

**PAUL'S DAMASCUS ROAD EXPERIENCE AND ITS RELEVANCE TO
PASTORAL MINISTRY IN METHODIST CHURCH NIGERIA IN
LAGOS**

By

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ABSTRACT

Paul's Damascus road experience, which refers to his conversion and call, is central to the success of his ministry. Existing studies on this remarkable experience have focused more on controversies surrounding the unusual nature of the event and its veracity than on its contribution to the success of Paul's ministry and its relevance to contemporary churches. This study, therefore, investigated the interaction between Paul's Damascus road experience (Acts 9:1-19, 22:4-16, 26:12-18; Galatians 1:1-17) and his pastoral ministry with a view to establishing their relevance to pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria (MCN) in Lagos.

The study was premised on Abogunrin's theory of transformative power, which posits that the gospel possesses the power to regenerate and transform an individual into an effective agent of change. Martin's grammatico-historical approach to biblical exegesis was used to elicit data from selected biblical texts. In-depth interviews were conducted with purposively selected clergy (56: seven from each diocese of eight Methodist dioceses in Lagos State) and laity (56: seven from each diocese). Copies of a questionnaire were administered to 454 randomly selected clergy and laity. While qualitative data were subjected to exegetical analysis; quantitative data were analysed using percentage.

Paul's conversion experience was revelatory and transforming in his life. It was described as a divine revelation in MCN 2006 Constitution. The event validated his call to ministry, which reflected in the success of his pastoral ministry unlike some clergy in MCN without conversion experience (clergy 82.5% and laity 78.1%) which consequently led to ignorance of their call, poor admission procedure into ministry and godfatherism as affirmed by 15.7% of the respondents. The event shaped Paul's theology in terms of his understanding of Christ as both the Messiah and the end of the law, and the divine intention to incorporate Gentiles into the people of God by faith. Conversely, the pastoral ministry of MCN is characterised by distorted theology arising from poor study of the scriptures (29.6%) and lack of missionary vision (13.0%). The Damascus road experience that informed Paul's teachings on the Jewish concept of reconciliation and self-sacrificing pastoral activities contrasts with lack of knowledge about salvation (40.7%) and poor sacrificial pastoring among MCN clergy. Some unconverted ministers in Paul's churches and MCN broke away to found their own ministries. The effects of these on Paul's churches were envying and fixed parties while there were misplaced priorities, unhealthy rivalry and non-compliance with the resolutions of the church in MCN. In addition, the clergy (96.8%) and the laity (92.1%) attributed ineffectiveness in the pastoral ministry of MCN to lack of conversion experience, and blamed unconverted ministers for the spiritual, numerical and financial stagnation of the Church.

Contrary to the experience in Methodist Church Nigeria in Lagos, Paul's Damascus road experience impacted positively on the success of his pastoral ministry. The Church, therefore, needs to review its doctrinal operation to guarantee genuine conversion and call into the pastoral ministry. This is imperative for a productive Christian ministry needed in the contemporary Nigerian religious terrain.

Key words: Pastoral ministry, Paul's conversion experience, Methodist Church Nigeria in Lagos, Transformative power.

Word count: 496

CERTIFICATION

I certify that this work was carried out under my direct supervision by Honore Mahukpego SEWAKPO (Very Rev.) in the Department of Religious Studies, Faculty of Arts, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria.

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DEDICATION

In honour of Methodist Church Nigeria

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Honore Mahukpego Sewakpo (Very Rev.)

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AJS	American Journal of Sociology
CATHAN	Catholic Theological Association of Nigeria
CBQ	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
CNT	Commentaire du Nouveau Testament
CTR	Criswell Theological Review
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
HTR	Harvard Theological Review
ICC	International Critical Commentary
IJPR	International Journal for the Psychology of Religion
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JBT	Journal of Bible and Theology
JJW	Journal of John Wesley
JSNT	Journal for the Studies of the New Testament
JTS	Journal of Theological Studies
LD	Lectio Divina
LXX	Septuagint
MCN	Methodist Church Nigeria
NABIS	Nigerian Association for Biblical Studies
NovT	Novum Testamentum
NTS	New Testament Studies
RNT	Regensburger Neues Testaments
SA	Sociological Analysis
SP	Studia Paulina
THKNT	Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZNTW	Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche
ZNW	Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
ZTK	Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the study

Conversion is intrinsic to the Christian religion. Jesus began his ministry with the proclamation: “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel” (Mark 1:15). Peter closed his Pentecost day sermon by exhorting his hearers: “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38). And Paul commended his Thessalonian converts for having “turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come”¹.

However, understanding the meaning of Christian conversion has often been difficult. Frequently, it is discussed anecdotally in terms of one’s own experience, whether by way of testifying to its validity and salutary effects or in disparagement of the same. It has been analysed from the comparative religious perspective and socio-psychological angle. In view of this, it is expedient to consider in detail Paul’s conversion for a clear grasp of the nature of Paul’s conversion and a more informed understanding of the impact that experience had on his life, thought, and ministry. It is also important to investigate if Paul’s experience should be the general paradigm for Christian conversion today.

The most remarkable conversion recorded in the New Testament is that of Saul of Tarsus, who is also known as Paul, and is portrayed as the leading Christian apostle to the Gentile world. Some people often considered Paul’s experience on his way to Damascus as a prototype of Christian conversion. But what about Peter’s conversion in Luke 5:1-11? Alinsangan opines that there are other “turnabouts” that have left an indelible mark in the history of Christianity. For example, we read of Emperor Constantine’s “conversion” or, rather, his proclamation of Christianity as the official religion of the Empire. We also read of the conversion of Augustine of Hippo, and of the conversion and reform of Martin Luther. But most probably none of these is as dramatic as that of the Apostle to the Gentiles. In fact,

¹ R. N. Longenecker. 2002. Introduction. *The road from Damascus: the impact of Paul’s conversion on his life, thought, and ministry*. Longenecker Richard N. Ed. Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, pp. xi. (1Thess 1:9-10; cf. 2Cor 3:15-16 where *evpistre, yhl pro.j ku,rion* “turning to the Lord,” is used for another instance of conversion language with unbelievers, and Gal 4:8-9 *evpistre, fete pa,lin evpi. ta. avsqenh* “turning back again to the weak” is equally employed for conversion language with believers).

it can be claimed that, apart from the Christ-event itself, no other event has proved so determinant for the course of Christian history as the conversion and commissioning of Paul². The Damascus road experience is an example of a radical change of mind and life. However, the term “conversion” today is differently understood and it ranges from a change of religious belief and practice to a renewal of faith and devotion within a religious tradition³. Today, the discussion on conversion has expanded, largely as a result of our religiously pluralistic and multi-cultural situation. It was the growth of the evangelical movement, especially in the 19th and 20th centuries in the United Kingdom and in the United States of America that made the usage of the term more common. Richard Quebedeaux⁴ claims that “in evangelical circles, great stress is placed on the necessity of personal conversion. That stress has led some liberal Protestants, and even some within evangelical circles, to object that conversion was being personalised or privatised and to suspect that the corporate nature of Christian life was being neglected”. However, the traditional Protestant to which Methodist Church Nigeria owes its origin posits that Paul’s Damascus road encounter led to his conversion.⁵ But in Methodist Church Nigeria today, many have not encountered God in this way.⁶

1.2 Statement of the problem

The story of Paul’s Damascus road experience was so important to the Early Church that it is told three times in the Acts of the Apostles. In his letters, Paul continually makes reference to the Damascene event and this event remained fresh on his mind till death. Paul’s Damascus road experience, which refers to his conversion and call, is central to the success of his ministry. Existing studies on this remarkable experience have focused more on controversies surrounding the unusual nature of the event and its veracity than on its contribution to the success of Paul’s ministry and its relevance to contemporary churches.

The reading of Paul’s letters reveals that some of the problems militating against the Church today could be found in the Primitive Church. His letters reveal how he successfully dealt with these problems owing to his Damascus road experience. In fact, from that Damascus road experience sprang the ministry of St. Paul. From the ministry of Paul came

² G. Alinsangan. 2008. Conversion and call of Paul. In *Home Life: The Philippines’ Family Magazine*, p. 18.

³ J. R., S. J. Donahue. 1986. Editor’s foreword. In Beverly Roberts Gaventa. *From darkness to light: Aspects of conversion in the New Testament*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, p. ix.

⁴ Richard Quebedeaux. 1978. *The worldly evangelicals*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, pp. 17-18. Cf. Jim Wallis. May 1978. Conversion: what does it mean to be saved? *Sojourners* 7: 10-14.

⁵ Neil Richardson. 2008. *Paul for today: new perspective on a controversial apostle*. London: Epworth Press, p.21.

⁶ E. A. Esedeke. 2000. *Christians and Nigerian politics*. Abba: Effort Printers Nigeria, p. 27.

the Gentile Church⁷ as well as the emergence of Western Asia Minor Churches. Paul's experience is similar to Aldersgate-Street experience of John Wesley which led to Wesley's successful pastoral ministry that eventually gave birth to Worldwide Methodist Church.

Methodist Church Nigeria is faced with a myriad of problems. Most of these problems are traceable to the kind of pastoral ministry which its clergymen and women provide. The lifestyle of some ministers corresponds neither to what they teach or preach, nor to the biblical standard of Christian living. As a result of this, they could not tell the flock confidently like Paul, "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (1Cor 11:1). Moreover practical Christian living and accountability are sacrificed on the altar of scholarship in some of her theological institutions and in preparation of people for pastoral ministry. Devaluation of moral values, less emphasis on moral absolutes, all of which have made Bible-based preaching impossible, can be noticed among some ministers of the Church. Indeed, the salt is fast losing its saltiness. Also, the ecclesiastical system, which Methodist Church Nigeria operates, could not guarantee the selection of quality candidates for the ministry as it is difficult for the church to differentiate men and women who are genuinely called of God from those who falsely claim to be called to pastoral ministry. This situation has snowballed into increasing decay in the church's pastoral ministry leading to the weakening of spiritual, numerical, and financial strengths of the Church, hence the flock often times has no one to look up to as a good example for the true worship of God. This is why the need for spiritual transformation of the pastoral ministry is urgent especially as it relates to the Methodist Church Nigeria.

This study, therefore, investigated the interaction between Paul's Damascus road experience (Acts 9:1-19, 22:4-16, 26:12-18; Galatians 1:1-17) and his pastoral ministry with a view to establishing their relevance to pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria (MCN) in Lagos.

Research Questions

Following from the above discussion, the underlisted constituted the research questions that guided the study:

- (i) How should the Damascus road experience of Paul be understood in recent scholarship?

⁷ There were churches in Gentile areas not founded by Paul, the church at Rome being the prime example. However, it was out of Paul's ministry that the majority of the original Gentile churches emerged.

- (ii) To what extent should Paul's conversion be seen as a paradigm for Christian experience today?
- (iii) What factors led to effectiveness in the pastoral ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria, and what are the causes and results of ineffectiveness in the pastoral ministry?

1.3. Purpose of the study

We investigate the conversion and call of Paul in the context of the call to pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria. This work examines a number of texts in the Acts of the Apostles and in some of the Pauline Letters in order to understand the impact of that experience on Paul's life, thought, and ministry; and the question of taking his experience as a paradigm for conversion today. Also, the work focuses on the ineffectiveness identified in the pastoral ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria, their causes and the effects on the Church. Appropriate recommendations that could lead to effective pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria are also made.

1.4. Scope of the study

The work is limited to Paul's Damascus road experience as recorded in Acts and in some of Paul's letters. Its implications for the eight Methodist Dioceses in Lagos State are examined. The Dioceses are Trinity Church Council, Diocese of Lagos, Diocese of Lagos Mainland, Diocese of Lagos Central, Diocese of Lagos West, Diocese of Lagos North, Diocese of Ikorodu, and Diocese of Badagry. The choice of Lagos, which is cosmopolitan and where all Nigerian ethnic groups are represented, enabled us to study and evaluate the opinions of the various ethnic groups about pastoral ministry and how these views have impacted on the dioceses in the metropolis. It is believed that the findings and recommendations will serve as guide for other church denominations with similar problems.

