing biblical texts were also taught in a corporate learning forum where each participant was oriented on theoretical part of it and later all participants were involved in the practical training. Each person was asked to read aloud a verse of his or her choice five times and then a specified verse was also read in rounds for the same five counted times. The chosen key verse stated that: "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you" (Ps 119:11, NIB). Repetition was employed as one of the learning tools and the best way to engrave the verse into the memory of the participants. The following biblical texts were used in reference to body-temple principle: 1Corinthians 6:19-20; 3:16-17; 10:31. The state of the dead was also discussed as stated in Job27:3;14:10 and Ecclesiastes9:5-6 respectively for the learning purposes of the newly baptized members whose traditional backgrounds were grounded on the living dead. It was also deemed right to activate Christian lifestyle of the entire church membership.

Activating Christian Lifestyle of All Members

Based on the fact that nominal lifestyle gets into church members gradually as one fails to heed God's decree, which is contagious, it was necessary to activate Christian lifestyle of all church members as a corporate body. To safeguard church members against irresponsible marriages and indiscriminate sexual involvements seven biblical principles were outlined:

(i) The principle of unity—complete and constant adjustments which should exist to strike unity...¹“Can two walk together, except they be agreed?”(Amos3:3).

(ii)The principle of interdependence—Living for the support of each other... “Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Gal 6:2).

(iii)Principle of endogamy—Marriage between believers and non believers... “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?” (2 Cor. 6:14).

(iv)The principle of monogamy (one husband and one wife).Polygamy only began with Lamech as an act of stubbornness. It is not God's will though He tolerated it... “And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made [them] at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?”(Matt 19:5).

(v)The principle of permanence—Life long union terminated by death of one of the partner... “Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (Matt19:6).

(vi)The principle of privacy—Leaving and cleaving as is instructed by God... “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh” (Gen 2:24).

(vii)The principle of exclusivity-exclusively heterosexual covenant between one man and one woman... “And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD” (Gen 4:1).

¹Calvin B. Rock, “Marriage and Family” in George W. Reid, ed., *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000), 728-729. (Note that all following six points mentioned above are taken from the same book).

The state of the dead was handled as a deep sleep in total ignorance of whatever happens after the persons die, be they good or bad as it is indicated in Ecclesiastes 9:5. This was to counteract the traditional norms that are practiced by the nominal Christians in honor of the dead. Sanctity of the Sabbath was emphasized in the context of its being an everlasting institution as indicated in Isaiah 66:23. This training reached its climax with emphasis on growing in Christ, as stated in the church manual that:

No longer do we live in the darkness, fear of evil powers, ignorance, and meaninglessness of our former way of life. In this new freedom in Jesus, we are called to grow into the likeness of His character, communing with Him daily in prayer, feeding on His word, meditating on it and on His providence, singing His praises, gathering together for worship, and participating in the mission of the church. As we give ourselves to loving service to those around us and in witnessing to His salvation.¹

After the seminar was successfully conducted, there was a need to test the understanding of the participants for the implementation of this program.

Implementation of the Program

This program was implemented in Dudi SDA Church. At the beginning of this project, between 40-50 percent of Dudi SDA church members were not committed to Christian lifestyle revealed in the Scriptures, even though they were involved in church and outreach activities through their financial support. This was noted by the researcher in the church membership statistical analysis on March of 2010. The researcher introduced this project to Dudi SDA Church in October, 2010. However, effective program implementation was conducted in a period of six months running between March, 2013 and November, 2012.

¹*General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Church Manual, 17th Edition, (Hagerstown, Maryland, U.S.A.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2005), 12-13.*

Based on the fact that nominal Christian lifestyle was misrepresenting the Scriptures among the newly baptized and other members, it prompted the researcher to engage church members into serious Bible study. The researcher sensitized the entire church membership in readiness for what was about to be done. In order to affect this program, the researcher administered a questionnaire that intended to establish facts about nominal Christian lifestyle and other lifestyle habits that hinders true Christian lifestyle. A special time was taken on a Sabbath day to gain the benefit of effective participation of the entire church membership so that every member would be able to attend. The researcher explained the content of the three-page questionnaire in Dholuo which is the vernacular of the then expected respondents. This was to gain their confidence in both their understanding of the concepts outlined therein hence giving room to non-English speakers to participate without fear and also to get the general idea of the research. A call for sincerity and honesty was made in prior to all respondents so as to achieve trustworthy results. Questions were allowed in areas that posed some difficulties to the respondents and high principle of privacy appealed for to the participants as and on a reciprocal sense, the researcher promised to keep and maintain high confidentiality on every response.