1.5 Research methodology

This study, which is in the field of Biblical Studies, is primarily a library research. It applied the method of textual, literary and historical criticism to the relevant scriptural passages, while making use of the Hebrew and Greek texts of the New Testament in the course of the exegesis and interpretation of the selected texts. The comparative hermeneutical

approach was applied. This gave room for sound understanding, objective judgement, creativity and innovations.⁸

Two major research instruments were used to collect quantitative and qualitative data for the study. A questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data, while the structured interview guide method was used to collect qualitative data. The questionnaire was divided into four sections. The first section was designed to elicit information from the respondents with regard to their demographic data. Here, questions on respondents' age, sex, nature of service in the Church and length of membership in the Church were asked. The second section addressed issues bordering on respondents' level of understanding of pastoral ministry in the Church, while the third section aimed at finding out the causes of ineffectiveness in the pastoral ministry of the Church. The fourth section focused on questions relating to results of ineffectiveness in the pastoral ministry in the Church. To probe further and complement the data obtained through the questionnaire, in-depth interviews (IDIs) were also carried out to collect qualitative data. This helped in the verification of the information gathered from the survey questionnaire.

Six hundred copies of the questionnaire were distributed among the 8 Methodist Dioceses in Lagos State. In all, 520 copies were completed and returned. Out of this number, 454 were considered usable for analysis. In addition to the survey, in-depth interviews were conducted in each of the selected dioceses in Lagos State. These in-depth interviews were used to generate qualitative data to supplement the quantitative data from the survey. This was necessary to elicit information on all aspects of the study which deals with individual perceptions on the causes and results of ineffectiveness in the pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria. In-depth interviews were conducted with 56 purposively selected clergy (seven from each diocese of eight Methodist dioceses in Lagos State where the denomination started) and 56 laity (seven from each diocese). Each of the interviewees was contacted personally at different times. In addition to the notes taken during the interview, all discussions were recorded on an audio tape and later transcribed for qualitative analysis. Both surveys were done between 2010 and 2011.

Efforts were made to calculate the information gathered from our questionnaire by simple percentage, using the formula: $\frac{N}{TN} \times \frac{100}{1}$. "N" means the number of respondents, while "TN" means the total number of respondents per question.

⁸ A. Dzurgba. 2003. *God and Caesar: a study in the sociology of religion*: Ibadan: John Archers Publishers Ltd., p. 32.

The demographic features of respondents are analysed below. The information collected from our various respondents in sections B, C, and D were carefully and critically analysed and interpreted in Chapter Six of this work, alongside other data. Inferences were drawn from these data.

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Table 1: Demographic Data of Respondents

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Age	(18 - 30) yrs	176	38.8
	(31 - 40) yrs	124	27.3
	(41 - 50) yrs	85	18.7
	(51 - 60) yrs	54	11.9
	61 yrs & above	14	3.1
	Total	453	99.8
	No response	1	0.2
	Total	454	100
Sex	Male	328	72.2
	Female	124	27.3
	Total	452	99.6
	No response	2	0.4
	Total	454	100
Ministry served in the Church	Pastoral Ministry	179	39.4
	Non-Pastoral Ministry	259	57
	Total	438	96.5
	No response	16	3.5
	Total	454	100
How long have you been in the Church?	Less than 10 yrs	63	13.9
	(10 - 19) yrs	96	21.1
	(20 - 29) yrs	135	29.7
	30 yrs & above	158	34.8
	Total	452	99.6
	No response	2	0.4
	Total	454	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

Table 1 shows the frequency and percentage distribution of respondents' demographic data, such as age, sex, ministry served in the Church, and length of membership of the Church.

The data on the age category of the respondents shows that there were more adults than those in the age group of eighteens and thirties. Specifically, the table shows that the lowest percentage (38.8%) was within the age category of 18-30 years, while the highest (61%) was the sum total of the age category of 31 years above. The implication of this is that most respondents were not young in age. This may be as a result of Fatokun's claim that "the new church vision provides the youth with greater empowerment through the delegation of responsibilities to the youth."⁹

Regarding the sex of the respondents, the table reveals that more male church members (72.2%), participated in this study than female church members, who accounted for only 27.3% of the sample selected.

Most of the respondents surveyed were in non-pastoral ministry (57%), while 39.4% were in pastoral ministry. This higher percentage (57%) may also have accounted for the preponderance of the Laity in the sample.

Data on length of membership in the church shows that respondents from 30 years and above (34.8%) dominated the sample. This could be attributed to the fact that the survey was conducted in main churches of the dioceses, which are predominantly adult members sections.

The theoretical framework: The study was premised on Samuel Oyinloye Abogunrin's theory of transformative power of the gospel, which states that the gospel has the power to regenerate and transform an individual into an effective agent of change. Ralph P. Martin's grammatico-historical approach to biblical exegesis was used to elicit information from the selected biblical texts. In this approach, an enquiry is made into what the words (*Gr. grammata*) meant to the original recipients of the passages under study. Since the original autographs of biblical texts are no longer available, the scholar should make use of the 'best' translation. Martin is of the opinion that the best translation is the one that is close to the original manuscript after it has been subjected to thorough textual criticism.¹⁰

1.6 Significance of the study

This research study is very significant in the following ways:

First, it investigates Paul's Damascus road experience in the context of the call to the pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria. The research has proffered suggestions that

⁹ Jide Fatokun. 2009. *Methodist witness in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Positive Press, p. 132.

¹⁰ P. M. Ralph. 1997. Approaches to New Testament exegesis. *New Testament interpretation: essays on principles and methods*. Howard Marshall I. Ed. Great Britain: Paternoster Press, pp. 220-251.

could lead to effective pastoral ministry of the Church. Many of the Methodists elite, among whom are scholars of Religious Studies, owing to many influences, seem to ignore the fact that critical study of Paul's conversion in Acts and in some of Paul's letters, could serve as a catalyst to achieving the vision and mission of the Church. This research fills this vacuum and triggers new efforts into other areas, which may also be lying untouched. The study is also a documentation of the thought of one of the major protestant denominations in the world.

Second, it brings out the relevance of the nature of Paul's Damascus road experience to the call to pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria.

Third, it shows the gradual diminishing, via the use of conversion experience, of the artificial boundaries between Christians and aggressive evangelism.

Fourth, this study is worth undertaking because of the theological weight of the issues raised in it. On this, Martin Dibelius says, "If one is to gain a true meaning of Paul's experience on the Damascus road, it is necessary right away to understand the motive which made him, according to his own witness, a persecutor of Christians".¹¹ Furthermore, the study discusses the fundamental issue of human destiny.

Lastly, it adds to the existing literature in the field and particularly influences the position of many people on the contribution of Paul's Damascus road experience to the success of his ministry.

¹¹ Martin Dibelius. 1953. *Paul*. Edited and completed by Werner Georg Kümmel, translated from the German by Frank Clarke: London, p. 46.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

2.0. Introduction

This chapter attempts a review of related literature. Areas examined include the works that have been carried out on Paul's conversion and the interpretations of his missionary activities, among others.

2.1. Paul's Damascus road experience

James D. G. Dunn points out that "the tradition that Saul was converted on the road to Damascus, probably within two or three years of Jesus' crucifixion, has become well established in common parlance as well as for historians of early Christianity"¹². He says further that Paul's conversion is widely used in all sorts of contexts for a sudden turn-about of policy or complete reversal of direction in life. Although Paul himself never says at what point his conversion took place, Gal 1:17 is sufficiently coherent with the Acts' accounts of the decisive event (Acts 9:3-8; 22:6-11; 26:12-20).¹³

Certainly, something must have led to Paul's radical rethinking. As a devout Jew, the fact that the Jewish Messiah was put to death by crucifixion on a Roman cross would have been a scandal to him (1Cor 1:23)¹⁴. For Deut 21:23 declares that God's curse rests on "anyone who is hung on a tree." The verse originally referred to the exposure of a criminal executed for a capital offence, whose dead body was hung on a tree for public ridicule. Later the Jews applied the text to the crucifixion of a living person on a pole or a cross. It is a curse that Christ bore on behalf of humanity in exchange for which humanity is offered the righteousness of God by being united with Christ.¹⁵ Therefore, Longenecker may be right in his submission that Paul's opposition to any messianic claims by Jesus of Nazareth and his persecution of those who made such claims were based on his "pre-conversion Christology."¹⁶

¹² J. D. G. Dunn. 2009. *Christianity in the making: beginning from Jerusalem*. Vol.2. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, p. 511.

¹³ J. D. G. Dunn. 2009. *Christianity in the making: beginning from Jerusalem*. Vol.2. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, p. 346.

¹⁴ J. D. G. Dunn. 2006. A light to the Gentiles: the significance of the Damascus road Christophany for Paul. *The glory of Christ in the New Testament: studies in Christology*. L. D. Hurst and N. T. Wright. Eds. Eugene: Wipf & Stock Publishers, p. 254.

¹⁵ Morna Hooker. 1994. *Not ashamed of the Gospel*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, pp. 32-36. Furthermore, read 2Cor 5:21 and Gal 3:13.

¹⁶ Richard N. Longenecker. 1997. A realized hope, a new commitment, and a developed proclamation: Paul and Jesus. *The road from Damascus: the impact of Paul's conversion on his life, thought and ministry*. R. N. Longenecker. Ed. Eugene: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., p. 24.

Bornkamm writes that the vision that Paul had on that journey “was the occasion of the apostle’s conversion and call”¹⁷. This position of Bornkamm’s is not accepted by many scholars.¹⁸ They claim on the one hand that the Damascene event is Paul’s commission and, on the other hand, it is Paul’s call.

George Lyttelton is of the view that the facts surrounding Paul’s conversion could be explained in only one of four ways: (i) Paul was an impostor who reported what he knew to be false; or (ii) he was an enthusiast who was driven by an overheated imagination and thereby deceived; or (iii) he was deceived by the fraud of others, whether human or demonic powers; or (iv) what he declared about the cause and consequences of his conversion was true and, therefore, the Christian religion is a divine revelation.¹⁹

William James avers that modern psychology considers Paul’s experience a primary archetype of religious conversion. In his Gifford Lectures at the beginning of the twentieth century, William James proposes that the psychology of conversion may be described as either “gradual” or “sudden.” “The older medicine used to speak of it in two ways,” “λύσις and κρίσις, one gradual, the other abrupt, in which one might recover from a bodily disease. In the spiritual, there are also two ways, one gradual, and the other sudden, in which inner unification may occur.”²⁰ The λύσις (loosing or subsiding) which is the gradual type may be described as an introspective and voluntary change that “consists in the building up, piece by piece, of a new set of moral and spiritual habits.”²¹ The κρίσις (turning point, also called “lightning” or “dramatic”) is the sudden type, an unexpected or involuntary self-surrender. Sudden conversion is an abrupt turn-about. “Often amid tremendous emotional excitement or perturbation of the senses, a complete division is established in the twinkling of an eye

¹⁷ J. Aliet. 2006. Review: Bornkamm Gunther, (1971) Paul. In *review of Paul*. New York: Harper and Row, p. 21.

¹⁸ Krister Stendahl. 1976. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, pp. 7-23; F. F. Bruce. 1977. *Paul: Apostle of the Heart set Free*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, pp. 15-16; Seyoon Kim. 1981. *The Origin of Paul’s Gospel*. Wm. B. Eerdmans, pp. 7-23; J. Christiaan Beker. 1980. *Paul the Apostle: the triumph of God in life and thought*. Philadelphia: Philadelphia: Fortress Press, pp. 3-9. R. N. Longenecker. 2002. A realized hope, a new commitment, and a developed proclamation: Paul and Jesus. Richard N. Longenecker. Ed. *The road from Damascus: the impact of Paul’s conversion on his life, thought, and ministry*. Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, pp. 25-26.

¹⁹ George Lyttelton. 1747. *Observations on the conversion and apostleship of St. Paul*. London: R. Dodsley, pp. 3-72.

²⁰ W. James. 1902. *The varieties of religious experience: a study in human nature*. London: Longmans and Green, p. 183.

²¹ W. James. 1902. *The varieties of religious experience: a study in human nature*. London: Longmans and Green, p. 206.

between the old life and the new.”²² Paul is the “most eminent” representative of the sudden type of conversion.

Apart from Stendahl, others have been hesitant to use the language of “conversion” in relation to Paul’s Damascus road experience because of: (i) the brevity of its descriptions which always occur each time the apostle is dealing with other issues²³; (ii) doubts about the accuracy of the portrayals of the Damascus road encounter in Acts 9, 22, and 26, especially when they are compared with the apostle’s own statements; and (iii) the difficulty of providing an appropriate definition of conversion and then applying it to Paul.²⁴

In the Puritan “morphology of conversion,” Damascus could not be the exemplar of a believer’s conversion. Rather, the foremost scriptural example became Lydia, the seller of purple, “whose heart the Lord opened to receive the message spoken by Paul” (Acts 16:14). At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Cambridge preparationists saw in the description of Lydia’s conversion an inward moving of the heart that matched the Puritan experience. Thomas Hooker avers that: “Paul was not willing to take up his own heart, for that was mad against the Lord ... but the Lord must come down from heaven and break open the door by strong hands.” By contrast, Lydia looked to God’s promises, and God “opened her eyes and melted her heart kindly”²⁵. Scholars who uphold the Puritan “morphology of conversion” say that the conversion of Paul is prominent. But it does not in itself constitute a model or a prototype of Christian conversion, as it has been seen to be. Many have noted that this experience is dramatic, decisive and determinative, and rightly so. But this conversion is in no sense portrayed as the ideal or as prescriptive in any respect, other than that it describes an encounter with Christ. Nevertheless, Paul’s conversion has been a point of reference for religious experience for two millennia or a kind of standard by which conversions are measured²⁶. But the scholars who do not share the Puritan “morphology of conversion,” propose that Paul’s conversion experience be seen as a prototype of a punctiliar conversion. On this Richard Peace, for example, presents what he sees as two models of conversion in the

²² W. James. 1902. *The varieties of religious experience: a study in human nature*. London: Longmans and Green, p. 217.

²³ He was defending the gospel that he proclaimed to his Gentile converts in Galatians 1:13-17; he was also countering certain super-spiritual believers who were evidently attempting to denigrate him in 1Corinthians 9:1; 15:8-10; and rebutting certain Jewish Christians who were trying to “judaize” his converts in Philippians 3:4-11.

²⁴ Peter T. O’Brien. 2004. Was Paul converted? D. A. Carson. Et al. *Justification and variegated nominalism*. Vol.2. *The paradoxes of Paul*. Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, p. 362.

²⁵ H. Thomas. 1632. *The soul’s preparation for Christ*. London: R. Dawlman, pp. 180-81.

²⁶ Gordon T. Smith. 2001. *Beginning well: Christian conversion and authentic transformation*. Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, p. 126.

New Testament: that of Paul, which he contends is punctiliar, and that of the twelve disciples, which he regards as protracted or extended process as shown by Mark's Gospel.²⁷

In reviewing the grounds covered so far on Paul's conversion, three major points must be highlighted, with various sub-points under each of them. First, the term invariably used in the history of interpretation for Paul's experience at Damascus was "conversion," although the word itself is not found in the biblical accounts. Contemporary definitions, based on sociological and psychological studies, suggest at least three shades of meaning associated with conversion: (i) a gradual change of life that grows out of the past is an "alternation"; (ii) a sudden change of life that rejects the past and takes a new direction is a "conversion"; and (iii) a cognitive change of life that re-conceives the past is a "transformation"²⁸. No one would contest that what Paul experienced was a transformation. With regard to conversion, he certainly rejected some aspects of his Jewish past. In fact, he rejected enough of Jewish theology and praxis to render him an apostate in the eyes of his fellow Jews.²⁹ However, to speak of Paul's experience as only a calling is not adequate to describe the "turning from" the past, that his conversion connotes.

Second, the role of Paul's conversion in the history of the Western Church is more complicated than Stendahl's analysis suggests. Both Augustine and Luther give us narrative descriptions of such spiritual introspection. But neither of them suggests Paul as the archetype of their anguish. On the contrary, they find in him the promise of sudden grace. The Law-Gospel paradigm, which described the function of the Law as a means to terrify the sinner with God's justice so as to seek refuge in the imputed righteousness of Christ *sola gratia* (Luther) or primarily a revelation of the perfect and divine will³⁰, stands prominently in Paul's thinking contributed to two movements that nearly provide evidence for Stendahl's case. The first is the Puritan preparationists, who established a theological necessity for a plagued conscience to precede a true conversion, and the Enlightenment rationalists, who established a psychological necessity for a plagued conscience to induce a questionable conversion. Having seen these alternatives, we must disagree with the judgment of "the new perspective." Augustine and Luther are still better guides to Paul's thought than either of these two movements.

²⁷ R. V. Peace. 1999. *Conversion in the New Testament: Paul and the Twelve*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., p. 19.

²⁸ B. R. Gaventa. 1986. *From darkness to light: aspects of conversion in the New Testament*. Philadelphia: Fortress, pp. 10-13.

²⁹ A. E. Segal. 1990. *Paul the convert: the apostolate and apostasy of Saul the Pharisee*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

³⁰ F. Thielman. 1994. *A contextual approach: Paul and the Law*. Illinois: InterVarsity, pp. 14-27.

Third, the models for understanding Paul's conversion in the history of interpretation have their counterparts today, much in the way that Thomas Aquinas anticipated William James. Many of the approaches to Paul's conversion today are multifaceted, and so tend to resist a neat definition. Yet, for Bruce it is useful to propose the following four models as an index to current thinking about the impact of Paul's conversion on his theology³¹: (i) Paul's conversion revealed Christ as the end of the law (Rom 10:4); the crucified Messiah overcame the curse of the law by his resurrection and offered salvation apart from the law; (ii) it revealed Jesus as the Messiah of Israel (Gal 1:12), whose death and resurrection inaugurated the "Age to Come" and fulfilled the covenant promises of the Old Testament; (iii) it revealed the divine intention (Rom 1:5) to incorporate the Gentiles into the people of God by faith and to claim Paul for a world mission; and (iv) it revealed Jesus as the Lord of glory (2Cor 4:6), whose radiance intimated the very presence of God and the eschatological glory to come. Finally, Paul views his Damascus Road experience to be a new creation; the dawn of the age of resurrection; the indenture of the servant of the Lord commissioned as the light to the Gentiles.

In sum, what happened on the Damascus road should not be understood in terms of a transformation, an alternation, or a call. It was a conversion from Paul's previous understanding of how God's will and purpose for Israel was to be carried forward. Paul saw it as a conversion to a better understanding of that will and purpose for Israel. It must not be seen as an apostate from Israel; rather, an apostle of Israel commissioned to carry out Israel's destiny as "a light to the Gentile world".

2.2 The meaning of conversion

Depending on one's perspective, whether social science or theological (liberal or evangelical, sacramental or Pentecostal), conversion can mean very different things. Conversion is whatever a particular group says it is, according to Rambo.³² Atkins opines that a contemporary understanding of conversion is a slippery fish to grasp.³³ Grenz calls conversion a mystery³⁴. Pawson³⁵ outlines how conversion can mean both the whole process

³¹ C. Bruce. 2002. Interpreting Paul's conversion—then and now. *The road from Damascus: the impact of Paul's conversion on his life, thought, and ministry*. R. N. Longenecker. Ed. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, p. 16.

³² L. R. Rambo. 1992. The psychology of conversion. *Handbook of religious conversion*. H. N. Maloney & S. Southard. Eds. Alabama: REP, p. 160.

³³ M. Atkins. 2002. *Lecture notes*. Sheffield: Cliff College, p. 3.

³⁴ S. J. Grenz. 1994. *Theology for the community of God*. Carlisle: Paternoster Press, p. 529.

³⁵ D. Pawson. 1997. *The normal Christian birth*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, p. 82.

and equally some of its component parts. Therein lie the difficulties in understanding what conversion is all about.

Grenz agrees that repentance involves a radical alternation. It leads to a mental, emotional and volitional change, but it stops short of the need for corrective action.³⁶ He claims that turning to God is inseparable from turning to others, a turn to creation and a turn inwardly to accept ourselves and live as God intended our lives to be. Green talks in similar vein about a turn to God, the world and others.³⁷ Wallis says that repentance must be more than an emotional release and he outlines distinctive actions that demonstrate when this is the case.³⁸ The subtlety of the radical nature of Pawson's view is worth examining. He is unique and includes restitution in his view. Even if other authors agree with him on the importance of radical actions or change in lifestyle, he seems to be the only one to include the dimension of repair.

For Pawson and others, conversion, through repentance and turning away from sin, entails a change in behaviour. However, there are differences as to whether the change in behaviour is necessary for conversion, a by-product of conversion and the nature of that change. Kraft points out that conversion is a change of allegiance, which leads to a new principle of evaluation and interpretation. Seeing things in this new way leads to a new way of behaving.³⁹ The change in behaviour is, therefore, a by-product. He also says that the change in behaviour will be less radical where the convert has grown up in the culture of what they convert to; hence they have already accepted many of the cultural and social norms. This is important because if one looks for a radical change either as an evidence of conversion, or as part of the conversion process, one ignores the fact that change will be relative to each convert's starting point on the journey of faith.

Newbigin⁴⁰ equates conversion to a change in conduct to be like Christ. This poses a challenge. What does it mean to be like Christ? Often this can sometimes manifest itself in a list of things one should do or not do, which, in turn, becomes a series of hurdles that must be jumped over *before* entering the kingdom. Glasser⁴¹ equates this to a Western mindset which, using sociological terminology, is a bounded set. This means it has a firm boundary, making

³⁶ S. J. Grenz. 1994. *Theology for the community of God*. Carlisle: Paternoster Press, p. 531.

³⁷ M. Green. 1990. *Evangelism through the local Church*. Sevenoaks: Hodder & Stoughton, p 37.

³⁸ J. Wallis. 1986. *The call to conversion*. Herts: Lion Publishing, p. 4.

³⁹ C. H. Kraft. 1979. *Christianity in culture*. New York: Orbis Books, p. 344.

⁴⁰ L. Newbigen. 1995. *The open secret*. London: SPCK, p. 136.

⁴¹ A. Glasser. 1986. An international perspective. *Entering the kingdom*. M. Hill. Ed. MARC Europe, British Church Growth Association, pp. 22-38 (p. 26).

it obvious whether you are in or not.⁴² He suggests that another way of viewing change and the community is through a centred set model. Here people are defined by their relationship to the centre (Jesus Christ) and their movement towards him. This description of change is less legalistic, encourages a dynamic rather than static perspective and recognises that each person's journey will be unique.

Jonathan Edwards⁴³ and the Puritans⁴⁴ aver that the meaning of conversion is all about: (i) a discernible pattern to a Christian conversion; though it can vary from person to person, all have some common elements; (ii) an integration of heart and mind, intellect and emotion; and (iii) a response to God's grace rather than to initiating grace. We may suppose that Jonathan Edwards and the Puritans agree with Glasser's understanding of conversion to some degree. Besides, both say that "conversion is an act whereby we discern and respond to divine initiative. It is a response to the initiative and superintending work of the Spirit of God"⁴⁵.

In search for the meaning of conversion, we must also explore its relationship to time. Lane⁴⁶ argues that, theologically, it is a single event, which may in practice happen gradually over a period of time and in stages. At first reading, he would appear to be hedging his bets but he is saying that conversion is one event. His view has certain components whose time and expression will vary for each individual. An analogy is the game of football that will still be one game, but may or may not have half time to pause for breath! Finney in his research on the way people came to faith⁴⁷ found that 31% could date their conversion and 69% could not and that the average time to discover God was four years. Pawson⁴⁸ disagrees strongly with this. He says that it is unbiblical to remember the day of one's conversion. A more tempered, realistic and pragmatic view is that of Morris,⁴⁹ who says that there is no conversion so instantaneous that it happens overnight and at the other end of the spectrum, no conversion so gradual that the person is unaware of God working in them. Green⁵⁰

⁴² For example, doctrinal or behavioural standards that need to be kept.

⁴³ Jonathan Edwards. 1959. *Religious affections*. John E. Smith. Ed. New Haven: Yale University Press, pp. 381-382.

⁴⁴ Jerald C. Brauer. 1978. Conversion from Puritanism to revivalism. *Journal of Religion* 58:230-234.

⁴⁵ Gordon T. Smith. 2001. *Beginning well: Christian conversion and authentic transformation*. Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, p. 90.

⁴⁶ ANS. Lane. 1987. Conversion: a comparison of Calvin and Spener. *Thermelios*. Vol. 13 , No. 1, pp. 19-21, (p. 21)

⁴⁷ J. Finney. 1999. *Finding faith today*. Swindon: British and Foreign Bible Society, p. 24.

⁴⁸ D. Pawson, 1997. *The normal Christian birth*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, p. 79.

⁴⁹ G. E. Morris. 1981. *The mystery and meaning of Christian conversion*. Nashville: Discipleship Resources, p. 126.

⁵⁰ M. Green. 1990. *Evangelism through the local Church*. Sevenoaks: Hodder & Stoughton, p. 36.

acknowledges that there will always be some history behind any act of commitment. There have been ways to try and describe and quantify this history.