The questionnaires were subsequently distributed at 10:30 am to every willing participant whose age limits ranged between 16 years to 61 years and above. An interval time was given before the divine service allowing them to read and respond. Later, the filled up questionnaires were collected back as people were leaving the church after the services that ended at around 1:00 pm. The questionnaire was later analyzed and the results of the survey are captured in Chapter 3 of this project. The implementation of the program was presented in various modes by lectures and group discussions, including questions and answers sessions.

The process of implementation was characterized by lectures, and, group discussions, including questions and answers sessions. As was stated earlier, the whole presentation was conducted in Luo language. The areas explored during these sessions are outlined in the following successive presentations characterized by several discussions about nominal lifestyle revealed in the Bible.

Nominal Lifestyle Revealed in the Bible

A presentation was done on the way nominal Christian lifestyle has been revealed in the Bible through the character of those who devised their own ways of worshipping God. The discussion began with the first two sons of Adam: Cain and Abel. The contrasting issues in their giving modes were discussed in the context of the book *Christ' Object Lessons*, page 152 in relation to Mathews 5:3, depicting Cain's self contentment in Spirit requiring no cleansing, while Abel, lowly in heart, asked for mercy and came with the blood that pointed to the Lamb of God.

Hence, the Spirit of giving tithes and offering for the advancement of God's work was examined on the parameters of acknowledging Christ as the only sacrificial Lamb for the forgiveness of sin. This recognition purifies the hearts of the givers and makes their benevolent giving acceptable to God as the Bible says: "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven"(Matt 5:3, KJV).

The appeasing devices practiced by nominal Christians were resolved to be of no use in terms of the ideal Spiritual conditions that requires a contrite heart willing to love justice, mercy, and to walk humbly with God. The text from Micah 6:6-7 has no value in the absence of true confession. It states, "Where with shall I come before the LORD...shall I come before Him with burnt offerings...Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams...shall I give my firstborn [for] my transgression, the fruit of my body [for] the sin of my soul?"

The similar idea was discussed in relation to the second Commandment forbidding idolatry which is the malevolence of nominal Christians, whose worldviews over the state of the dead and other forms of idol worship was discussed. Nominal Christians are driven into incessant sacrifices in respect for the dead before and after burial ceremonies. This was viewed as an act of idolatry and spiritualism. It was determined that the self-sacrificial act of Christ on the cross is the ultimate requirement for human salvation hence leaving no room for any other substitutes. Detailed reading assignments were given to all participants on several texts including: Nehemiah9:13, Exodus20:3, Exodus 15:11, Deuteronomy5:7, Psalms81:9, and Isaiah26:4.

The terrible nature of idolatry was expanded on the context of the repercussions God has bestowed upon it as it is stated in Deuteronomy 13:6-17.

Matters pertaining to falsehood of all kinds among worshippers were also discussed in depth. This was due to the fact that nominal Christians are not able to call sin by its right name but rather live in complacency, conducting regular Sabbath worships without true conversion. The main text for emphasis was taken from the book of Jeremiah7:1-11, which was intended to expose the nature of nominal ways of worship that God abhors.

Misrepresentation of the Scriptures was also explored in the context of Psalms50:16-20, where God's rebuke is expressed in a strong form to the nominal Christians whose lifestyles are not in harmony with what they profess before people. In essence, the picture they portray in their daily lifestyle contribute to total confusion among the un-churched who would otherwise emulate their ways of life and found their salvation in God.

Practical ways of worship devoid of mere lip service was appealed to emphatically, as written in the book of Isaiah 29:13 in which God declares human precepts as futile in regards to proper worship and honor humanity ought to give Him. The same idea was visited in the book of Mark 7:6-9 where Jesus, the harbinger of God's truth, declared worship that upholds human traditions above God's Commandments as egotism. Thus, having the Commandments of God on the lips alone and using human doctrines means nothing for human salvation. Jesus mournfully rejected such devices and He continually calls for reforms.

These readings were performed during the lessons and the same were given as carry home assignments. Each day began with the revision of the previous lessons characterized by interactive discussions from the participants. They took interactive opportunities to express their convictions on the awfulness of idolatry. They were also able to share their experiences on the dangers of nominal way of life that embraces a combination of religious and traditional ways of life. Sessions for testimonies on the affects of nominal lifestyle were given, where the participants articulated how such conditions have been negating true Christian lifestyle in them and barely caused embarrassment and shame so that they would not attend church services joyfully. In essence, the participants were bold to express how the discussions had impacted them positively to an extent of defining their renewed attitude towards Christian lifestyles. However, there were some challenges that went side by side with the implementation program.