Wimber utilises an adapted version of the Engel scale to outline the process of conversion.⁵¹ This scale starts at -10 with steps running to 0, where a decision is made and then steps to +3 which involve growing in faith. These measures are useful as descriptive tools. There is danger in this because it could prescribe that conversion must be linear and staged, whereas often it is far more circular and rambling. Regardless of whether the conversion is instant or gradual, there seems some agreement that it must be preceded by a crisis or disorientation. Rambo⁵² says that this crisis could be religious, political, cultural, and psychological or a change in life situation. William James Abraham⁵³ says that we need to stress the importance of both crisis and process, as one without the other is inadequate and misleading. These crises also give a clue to motivations for conversion from the social science perspective. Rambo, citing Ullman,⁵⁴ includes a variety of emotional factors and problematic relationships as the precursor to conversion. Klaiber, citing Lofland and Skanovd, lists 6 other motives or types of conversion:

The intellectual—seeking after God, the mystical—surprised by god, experimental—*trying out* a new religion, affectional— attracted to the warmth of a fellowship, revivalist—dramatic conversion under influence of suggestive proclamation and experience, the coercive—brainwashing under extreme force.⁵⁵

Ullman's ideas are limiting, as they suggest that conversion is for those who stereotypically need faith as some kind of emotional crutch. The great conversions—those of such saints of the church as Paul, Augustine, John Woolman, and Dorothy Day—bring not comfort, at least not in any superficial sense, but demand a courage, a willingness to risk and suffer, to live a life of disease and spiritual adventure that is unsettling if not terrifying to contemplate. Why is this the case? Why should courage and not comfort be the outcome of conversion to the Christian perspective on reality?⁵⁶ William James's psychological study of conversion was heavily dependent on the traditional way of understanding Paul's Damascus road experience.

⁵¹ J. Wimber, and K. Springer. 1992. *Power evangelism*. Kent: Hodder and Stoughton, p. 107.

⁵² L. R. Rambo. 1992. The psychology of conversion. *Handbook of religious conversion*. H. N. Maloney & S. Southard. Eds. Alabama: REP, p. 165.

⁵³ W. J. Abraham. 1993. *The art of evangelism*. Sheffield: Cliff College Publishing, p. 65.

⁵⁴ L. R. Rambo. 1992. The psychology of conversion. *Handbook of religious conversion*. H. N. Maloney & S. Southard. Eds. Alabama: REP, p. 166.

⁵⁵ W. Klaiber. 1997. *Call and response*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, p. 188.

⁵⁶ S. McFague. 1978, July. Conversion: life on the edge of the raft. *Interpretation: a JBT*. Vol. XXXII. NO.3: 255.

Everts⁵⁷, quoting James, defines conversion as “the process by which a person who struggles with a sense of guilt and inferiority becomes a person with a conscious sense of being right and unified as a consequence of achieving a firmer hold on religious realities.” James’s definition of conversion has been widely used over the years and offers, therefore, a convenient starting point:

To be converted, to be regenerated, to receive grace, to experience religion, to gain an assurance, are so many phrases which denote the process, gradual or sudden, by which a self hitherto divided, and consciously wrong inferior and unhappy, becomes unified and consciously right superior and happy, in consequence of its firmer hold upon religious realities⁵⁸.

The emphasis James places on conversion as a change from division to wholeness, from a negative to a positive state, appears in a slightly different form in the well-known definition of Arthur Darby Nock:

By conversion we mean the reorientation of the soul of an individual, the deliberate turning from indifference or from an earlier form of piety to another, a turning which implies a consciousness that a great change is involved, that the old was wrong and the new is right⁵⁹.

These definitions by James and Nock differ, in that James seems to imply that the convert’s status is objectively improved, while Nock describes a change that is subjectively assessed. The distinction may reflect the disciplines of the two scholars, one of whom concentrates on the relationship of conversion to emotional health, while the other addresses the question of conversion in the history of religions. A more recent definition of conversion also characterises it as a change from a rejected past to an accepted and affirmed present:

Conversions are drastic changes in life. ... Conversions are transitions to identities which are proscribed within the person's established universes of discourse, and which exist in universes of discourse that negate these formerly established ones. The ideal typical conversion can be thought of as the embracing of a negative identity. The person becomes something which was specifically prohibited⁶⁰.

All the three definitions characterise conversion as a pendulum-like change in which there is a rupture between past and present, with the past portrayed in strongly negative terms.

⁵⁷ J. M. Everts. 1993. Conversion and call of Paul. *Dictionary of Paul and his letters*. Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin. Eds. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, p. 156.

⁵⁸ James William. 1902. *The varieties of religious experience*. London: Longmans: Greens & Co., p. 189.

⁵⁹ A. D. Nock. 1933. *Conversion: the old and new in religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo*. London: Oxford University Press, p. 7.

⁶⁰ R. Travisano. 1970. Alternation and conversion as qualitatively different transformations. *Social psychology through symbolic interaction*. G. P. Stone and H. A. Farberman. Eds. New York: John Wiley, pp. 237-248.

In an article critical of both the nature of the questions being asked and the answers offered, Max Heirich notes that current theories offer three kinds of explanations for the phenomena of conversion:

1) *Psychological stress*. Many of the psychological studies of conversion describe it as a “fantasy solution” to stress. The stress itself may be the result of a personal situation or of social conditions. 2) *Previous socialization*. According to this approach, conversion has its origins in early conditioning. Thus, adherents examine religious orientations of parents, sex-role education (because of women’s greater interest in religious matters), and education. 3) *Direct social influence*. This explanation stresses the social interactions that make it possible for persons to change religious perspective. Such analyses look at patterns of influence and their relationship to conversion⁶¹.

Obviously, these are not mutually exclusive options. The Lofland Stark model, for example, uses elements of each of these options⁶². Nevertheless, they do reflect major tendencies in current research on conversion in the social sciences. Now let’s consider the final contribution from the social science perspective, looking at conversion in the light of faith development theory. Fowler and Tomlinson both set conversion against the backdrop of faith development. They view faith as something in its own right that can be measured and described. Tomlinson has four levels and Fowler, seven. Each of these levels involves a different level of maturity of faith, comparative in many ways to stages in child development. For Fowler, conversion is a change in the *contents* of Faith.⁶³ As such, conversion can mean a change within the stage of faith in a person or could simply be a re-centring of one’s images of value and power, the adoption of a new set of master stories but within the same level of faith. These insights from the development of faith are useful in our understanding of conversion for several reasons. Conversion at different levels of faith will have a bearing on the experience and perspective that the convert has. As such, it is a challenge not to attempt to make all conversion experiences the same. It is also a reminder that, since conversion is but a beginning, we should not neglect to help converts mature in faith.

Richardson⁶⁴ has argued that a new paradigm has emerged in contemporary studies of religious conversion and is most apparent in conversion studies with either a social, psychological or sociological emphasis. The basis for this argument can be seen in the way

⁶¹M. Heirich. 1977. Change of heart: a test of some widely held theories about religious conversions. *AJS* 83:654.

⁶² M. Heirich. 1977. Change of heart: a test of some widely held theories about religious conversions. *AJS* 83:654-655.

⁶³ J. W. Fowler. 1985. *Stages of faith*. New York: Harper Collins, p. 281

⁶⁴ J. T. Richardson. 1988. Paradigm conflict, types of conversion, and conversion theories. *SA* 50:11-21.

that conversion is conceptualised. In the old paradigm, conversion is generally viewed in passivist and deterministic terms, whereas in the new paradigm, conversion is generally explained from the standpoint of active agency (that is, self-directed behaviour), personal choice, meaning, and negotiation. In a very real sense, the “old” and “new” paradigms provide diametrically opposed ways of conceptualising the same phenomena.

The prototype of the old paradigm is the conversion of Paul on the road to Damascus. For many within the Christian tradition and throughout Western civilisation, the transformation of Paul constitutes what conversion should be. The Pauline experience and similar passivist conversions are usually described by the following characteristics: i) sudden and dramatic; ii) irrational or magical in nature; iii) involving a powerful, external, and impersonal force; iv) usually a single event; v) the negation of the old self and the affirmation of the new self; vi) change from one static state to another static state; vii) typically occurs during adolescence and is a “good thing”; and viii) behaviour change usually follows belief change. Thus, in the old paradigm, the individual is conceptualized as a passive recipient of personality changes and life experiences. Whether psychologically predisposed or situationally tempered, individuals’ conversions are considered determined, in large part, by impersonal and powerful forces acting upon them, within them, or both.

The prototypes of the new paradigm are seekers or individuals who actively make plans, choices, and decisions, generate many of their life experiences⁶⁵. Rather than being pushed around by powerful, unseen, and uncontrollable forces, the seeker is an active agent. The seeker is generally characterised by the following: i) volition; ii) autonomy; iii) search for meaning and purpose; iv) multiple conversions or conversion careers; v) rational interpretation of experiences; vi) gradual and continuous conversion(s); vii) negotiation between the individual and the potential membership group; and viii) belief change that follows behaviour change, as the individual learns the role of being a new convert.

Inasmuch as the dual paradigmatic status of contemporary conversion research helps the researcher to appreciate the relationship between the dominant theoretical perspectives of a discipline and the larger societal context of a discipline, it has not adequately discussed Paul’s understanding of what occurred to him on the road to Damascus.

According to Richard Peace,⁶⁶ the Greek word for conversion is ἐπιστροφή. But, in fact, there are three related words that express the concept of conversion. They are:

⁶⁵ R. Strauss. 1979. Religious conversion as a personal and collective accomplishment. *SA* 40:158-65.

⁶⁶ R. V. Peace. 1999. *Conversion in the New Testament: Paul and the twelve*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., p. 346.

ἐπιστρέφω, μετανοεω, and μεταμελομαι. ἐπιστρέφω is the broader term. It means “to turn towards; to turn round; to bring back, convert; to turn about; to turn back, return; and to be converted.”⁶⁷ It defines the actual turning itself. ἐπιστρέφω involves both μετανοεω “repentance” and πιστις “faith”. Μετανοεω, on the other hand, is a more focused word. It describes the decision to turn; it emphasises the inner, cognitive decision to make a break with the past. Μετανοεω must be combined with πιστις in order to bring about ἐπιστροφή. “In the non-canonical Jewish literature, the two meanings attached to it are namely the change of mind and to regret.”⁶⁸ The third word, μεταμελομαι, carries the idea of feeling sorry for failure. It focuses on past sin, error, debt, or failure and is connected with the concept of repentance.

Beverly Roberts Gaventa⁶⁹ in a study of conversion in the New Testament identifies three types of change that take place at conversion. The first is *alternation*, which is a natural progression of previous choices. The second is the *pendulum* that deals with the rejection of past convictions and affiliations. The third is the *transformation*, which is a new way of perceiving things, the radical reinterpretation of the past. This typology is useful in describing the nature of change, whereas many of the previous scholars prescribe what the nature of change should be. In the light of Gaventa’s view of conversion, we may suppose that conversion is a multifaceted event that cannot be disclosed from the community of faith, whether through baptism, social action or individual improvement. Yet conversion is unique to each convert.

In conclusion, the meaning of conversion certainly involves a radical alternation in lifestyle, through faith and repentance. Paul’s remarks about himself must be understood to reflect his convictions at the time he was writing. Taylor’s caution about the use of converts’ statements is extremely important for our study of Paul’s conversion. What Paul himself says has much to tell us, but what it tells us concerns his understanding of what had occurred.

⁶⁷ *The analytical Greek lexicon: consisting of an alphabetical arrangement of every occurring inflexion of every word contained in Greek New Testament with a grammatical analysis of each word, and lexicographical illustration of the meanings: a complete series of paradigms, with grammatical remarks and explanations.* London: Samuel Bagster & Sons Ltd., 1971, p. 161.

⁶⁸ J. W. Heikkinen. 1966, June 12-17. Conversion: a biblical study. *National faith and order colloquium.* World Council of Churches, p. 13.

⁶⁹ B. R. Gaventa. 1986. *From darkness to light.* Philadelphia: Fortress Press, p. 12.

2.3 Paul's call to the missionary work

Paul, according to Alinsangan,⁷⁰ views the appearance of Jesus as a call or commissioning. The call to be a missionary to the Gentiles belongs to Paul's experience of the risen Christ, not an afterthought or a product of Paul's missionary experience. Also, Stendahl contends that the Damascus road experience ought not to be considered the story of a conversion at all but the story of a call.⁷¹ Stendahl agrees with Alinsangan that Paul's Damascus road experience should be considered as a call. Although, Stendahl opposes any attempt to regard the event as Paul's conversion. In spite of this position of Stendahl's, there is relative unity at Paul's call to the missionary work. Contemporary understandings diverge as we look at James Dunn's consideration of Paul's Damascus road experience.

Bornkamm may be right when he says that understanding of Paul's Damascus road experience is centred on the textual meaning of the word "reveal." In Gal 1:16, Paul uses the phrase $\alpha\nu\kappa\alpha\lambda\upsilon\gamma\alpha\iota\ \tau\omicron\nu\ \nu\iota\omicron\nu\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon/\ \epsilon\nu\ \epsilon\upsilon\mu\omicron\iota$. (*to reveal his Son in me*). In 1Cor 15:8 and 1Cor 9:1, he employs the statements $\omega\ \epsilon\gamma\omega\ \kappa\alpha\upsilon\mu\omicron\iota$, (*he was seen by me also*) and $\mu\eta\ \delta\omicron\upsilon\upsilon\varsigma\ \epsilon\iota\delta\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\nu\ \kappa\upsilon\ \rho\iota\omicron\nu\ \eta\mu\omega\ \nu\ \epsilon\omicron\ \rho\alpha\kappa\alpha$; (*have I not seen Jesus our Lord?*) respectively. In a similar manner, John says $\epsilon\gamma\omega\ \epsilon\iota\delta\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\nu\ \kappa\upsilon\ \rho\iota\omicron\nu$ (*I have seen the Lord*) to report that Jesus Christ was revealed to Mary Magdalene after His resurrection; and Mary told her experience to the disciples (John 20:18). Thus Paul and John exclusively use $\acute{\omicron}\pi\acute{\alpha}\omega$ (see "with the eyes") to narrate the appearances of Jesus Christ after His resurrection.

Dunn⁷² points out that Saul understood his encounter on the Damascus road as first and foremost a call to preach the good news about God's Son to the Gentiles (Gal 1:16). This has several important corollaries. Some of them are discussed below.

First, we should not think of Saul as converting from one religion to another (Judaism to Christianity).⁷³ Nevertheless, we can hardly avoid speaking of Paul's experience as a conversion; the voile-face of which he himself speaks (Phil 3:7) was as clear a "conversion" as one could imagine.⁷⁴ The only clarification required is that it was a conversion not from one religion to another but from one form of Second Temple Judaism to another, that is, from

⁷⁰ G. Alinsangan. 2008, January. Conversion and call of Paul. *Homelife: the Philippines' family magazine*, p. 19.

⁷¹ K. Stendahl. 1976. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, p. 7.

⁷² J. D. G. Dunn. 2009. *Christianity in the making: beginning from Jerusalem*. Vol. 2: Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., pp. 353-356.

⁷³ W. D. Davies. 1977-78. Paul and the People of Israel. *NTS* 24: 4-39.

⁷⁴ 'If such radical changes do not amount to conversion it is hard to know what would do so' (Barrett. Acts 1.44s2).

Pharisaism to Jesus Messianism, that is, conversion. We might even say, from a closed Judaism to an open Judaism.⁷⁵ We have no reason, then, to set the two categories in contrast or antithesis. Conversion is more the language of the historian of religion; commissioning is the language of Paul's self-understanding. But the two can easily co-habit the same space.⁷⁶

Second, this emphasis on 'called to the Gentiles' helps to explain what otherwise appears to be a straight contradiction between Gal 1:11-12 and 1Cor 15:3: (i) Gal 1:11-12, *pare, labon* "I did not receive the gospel from humans, neither was I taught it, but through a revelation of Jesus Christ"; and (ii) 1Cor 15:3, *pare, labon* "I received as the gospel (the tradition passed down) that Christ died for our sins . . .". Paul assuredly did not think of his gospel as a different gospel from that agreed upon by Peter, James and John (Gal 2:2- 9); the gospel of 1Cor 15:3-4 was the gospel which they all preached (1Cor 15:11). What was different about Paul's gospel was his conviction that it was opened also to Gentiles, that the gospel he received in the tradition handed down to him at the time of his conversion (1Cor 15:3) was the message regarding God's Son which he had been commissioned to deliver to the Gentiles (Gal 1:16).

Third, it seems Paul suggests that his commissioning was wholly in line with the earlier commissioning of Israel's prophets and indeed was a commissioning to fulfil Israel's own mission with regard to the nations. Gal 1:15-16 is evidently framed in order to make clear an echo of Isa 49:1-6 and Jer 1:5: (i) Gal 1:15-16 says, *avfori, saj ... evk koili, aj mhtro, j mou kai. kale, saj ... evn toi/ j e; qnesin* (... the one who set me apart from my Mother's womb and called me through his grace ... in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles . . .); (ii) In the LXX version of Jer 1:5, Jeremiah expresses his sense of call: *pro. tou/ me pla, sai se evn koili, a| evpi, stamai, se kai. pro. tou/ se evxelqei/ n evk mh, traj h`gi, aka, se profh, thn eivj e; qnh te, qeika, se* "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations"; (iii) In the LXX version of Isa 49:1-6, the Servant of Yahweh speaks: *evk koili, aj mhtro, j mou evka, lesen to. o; noma, mou ... ivdou. te, qeika, se eivj diaqh, khn ge, nouj eivj fw/ j evqnw/ n tou/ ei= nai, se eivj swthri, an e[wj evsca, tou th/ j gh/ j* "From the

⁷⁵ S. J. Chester. 2003. *Conversion at Corinth: perspectives on conversion in Paul's theology and the Corinthian Church*. London: Dark, pp. 153-64.

⁷⁶ D. A. Hagner. 2007. Paul as a Jewish Believer—according to his letter. *Jewish believers in Jesus: the early centuries*, 102 n. O. Skarsaune and R. Hvalvik. Eds. Peabody: Hendrickson, p. 32.

(womb) body of my mother he named my name. . . . I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”; (iv) There is probably an echo of Isa 49:6 also in the climax of the third account of Saul’s conversion (Acts 26:23), and Luke has Paul and Barnabas explicitly quoting the same passage in Acts 13:47; and (v) Other allusions in Paul’s letters seem to confirm the suggestion that Paul did not hesitate to see his work in terms of the role attributed to the Servant of Second Isaiah.⁷⁷

We may suppose that Paul clearly understood his call, installation, and commissioning in analogy to the great prophets of the Old Testament, with a particular close connection to Deutero-Isaiah (cf. Isaiah 49:1-6). Paul was to fulfil the proclamation of the saving will of God that includes the Gentiles. It is not that Paul saw his call and commissioning in terms of the call of the Twelve especially those who witnessed resurrection appearances. In 1Cor 13 he puts his experience at par with those of the early disciples. Like the other apostles he too had seen the risen Lord on the Damascus road. Therefore, his own call and apostleship is not inferior to those of Peter, James, John, etc. Paul rarely saw himself in the light of the Old Testament prophets. Also, his conversion was truly a conversion from Judaism and not a mere conversion from Jewish Temple to a new Hellenistic Temple. Had it been so, he would not be a party to the killing of Stephen and would not have suffered persecution.

Fourth, Saul’s persecuting zeal was the determination to prevent Israel’s status of being set apart for God from being compromised by Hellenist critique of the Temple and/or willingness to lower the barriers of Israel’s holiness with regard to Gentiles. The light of heaven exposed a major flaw in his self-understanding, namely, that he was heading in the completely wrong direction (so far as God’s will for Israel was concerned). So the description of what happened to Saul as a “conversion” is entirely appropriate, for Saul did indeed “convert” 180 degrees, and became an advocate of what he had been persecuting (Gal 1:23). That is to say that from persecuting those who threatened Israel’s boundaries, to a mission which required Paul to cross them himself; and from an attitude essentially dismissive of Gentiles (as subsequently expressed in Eph 2:12)⁷⁸ to a commitment to bring them the good news of Jesus Messiah.

Paul’s calling took place in two stages, beginning in the wilderness between Jerusalem and Damascus (Acts 9:3-9) and its climax was in Damascus where Ananias was

⁷⁷ Rom 10:16 (cf. Isa 53:1); Rom 15:20-21 (cf. Isa 52:15); 2 Cor 6:1-2 (cf. Isa 49:8); Phil 2:16 (cf. Isa 49:4)

⁷⁸ Gentiles as outsiders, “strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world” (Eph 2:12).

told: “Go, for he (Paul) is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and Kings and the sons of Israel; for I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name” (Acts 9:15-16). Then Paul was also filled with the Holy Spirit (v. 17).⁷⁹

Hengel and Schwemer aver that for Paul himself, as for Luke, the most important consequence was the call to be missionary to the Gentiles.⁸⁰ Inasmuch as these decisive shifts in the earliest community were connected with revelations, visions and dreams; and other “prophetic-ecstatic” experiences were consequences of his possession of the Spirit, they must not be regarded as an eschatological fulfilment of Joel 3:1-5. Hence for Paul, Joel 3:1-5 plays a central role in respect of calling upon the Lord to be saved.

Furthermore, the significance of Paul’s calling is enhanced in two ways that do not depend upon textual parallels. First, as with Jesus, Paul’s suffering was foretold early on (Acts 9:16; 20:25; 21:11). Second, Paul’s vision of Jesus while on the road to Damascus is highly reminiscent of the burning bush scene in Exodus 3. Luke 9:4’s “Saul, Saul” recalls Exodus 3:4’s “Moses, Moses,” and in both scenes God’s chosen messenger first humbled himself and later questioned the identity of the heavenly voice. Both received directions as to what they must do in the midst of the Gentile territory.

In conclusion, Paul describes neither his call nor commissioning in the usual terminology of justification that he employs elsewhere in his polemical argumentation in Galatians, which one would expect if the origin of the Pauline critique of the Torah had already been present in his Damascus road experience. We should not interpret Paul’s Damascus Road experience in the categories of the Torah versus Christ. Its scope may be limited to the revelation of the identity of Christ. But the testimony of the Galatian letter forms the basis for Paul’s call and commissioning.

2.4 Paul’s personal account of the event in Galatians

Paul’s conversion, according to some New Testament critics⁸¹, should not only be interpreted from the passage in Acts concerning the Damascus road experience. In his letters,

⁷⁹ It is interesting to note that this two-phase calling of Paul corresponds to his two-phase mission, first to Jerusalem and then to Rome. In both of these ways, Paul, “goes beyond” Jesus. One may also find other instances of Paul’s double repetition of Jesus’ actions. For example, Paul was twice resurrected (shipwreck, viper), he preached from scriptures twice, and so on.

⁸⁰ M. Hengel and A. M. Schwemer. 1997. *Paul between Damascus and Antioch: the unknown years*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, p. 42.

⁸¹ See B. R. Gaventa. 1986. *From darkness to light*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press; K. Stendahl. 1976. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press; R. V. Peace. 1999. *Conversion in the New Testament: Paul and the twelve*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. A. E. Segal. 1990. *Paul the convert: the apostolate and apostasy of Saul the Pharisee*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Richard N. Longenecker. 1997. A realized hope, a new commitment, and a developed proclamation: Paul and Jesus. *The road from Damascus: the*

Paul himself seldom speaks of his conversion and when he does, it is always in the context of his exposition of the gospel. Moreover, he does not concentrate on subjective personal experience. Rather, he speaks of his conversion as something that happened to him; a decision that was not entirely his own. He speaks of it often in the passive mode: “I let myself suffer the loss of all things” (Phil 3:8)... “Because I was apprehended by Christ Jesus” (Phil 3:12). The change that issued from the conversion appears to be a complete one, such as his Jewish past which he highly regarded but was not now like refuse to him. His former attempt to please God by his own righteousness was now seen as self-righteousness. The *good news* Paul preached was the righteousness of God which is gained only by faith in what God has done through His Son, Jesus Christ. This is a universal gospel for all humankind; it is not Paul’s special dispensation.

The conversion resulted in a lifelong process of reorientation. In Paul’s case, this vocation was preaching the gospel. What emerges is a whole person, where life and thought mesh to an extraordinary degree, issuing in a personal, intellectual and imaginal openness to the new life of risk and adventure with God in Christ. On this, Crossan says “Jesus spoke of God in parables but the primitive communities spoke of Jesus, the Crucified One, as the Parable of God.”⁸² If parables are indeed subverters of ordinary, comfortable life, if they demand risk, courage, and openness that we may be vulnerable to God, then conversion must be life-long journey to pass over to a new orientation to reality, a surprising and unexpected orientation. According to Woolman, every day should be considered as a day of lent to us in which we devote all we have to the one who gave us a strange world, a new world in which to live and love.