The Noted Challenges During the Implementation

Considering the fact that most Church members, including school going youth and employed adults do not get chance to attend church services during a week, there was poor attendance on Wednesday afternoon, as the program began in March 2012.

The first lessons recorded 20-30 in attendance against the expected number that ranged between 130-200 that form part of the regular Dudi SDA Church membership. This prompted the researcher to reschedule time to Sabbath afternoons, which also realized just a little positive adjustment in attendance of between 40-50 people.

The final and the best time were scheduled for the slot from 10:30 am to 11:15 am that was arrived at through the consensus of the majority. The presentation offered at this time reached everyone in the church and it became popularly termed “hot encouragements.” In essence, this presentation encouraged punctuality at Sabbath school and high attendance in the normal lesson discussions.

However, the Sabbath afternoon lessons still continued on every scheduled Sabbaths though with low turn-ups as has been indicated above. This program went on in successive weeks and months from March 2012 up to 24 November 2012, when it reached its climactic launching period.

Launching the Bible-Based Christian Lifestyle Program

It was deemed necessary to devote a specific Sabbath for the launching of this Bible-based Christian lifestyle program aimed at enhancing Christian lifestyle of the nominal Christians. The launching was destined to call upon the entire church to come back to the rule of the Bible. The theme was to measure every human activity with the authoritative standard from the word of God in the context of “It is written...” (Matt 4:7) and “How readeth thou...?” (Luke 10:26). The launching declared that every word and action should comply with the written Word of God since it is rich in every regulation for human needs as outlined in Isaiah 34:16. Those who violate the rule of the Bible have no light of the day, as described in Isaiah 8:20.

The climactic exhortation was made on the utter determination of the faithful ones who keep the Commandments of God and do not forsake their faith in Jesus as

they cling to the Spirit of Prophecy (Rev 14:12; 19:10). The attendance on this audacious occasion was remarkably high and joyous. After this celebrative launching, the researcher went through the task of evaluation of the program.

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VITAE

Name: Luka O. Ogayo

Background: I was born on November 22, 1964 in the currently established Homa-Bay County-Kendu- Bay town, Kenya but raised in Rachuonyo North district, West Karachuonyo Division, Kokoth Kataa Location, Kokoth 'B' Sub. Location Onyando village. I am a second born among two brothers and two sisters. I was raised by loving parents who had two denominational influences where my deceased father was of a Roman Catholic faith while the survived mother was and still a strong Seventh-day Adventist Church believer. I was baptized into the body of Christ and became a Seventh-day Adventist in 1980 among the only three qualified candidates in the Kanyamfwa district baptismal class. I took my primary education in a Catholic school but my high school through University has been Adventist oriented Christian education.

Family: I was married on February 9, 1992 to Mary Luka who is from Kendu-Bay Township, Kenya. We have seven children, Michael, David, Stephen, Calvince, Naomi, Brian, Persi and (Monica).

Languages: Speaks Dholuo, English and Kiswahili

Education: 1974-1980 Kokoth Primary School for Certificate of Primary Education (CPE) Kenya
1984-1987 Kuoyo Kochia Secondary School for Certificate of secondary education (CSE) Kenya
1988-1989 Agoro Sare High School for Kenya Advanced Certificate of Education (KACE) Kenya
2001-2003 Bugema University- Bachelor of Theology (BTH) Degree (Uganda)

Ordination: 2007-Ordained and currently hold ministerial credentials from Kenya Lake Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

Experiences: 1990-1996 Salesman Grade 111B and acting Sales Manager with Kenya Credit Traders LTD

1984-1985 Class Prefect—Kuoyo Kochia Secondary School

1986 Deputy Head Prefect—Kuoyo Kochia Secondary School

1987 Head Prefect—Kuoyo Kochia Secondary School

1988 House Captain—Agoro Sare High School

2004 Trainer of Trainers (TOT)/HIV & AIDS Certified
Counselor by NASCOP in collaboration with ADRA AFRO

1999-2000 District Pastor of Kowuor SDA Churches (Kenya Lake
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2004-2005 District Pastor of Rusinga West SDA Churches (Kenya
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Interests and Hobbies:

Reading the Bible, Stories of Heroes characterized by intensified
pastoral duties on the basis of the biblical truths embedded on the Law
of God and the Spirit of Prophecy