In Gal 1:12 and 16, Paul speaks of a special revelation⁸³ of Jesus Christ,⁸⁴ a clear reference to his Damascus road experience (cf. 1Cor 9:1, 15:8; Phil 3:12). Even more

impact of Paul’s conversion on his life, thought and ministry. R. N. Longenecker. Ed. Eugene: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. J. D. G. Dunn. 2006. A light to the Gentiles: the significance of the Damascus road Christophany for Paul. *The glory of Christ in the New Testament: studies in Christology.* L. D. Hurst and N. T. Wright. Eds. Eugene: Wipf & Stock Publishers. C. Bruce. 2002. Interpreting Paul’s conversion—then and now. *The road from Damascus: the impact of Paul’s conversion on his life, thought, and ministry.* R. N. Longenecker. Ed. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers. J. M. Everts. 1993. Conversion and call of Paul. *Dictionary of Paul and his letters.* Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin. Eds. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press. M. Hengel and A. M. Schwemer. 1997. *Paul between Damascus and Antioch: the unknown years.* Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press. Seyoon Kim. 1984. *The Origin of Paul’s Gospel.* 2nd ed. Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck.

⁸² *The dark Interval: towards a theology of story* (Niles, IL., Argus Communications, 1975), p. 10

⁸³ Seyoon Kim argues that ‘Insofar as Paul describes his vision of the risen Christ exalted at the right hand of God in heaven as the ἀποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, he indicates that his vision, like those in Jewish apocalyptic writings, was of the heavenly reality that will be revealed at the end of time and so it was an anticipation or prolepsis of the eschatological ἀποκάλυψις of Jesus Christ’. *The origin of Paul’s Gospel* (Tübingen 1981) 73.

⁸⁴ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ should probably be taken as an objective genitive. “‘Call’ and conversion are regarded as simultaneous.’ E. Best, 1984. The revelation to evangelise the Gentiles. *JTS* 35 n 16.

significant are Paul's words in Gal 1:15, which are strongly reminiscent of Jeremiah 1:5 and Isaiah 49:1-6. In the latter passage, both in verse 1, where we read in the Septuagint *evk koili,aj mhtro,j mou evka,lesen to. o;noma, mou* "from the (womb) body of my mother he named my name"; and in verse 5, where we read *le,gei ku,rioj o` pla,saj me evk koili,aj dou/lon e`autw/|* "LORD says, who formed me from the womb to be his servant", the ideas of God's election and call from the womb are very similar to Paul's words.

J. Munck points out that 'these two ideas are, in fact, linked in the text with the call to be a light to the Gentiles, and this fits in well with Paul's next sentence (Gal 1:16): *ἵνα εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν.*'⁸⁵ Similarly, Jeremiah was appointed as a prophet *εἰς ἔθνη* "to the nations" even before God formed him *εἰς κοιλία* "in the womb". We may compare Paul's application of Isaiah 49:6 to himself and Barnabas in Acts 13:47; Acts 26:12-18 with its further echoes of Jeremiah 1:7f and Isaiah 42:6f and 61:1;⁸⁶ and Acts 9:15 with its echo of Jeremiah 1:10.⁸⁷ In the light of this evidence, it seems clear that Paul saw his call as being at par with the apostles of Jesus Christ. Paul's thought on call and commission have always been seen in the light of those of other apostles rather than the Old Testament prophets. Moreover, as F. F. Bruce comments, "in Paul's view it was for others to take up the Servant's mission to Israel, but he knew himself called to fulfil that part of the Servant's vocation which involved the spreading of God's saving light among the Gentiles, near and far, as he indicates in the verses which follow".⁸⁸

In Gal 2:2,6a and 9, Paul refers to James, Cephas and John as those reputed to be pillars of the Church. Bruce's verdict of *dokou/ntej* (those who were of repute), "carried no insinuation of sarcasm or irony, as though they only *seemed* to be leaders but were not really so"⁸⁹ is surely to be accepted, in the light of Paul's words in Gal 2:2b. "His commission was not derived from Jerusalem, but it could not be executed effectively except in fellowship with Jerusalem."⁹⁰ Moreover, as a former Pharisee, steeped in the scriptures,

⁸⁵ J. Munck, *Paul*, 26. *εἰς τὰ ἔθνη* and *εἰς τὴν περιτομήν* are intended racially and not geographically.

⁸⁶ Cf. Ebed Yahweh texts.

⁸⁷ Details in Munck, *Paul*, 127f. O.T. references are of course to the LXX. As regards Acts 26:16-18 and 9:15f Munck comments that 'it is justifiable to assume that the accounts in Acts go back to Paul, as they show a close connexion with the description in Galatians, not only in the narration of the previous history, but also in the explanatory words'. J. Munck, *Paul*, 29.

⁸⁸ F. F. Bruce. 2007. Galatians, Epistle to the. *New Bible dictionary* 3rd ed. Wood D. R. W. Rev. Ed. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, p. 92. Best denies that Paul gave his own position eschatological significance in the light of his reading of the OT, but his arguments are unconvincing. See 'Revelation', *JTS* 35:21f.

⁸⁹ Bruce, Galatians, 109. Pace C. K. Barrett, 1953. Paul and the "pillar" apostles. *SP*: (Haarlem) 5f.

⁹⁰ F. F. Bruce. 2007. Galatians, Epistle to the. *New Bible dictionary*. 3rd ed. Wood D. R. W. Rev. Ed. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, p. 111.

Paul would certainly see the Holy City as having a fundamental role in God's plan for the last days, as Gerhardsson has argued⁹¹ (cf. Isa 2:2ff and Rom 15:19). Thus, an agreement with the leaders of the Jerusalem church was clearly vital to him. The somewhat 'dismissive' tone⁹² he uses for them in Gal 2:6 is explained by the fact that some were clearly appealing to their status and prestige to diminish his own.

The agreement which was arrived at in Gal 2:7-10, was clearly what Paul had hoped for: "a remarkable parallel is drawn between Paul's divinely empowered mission to the Gentiles and Peter to the Jews—a parallel discerned not only by Paul himself but also by the 'men of repute'".⁹³ The prominent position given to Peter⁹⁴ and Paul as leaders of the respective 'apostleship' is remarkable. Noteworthy are Paul's words 'the grace given to me'⁹⁵ in Gal 2:9. Barnabas is merely associated with him in his apostleship to the Gentiles.⁹⁶ Fridrichsen's comment is thought provoking:

Obviously, Paul pictures to himself the eschatological situation of the world in this way: in this world, soon disappearing, the centre is Jerusalem with the primitive community and the twelve, surrounded by the mission field divided between two apostolates: one sent by the Lord to the circumcised, the other to the Gentiles. Peter, and Paul himself, are the chosen bearers of the gospel, flanking the portals of the world to come.⁹⁷

We may venture Fridrichsen's opinion since from the Damascus road experience Paul derived his right to belong to the circle of the original Jerusalem disciples.

⁹¹ Gerhardsson, *Memory*, 274ff. 'He too (e.g., as well as Luke) recognised the principle that the Word of God would proceed from Jerusalem in the last days. He too accepted the twelve apostles and the first Christian congregation as guardians of that logos which proceeded from Jerusalem.' cf. J. Jeremias, *Jesus' promise to the nations* (London 1958) 36ff.

⁹² Cf J. D. G. Dunn, 1977. *Unity and diversity in the New Testament*. London : Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 408 n 49.

⁹³ F. F. Bruce, 2007. Galatians, Epistle to the. *New Bible dictionary* 3rd ed. Wood D. R. W. Rev. Ed. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, p. 119.

⁹⁴ Space precludes a discussion of why Paul uses 'Peter' rather than his usual 'Cephas' in 2:7f; H D Betz suggests the possibility of an 'underlying official statement', *Galatians* (Philadelphia 1979) 97.

⁹⁵ Clearly the 'grace' of apostleship is in view (cf. Rom 1:5, which should be read as a hendiadys). Kim comments that 'Paul never connects χάρις as directly with the office of another Christian as with his own apostolic office', *Origin*, 292.

⁹⁶ Bauckman Richard, in 'Barnabas in Galatians', *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 2 (1979) convincingly argues that 'Paul's language reflects his recent disappointment over Barnabas' behaviour in the crisis at Antioch (Gal 2:13)', 61; 'Paul's response to this crisis involved an intensification of his apostolic consciousness', 67; 'The agreement was not a commissioning but an agreement between equals. Barnabas is excluded from these claims', 66.

⁹⁷ Fridrichsen. 'Apostle', *UVA* (1947:3) 6. Barrett suggests that originally the term στυλοὶ as applied to James, Cephas and John in Gal 2:9 was 'strictly eschatological' in meaning, marking them out as 'the basis' of the new people of God. Paul', *SP*, 15ff. If Barrett is correct, Paul sees himself as sharing this eschatological role.

Jacques Dupont⁹⁸ avers that Paul traces back his calling (to proclaim the gospel to the Gentiles) to the Damascus event. “God revealed his Son to me so that I should proclaim him among the Gentiles” (Gal. 1:16). For Dupont, Paul did not claim that Christ had given him the command to evangelise the Gentiles and there is nothing to allow us to imagine that this injunction was given him explicitly at this time.⁹⁹ But he was nonetheless convinced that his call to the apostleship of the Gentiles was bound up with the experience of Damascus. Implicit in such a call is that this experience could not consist only in the discovery of Jesus’ Messiahship. The attitude of the first Christians at Jerusalem shows sufficiently that it was one thing to recognise in Jesus the promised Messiah and another to have an immediate understanding of the necessity of proclaiming the gospel to the Gentiles. Paul’s conviction is far better explained as a recognition of the glorious Christ as the Lord on whom depended exclusively the salvation of all men, whether Jews or Gentiles. The apostleship of the Gentiles has, therefore, been entrusted precisely to this Pharisee who was filled with destructive zeal for the law, the Pharisee who saw religion, righteousness and salvation only in the observance of the law. Christ’s appearance has made him the herald of salvation exactly for those who are ignorant of the law and who are not troubled about it. For Christ is sufficient. Salvation comes only by him and by faith in him, without the works of the law.

The mission with which Paul knew himself charged for the sake of the Gentiles since the Damascus appearance implied a soteriology wholly suspended on Christ. It could not be adequately explained as arising from belief in the Messiahship of Jesus. Its basis could only be located in the faith of the saving, universal and exclusive role of the risen Christ. As Saviour of all men, he must play a beneficent role for Gentiles as well as Jews. As a unique Saviour, he takes away all significance from the law as a principle of righteousness and salvation. Paul writes in Romans 10:4: *te, loj ga.r no, mou Cristo.j*, which seems to state that Christ has brought an end to the law.¹⁰⁰ Now there is both righteousness and salvation for anyone who believes in Christ. But the Jews do not understand this, since verse 2 attributes to them a true but ill-informed zeal. Paul himself had opposed, from the very first

⁹⁸ Jacques Dupont, O.S.B. 1970. “The Conversion of Paul, and Its Influence on His Understanding of Salvation by Faith,” W. Ward Gasque & Ralph P. Martin, eds., *Apostolic History and the Gospel. Biblical and Historical Essays Presented to F.F. Bruce*. Exeter: The Paternoster Press, pp. 193-194.

⁹⁹ According to Acts, it is Ananias who received a revelation concerning the mission awaiting Paul (Acts 9:55) and who gave him news of it as the party concerned (Acts 22:14-15). One can understand why Paul did not wish to mention this indirect call.

¹⁰⁰ The *Traduction oecuménique de la Bible* (Paris, 1967), p. 78, notes: “The term in Greek which we translate as ‘end’ (*fin*) (*telos*) expresses at the same time the idea of purpose, conclusion and fulfilment.” The meaning “end” (*fin*) is adopted notably by J. A. Fitzmyer, “Saint Paul and the Law” in *The Jurist*, 27 (1967), pp. 18-36 (22 and 27).

and with all his strength, this Christ who had put an end to the role of the law. The vision at Damascus persuaded him that the role of the law was truly finished and the time had come to proclaim to the Gentiles salvation by faith in Christ.

In conclusion, the contrast between Paul's former life as a Jew and his new life as apostle to the Gentiles is seen as evidence for divine origin of the gospel Paul preaches as apostle to the Gentiles.

2.5 Conclusion

We have now reviewed some relevant literature on: (1) Paul's Damascus road experience, (2) The meaning of conversion, (3) Paul's call to missionary work, and (4) Paul's personal account of the event in Galatians. From the review, four major points are worth noting.

First, the main options highlighted by recent scholarship in understanding Paul's Damascus road experience include: (a) "conversion," (b) "transformation," (c) "alternation," and (d) "call."¹⁰¹ Approaches to Paul's conversion are multifaceted in that it is viewed soteriologically, christologically, missiologically, and doxologically.

Second, conversion is either gradual or sudden; it involves changes in lifestyle. Paul's conversion is never portrayed as being paradigmatic in the specific details of that event, as those details are narrated in Luke's Acts. But it is presented in Paul's letters as a paradigm for all Christians in terms of a radical reorientation of thought about Jesus and of life now lived "in Christ."

Third, Paul's call to the missionary work evokes two celebrated Old Testament vocations: the Servant of Yahweh in Isaiah and the prophet Jeremiah. Paul sees in his call the working of God's plan to extend his grace to the Gentiles.

Fourth, Paul's conversion should not only be interpreted from the passage in Acts but in his letters. In these letters, Paul claims that he outdid his peers in religious devotion (Gal 1:14) and that he was a good and loyal Jew who knew himself to be blameless (Phil 3:5-6). However, because of an experience of the risen Lord (1Cor 9:1-2; 15:8-11), an experience that contained a call to serve as an apostle to Gentiles (Gal 1:15-16; 1Cor 9:1-2; 15:8-10), Paul underwent a radical change. He no longer valued those early credentials (Phil 3:7); indeed, he regarded them as garbage because of his recognition that Jesus was the Messiah (Phil 3:8).

¹⁰¹ R. N. Longenecker. Ed. *The road from Damascus: the impact of Paul's conversion on his life, thought and ministry*. Eugene: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., p. xiii.

However, none of the above studies gave attention to Paul's Damascus road experience, and their implications for pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria. Therefore, this study investigated Paul's conversion and call to the ministry and the application of these in the pastoral ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria.

CHAPTER THREE

PAUL'S DAMASCUS ROAD EXPERIENCE IN THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

3.0. Introduction

Luke¹⁰² includes in his work three accounts of the conversion of Paul. That repetition in itself suggests that Luke understands this matter to be of major significance. Not only is the story repeated, but it is also told in such a compelling way that it has become far more familiar to Christians than the brief comments in the epistles. After all, it is Luke's narration to which people refer when they speak of a Damascus road experience. The discussion in this chapter will be confined to the exegesis of the three accounts in Acts 9, 22 and 26.

3.1 The hostile pre-conversion character of Paul (Acts 9:1-2, 13-14, 21, 26; 22:3-5, 20 and 26:9-12)

Luke is prolific with details in describing the hostile pre-conversion character of Paul. The first time Paul is mentioned in Acts is at the story of Stephen's stoning. The witnesses to the incident lay down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul (Acts 7:58b). Luke concludes his account of Stephen's martyrdom with the observation: "And Saul was consenting to his death" (Acts 8:1a). The word *suneudokw/n* employed in the text is the nominative case singular of the masculine participle present active of *suneudokéō*. *Suneudokéō* which is a compound word from *σύν* and *εὐδοκέω*, denotes "to approve with another, to accord with in principle, to stamp approval, to be willing or agreeable."¹⁰³ The

¹⁰² The name "Luke" is used here simply because it is the traditional designation of the author of the third Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles.

¹⁰³ *The Analytical Greek lexicon: consisting of an alphabetical arrangement of every occurring inflexion of every word contained in the Greek New Testament Scriptures, with a grammatical analysis of each word, and*

infinitive of *suneudokéō* is *suneudokein* and it is used in Acts 22:20. Saul gave his approval of Stephen's stoning and continued to approve the persecution of the church till his Damascus road experience. Likewise, *avnaíresij* denotes "taking away", or "putting to death, to murder."¹⁰⁴ It is evident that *avnaíresij* does not mean natural death, but killing. Even though death appears to be a legitimate translation of the word *avnaíresij* used here, it seems too colourless and meaningless to suit the present context, which demands the meaning of murder. In reference to *suneudokéō*, approved may be rendered as "agreed that the murder was right" or "agreed that Stephen should have been killed." Paul's attitude towards Stephen's stoning may be expressed by "said yes to the murder" or "his heart was good because they had killed Stephen."

Also, *avnaírein* is a Lucan word which has been used nineteen times in Acts and twice in Luke, but only three times in the rest of the New Testament. As a corollary to Saul's hostile pre-conversion character in Acts 7:58, *avnaírein* is probably Luke's own editorial work. After the martyrdom of Stephen, we read of Paul as an arch-persecutor, bursting into Christian houses and throwing them into prison: "But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison" (Acts 8:3). And it is precisely in this context that Luke inserts the remark: *~O de. Sau/loj e;ti evmpne,wn avpeilh/j kai. fo,nou eivj tou.j maqhta.j tou/ kuri,ou proselqwn tw/| avrcierei* "But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest" (Acts 9:1). *~O de* is anaphoric and *ẽti* helps to pick up the previous reference to Saul as a persecutor of the church. If Luke is following a written source *ẽti* could well be his insertion; more probably he is himself composing on the basis of tradition. In either case he means to indicate Saul's fierce opposition to the new movement did not abate with time. The word *ẽμπνέων* is in the nominative case singular of the masculine participle present active of *ẽμπνέω*. Vividly, *ẽμπνέων*, employed in the context of Acts 9:1, connotes breathing threats and slaughter upon the disciples. However, *avpeilh/j* and *fo,nou* stand in the genitive and are described as "smelling of,"¹⁰⁵ whereas in the classical Greek the accusative *avpeilh. kai.*

lexicographical illustration of the meanings: a complete series of paradigms, with grammatical remarks and explanations. London: Samuel Bagster & Sons Ltd., 1967, p. 389.

¹⁰⁴ *The Analytical Greek lexicon: consisting of an alphabetical arrangement of every occurring inflexion of every word contained in the Greek New Testament Scriptures, with a grammatical analysis of each word, and lexicographical illustration of the meanings: a complete series of paradigms, with grammatical remarks and explanations.* London: Samuel Bagster & Sons Ltd., 1967, p. 22.

¹⁰⁵ F. Blass and A. Debrunner. 1979. *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch.* Göttingen: Bearbeitet von F. Rehkopf, p. 174.

φο, νοj is often taken as “threats of slaughter”.¹⁰⁶ It is probable that Luke means no more than that Saul threatened to slaughter the Christians. In other words, what Luke intends to say is that Saul threatened them, and actually carried out his threats and killed them. Saul did not simply *pursue* or *persecute* the church of God; but he did so “to an extraordinary degree, or beyond measure, extravagantly, in excess” καθ’ ὑπερβολήν.¹⁰⁷ He uses εἰς ἵκεν (to destroy) to indicate the extent to which he launched material assault on the church. So we cannot trust what he says. In Jerusalem itself, it is not hard to envisage limited police action, led by the fiery young Pharisee, with the high priest backing. The Roman garrison would not see any need to intervene. Paul was probably leading a delegation to urge synagogue leaders to discipline recalcitrant followers of the ‘Way’ and to do so with all the force at their command.¹⁰⁸

Saul’s hostile pre-conversion character took on a specific form as Luke says: hv|th,sato par autou/ evpistola.j eivj Damasko.n pro.j ta.j sunagwga,j o[pwj eva,n tinaj eu[rh| th/j o`dou/ o;ntaj a;ndraj te kai. gunai/kaj dedeme,nouj avga,gh| eivj VIerousalh,m “and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the ‘Way’, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem” (Acts 9:2).¹⁰⁹ Paul asked for letters addressed to synagogues that would enable him to exercise disciplinary measures. To issue such letters would presuppose authority on the part of the High Priest to require, or at least request, action by local Jewish communities in territory outside Palestine and under a different civil government. Whether such authority existed, and if it did, how it was exercised cannot be determined with certainty. According to 1Macc 15:16-21, a letter from the Roman Consul Lucius to Ptolemy of Egypt seems to supply a precedent: it requires support for the Jews and adds ei; tinej ou=n loimoi. diapefeugasin evk th/j cw,raj autw/n pro.j u`ma/j para,dote autou.j Simwni tw/|

¹⁰⁶ C. K. Barrett. 1994. *A critical and exegetical commentary on The Acts of the Apostles*, vol.1. Preliminary introduction and commentary on Acts I-XIV. London: T. & T. Clark Ltd., p. 445.

¹⁰⁷ P. Fredriksen 1991. Judaism, the Circumcision of Gentiles, and Apocalyptic Hope: Another Look at Galatians 1 and 2. *JTS* 42:549-550

¹⁰⁸ Although we find μαθητής twenty eight times in Acts, and seven of them are in this chapter. But in the context of Acts 9:1 μαχτα.j is used for Christians. Also, μαχτα.j tou/ kuri,ou is no proof of a separate source Acts 9:1 but Luke often changes the designation for “Christians”, which is explained as μαχται, (Acts 9:1), th/j o`dou/ eivnai (Acts 9:2), μαχθη.j (Acts 9:10), a, `gioi (Acts 9:13), evpikalou,menoi to. o;noma kuri,ou (Acts 9:14), avdelfo,j (Acts 9:17), and μαχται, (Acts 9:19).¹⁰⁸ Luke mentions tw/| avrcierei/ as the High Priest namely, Annas and Caiaphas is mentioned with him. Notably, Caiaphas was the High Priest recognised by the Romans; he was Annas’ son-in-law (John 18:13).

¹⁰⁹ The verb hv|th,sato is in the third person singular, aorist, indicative active of αἰτέω. It is difficult to find any consistency in Luke’s use of the active and middle forms of αἰτεῖν; active appears at Acts 3:2; 16:29.

avrcierei/ o[pwj evkdikh,sh| auvtou.j kata. to.n no,mon auvtw/n “if any pestilent men have fled to you from this country, hand them over to Simon the high priest, that he may punish them according to their law.” According to 1Macc 15:22 & 23 the same letter was sent to a variety of destinations.¹¹⁰ However, the evidence we have considered deals with relations between Jews and Romans. Any value it may possess will apply to the present case only if at the time in question Damascus was under Roman rule. This may have been so, but reference to Acts 9:23-25 suggests that there is some ground for thinking that it was not. It is, however, unnecessary to suppose that Paul’s action carried, or needed, any authority beyond the confines of Judaism. The important historical question is that of the relation between the Sanhedrin and provincial synagogues. Unfortunately, no precise answer can be given. The reason is that the extent to which the Jews outside Judea were willing to obey the orders of the Sanhedrin always depended on how far they were favourably disposed towards it. It was only within the limits of Judea proper that it exercised direct power. Known compliance with the policy of the Sanhedrin may have been a reason contributing to the choice of Damascus as a place in which to pursue anti-Christian action. On this, Seyoon Kim and J. D. G. Dunn affirm that Paul asked the High Priest and the chief priests for letters to the synagogues in Damascus that would give him the authority to arrest the followers of the Way and bring them back to Jerusalem (Acts 9:1)¹¹¹. Those whom Paul was pursuing were probably those who had fled to Damascus after the persecution broke out (Acts 8:1).¹¹² Evidence that the Romans supported the authority of the High Priest and the Sanhedrin, giving them the right of extradition, is found in 1 Macc 15:15-21. In 138 BCE, the Romans, on account of the treaty of friendship with the Jews, instructed Ptolemy Euergetes II and other heads of state in the area to hand over to Simon any Palestinians who had fled to other lands to avoid prosecution. Josephus records that Julius Caesar confirmed Hyrcanus II in all the existing privileges of the position of High Priest¹¹³, including, presumably, this one.

As evidenced by his decision to join the Pharisees, Paul became a passionate devotee of the Law. Acts is correct in saying that he was trained in Jerusalem, the movement’s

¹¹⁰ C. K. Barrett. 1994. *A critical and exegetical commentary on The Acts of the Apostles*, vol.1. Preliminary introduction and commentary on Acts I-XIV. London: T. & T. Clark Ltd., p. 446.

¹¹¹ Seyoon Kim. 1984. *The Origin of Paul’s Gospel*, 2d. ed. WUNT, 2s. 4;Tubingen: Mohr-Siebeck, pp.100-136; Dunn, J. D. G. 1998. *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, pp. 346-354.

¹¹² That there were many Jews (and therefore several synagogues in Damascus) can be inferred from the fact that Josephus says that, in 66 CE, many Jews were massacred there (*War* 2. 560-61). Non-Jewish residents of the city are said to have killed 10,500 Jews (*War* 7. 368 has a figure of 18,000). Two centuries earlier, religious refugees who called themselves the men of the new covenant fled to “Damascus” in order to escape persecution; this is probably coincidental (*Damascus Document*) and assumes that “Damascus” should be interpreted literally.

¹¹³ Josephus. *Antiquity* 14. 194

spiritual home. This is the time he is referring to when he says: *kai. proe, kopton evn tw/| VIoudai?smw/| u`pe.r pollou.j sunhlikiw,taj evn tw/| ge,nei mou perissote,rwj zhlwth.j u`pa,rcwn tw/n patrikw/n mou parado,sewn* “and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers” (Gal 1:14), and *kata. zh/loj diw,kwn th.n evkklhsi,an kata. dikaiosunhn th.n evn no,mw| geno,menoj a;memptoj* “as to zeal a persecutor of the church, as to righteousness under the law blameless” (Phil 3:6). This might have been why Jacques Dupont¹¹⁴ points out that a number of features of Pharisaic theology provided Paul with reasons for being satisfied with himself. These are considered:

(i). The pride which membership of the elect race gave Paul is explained in these verses: *~Ebrai/oi, eivsin kavgw, VIisrahli/tai, eivsin kavgw, spe,rma VAbraa,m eivsin kavgw* “Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I” (2Cor 11:22); *kai. ga.r evgw. VIisrahli,thj eivmi, evk spe,rmatoj VAbraa,m fulh/j Beniami,n* “I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin” (Rom 11:1b); *~Hmei/j fu,sei VIoudai/oi kai. ouvkv evx evqnw/n a`martwloi,* “We ourselves, who are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners” (Gal 2:15); *kai. h;meqa te,kna fu,sei ovrgn/j* “and so we were by nature children of wrath” (Eph 2:3); and *VIoudai/oi, kata. de. th.n evkloghn avgaphtoi. dia. tou.j pate,raj* “but as regards election they (Jews) are beloved for the sake of their forefathers” (Rom. 11:28). These verses are evidence of the beliefs in which Paul was schooled, his pride as an Israelite, and the confidence he drew from them in God’s presence.¹¹⁵

(ii). Within the elect nation, Paul was aware of belonging to the spiritual elite: he was a Pharisee, which he justifies in his statement, *peritomh/| ovktah,meroj evk ge,nouj VIisrah,l fulh/j Beniami,n ~Ebrai/oj evx ~Ebrai,wn kata. no,mon Farisai/oj* “circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law a Pharisee” (Phil 3:5). Saul

¹¹⁴ O.S.B. Jacques Dupont. 1970. The Conversion of Paul, and Its Influence on His Understanding of Salvation by Faith. W. Ward Gasque & Ralph P. Martin. Eds. *Apostolic history and the gospel. biblical and historical essays presented to F.F. Bruce*. Exeter: The Paternoster Press, pp.182-183.

¹¹⁵ K. H. Schelkie. 1967. Paulus vor Damaskus. *Bibel und Leben* 8:154.

spelled out the meaning of the law and protected its observance as though by a hedge of complementary prescriptions.¹¹⁶

(iii). Saul stood out from others by περισσοτέρως “an exceptional zeal.”

(iv). The exertion with which Saul observed scrupulously the law’s prescriptions, interpreted in their most rigid sense, led him to attain a perfection which was without lapse or defect.”¹¹⁷

Jerome Murphhy-O’Connor notices that the strongest statements concerning Paul’s pre-Christian activity always occur as introductions to narratives of his conversion. Apparently, it is in Luke’s artistic interest to exaggerate certain negative traits of Paul the persecutor in order to set in greater relief the miracle of his conversion and the success of his apostolate. It enhances the dramatic impact of his book to have the perfect persecutor transformed into the ideal apostle.¹¹⁸ Also, James D. G. Dunn avers that if there is one word which characterises the mindset of the pre-Christian Saul as persecutor, it is the word *zh/loj*. This is one of the points where Luke’s account and Paul’s own reminiscences are in full accord:

(i). Acts 22:3-4 — “. . . educated strictly in the ancestral law, being *zhlwth.j tou/ qeou/* (a zealot for God), just as all of you are today. And I persecuted this Way to the death ...”

(ii). Gal. 1.13-14 — “I persecuted the church of God in excessive measure and tried to destroy it. And I progressed in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my people, being *zhlwth.j u`pa,rcwn tw/n patrikw/n mou parado,sewn* (exceedingly zealous for my ancestral traditions)”. (iii). Phil. 3.6 — “. . . *kata. zh/loj* (as to zeal) a persecutor of the church...”¹¹⁹

Notably, *zh/loj* represents intense effort and emotional energy focused towards a goal; and *zhlwth.j* is one who single-mindedly pursues the goal, which frequently involves guarding and vindicating the sanctity of that goal.¹²⁰ Paul’s extensive use of *zh/loj* is probably due to his background and zealous personality. He may have considered his *zh/loj* “zeal” as being in the tradition of Mattathias, whose great *zh/loj* “zeal” for the Law and traditions was said to have followed the prototype of Phineas, the grandson of Aaron

¹¹⁶ W. G. Kümmel. 1934. Jesus und der jüdische Traditionsgeanke. *ZNTW* 33: 116-118.

¹¹⁷ M. Goguel. 1934. *κατὰ δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐν νόμῳ γενομένου ἄμεμπτος* (Phil 3: 6). Remarques sur un aspect de la conversion de Paul. *JBL* 53: 257-67.

¹¹⁸ Jerome Murphy-O’Connor. 1996. *Paul: a critical life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 66.

¹¹⁹ J. D. G. Dunn. 2009. *Christianity in the Making. vol. 2: beginning from Jerusalem*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, p. 341.

¹²⁰ A. B. Luter, Jr. 1993. Jealousy, zeal. *Dictionary of Paul and his letters*. Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin. Eds. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, p. 461.

(1Macc 2:26, 54).¹²¹ Speaking from the perspective of his post-conversion experience, Paul considered this fanatical persecution to be the epitome of his pre-Christian (Phil 3:6). Thus he regarded *zhlwth.j tou/ qeou* “a zealot for God” exhibited by many of his fellow Jews as *ouv kat evpi,gnwsin* “it is not enlightened” because they were *avgnoou/ntej ga.r th.n tou/ qeou/ dikaiosunhn* “for’, being ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God” (Rom 10:2-3). Günther Bornkamm’s verdict on Paul’s being eminently marked out to become a missionary to the Gentiles is absolutely correct: “The Diaspora synagogues were fairly liberal in their principles, being satisfied if the “God-fearers” drawn from the heathen into adherence to the Jewish community pledged themselves to confess belief in God and to observe a minimum of ritual commandments (Sabbath observance, the dietary laws, etc.) and the basic ethical commandments of the Law. No demands were made for circumcision—not all were required to become *proselytes*, full members of the Jewish people. Orthodox Palestinian Judaism led by the Pharisees disapproved of this and insisted on circumcision for all. Nevertheless Pharisees, too, conducted a mission to the Gentiles, though certainly with less success than the Diaspora. This is what Jesus refers to in his words to the Pharisees, “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you traverse sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of hell as yourselves.”(Matt 23:35). This shows us that even within the Jewish mission to the Gentiles there were too conflicting schools of thought on circumcision, the one originating among the Diaspora Jews and the other in Jerusalem. Against this background we can see how significant it was that, following perhaps a family tradition (Acts 23:8), Paul, the Diaspora Jew, attached himself to the Pharisees, that is to say, to the most strictly orthodox school of thought both in manner of life and in mission (Phil 3:5). The strictness of Pharisaism made it a highly esteemed lay movement with the Old Testament laws about holiness as its binding standard, which contrasted with the external traditionalism of the priestly aristocracy in Jerusalem and also with the laxness of popular conformity. It survived even the disastrous Jewish war and the

¹²¹ O.S.B. Jacques Dupont. 1970. The Conversion of Paul, and Its Influence on His Understanding of Salvation by Faith. W. Ward Gasque & Ralph P. Martin. Eds. *Apostolic history and the gospel. biblical and historical presented to F.F. Bruce*. Exeter: The Paternoster Press, pp. 184-185. Phineas exhibited *zhlwth.j tou/ qeou* when he spontaneously slew the Israelite Zimri and the Midianite woman Cozbi, thereby making atonement for the Israelites and averting the plague that had broken out against Israel in its worship of the Baal of Peor (Num 25:1-15)

destruction of Jerusalem, and thereafter, when Judaism was reconstructed, became the sole determinative authority, the seedbed of Talmudic Judaism.¹²²

In the context of Acts 9:2 ἡ οὐδότης is understood as strict observance of the Mosaic Law.¹²³ However, in the statement ὄψιν ἡλεῖσιν ἡβήρ[α]β' ὤρ[α]ν: ἡψ+ἡψ > ὄ,δ,ᾶ ὠνὰπ; ῥβ'ῆδ>Μιβ; ἀρεᾶϰ ἰΑϰεε "A voice cries: In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." (Isaiah 40:3), the most conservative Jewish Christian groups understood ὄ,δ not only to be strict observance of the Mosaic Law but the revealed will of God.¹²⁴ Though, in Acts 24:14 οὐδότης was described as a αἱ[ρεσις]. It was thus not only a term for a manner of behaviour but also for those who adopted the behaviour. Perhaps, "those who choose the way" may be said to constitute the way. The development however does not seem to have taken place in the Jewish use of ὄ,δ, or of ἡλεῖσιν which also may be considered part of the background of οὐδότης.

In conclusion, in all the evidence, none is found which expresses a recollection of his being restless, tortured by an unattainable ideal. As he saw himself, Paul was, at the eve of his conversion, a man well satisfied, contented with his membership of the elect race and of an elite group of his people. He was confident of attaining, by his religious observance, an ideal righteousness which would make him to be beyond reproach in the eyes of God, men and his own conscience. Also, as long as Paul was an orthodox Jew and as such made proselytes among Gentiles, it was only logical for him to be zealous in persecuting the church, the Hellenistic church in Damascus, which had severed itself from his people's basis of salvation. This explains the tremendous tension between his Jewish past and his turning to Christ, his former zeal for the Law and his gospel of justification by faith available for all men, not on the basis of doing what the Law commanded but also by faith alone. Again, while Judaism rested entirely on the conviction that the observance of the law by itself could secure salvation, the Christian faith shook this foundation by the saving interpretation it gave

¹²² G. Bornkamm. 1971. *Paul: paulus*. Stalker D. M. G. Trans. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, pp. 10-11.

¹²³ There are six variant readings of the phrase *th/j οὐδου/ ο;νταj* (being of the way) namely, *th/j οὐδου/ ο;νταj* (B C E H L P many minuscules), *ο;νταj th/j οὐδου/* (P⁷⁴ & A 81 88 (104), *th/j οὐδου* (33 429[^] 522 1175 1827 1891 cop^{sa,bo}), *th/j οὐδου/ tau, thj* (it^e vg). It is clear that *tau, thj* was introduced at various positions by scribes who wished thereby to relieve the peculiarity of the term ἡ οὐδότης, used here for the first time in reference to Christianity. The choice between the reading of B C al and P⁷⁴ & A 81 1739 seems to depend upon which order would have appeared more difficult and therefore more likely to be altered to an easier sequence. It is probable that scribes, in order to prevent the reader from taking *ο;νταj* chiefly with what follows (being both men and women), moved the participle nearer *τινα, j*

¹²⁴ J. A. Fitzmyer. 1971. *Essays on the Semitic background of the New Testament*. London: Chapman, p. 282.

to the mystery of Christ's cross. To judge from the epistles, it is exactly on this interpretation that the motive of Paul's hostility to early Christianity is to be sought.

3.2 The 'Bright Light' and the 'Voice' (Acts 9:3; 22:6 and 26:13)

The Acts of the Apostles tells what happened when Paul came near Damascus. Paul was halted on his track: *evn de. tw/| poreu,esqai evge,neto auvto.n evggi,zein th/| Damaskw/| evxai,fnhj te auvto.n perih,strayen fw/j evk tou/ ouvranou* "Now as he journeyed he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed about him" (Acts 9:3). In Acts 9:3, Luke employs various tenses, namely, accusative and infinitive with *evge,neto*, which is more or less a close imitation of *וַיִּבֹרֶךְ* to describe Paul's approach to Damascus. Luke chooses to write in biblical style because he is describing a theophany and an event comparable with the call of the prophets. Luke's use of *evxai,fnhj* is probably his own word; *evxai,fnhj* emphasises the supernatural character of the event,¹²⁵ which took place at the second milestone before Damascus. According to Luke Timothy Johnson, the adverb *ἐξάφνης* is used for the appearance of the heavenly choir in Luke 2:13 and the seizing of the youth by a spirit in Luke 9:39. The appearance of *fw/j* is especially associated with the presence of God.¹²⁶ This *fw/j* is described differently in each of the three accounts. For example, Acts 9:3 records *fw/j evk tou/ ouvranou* "a light from heaven", in Acts 22:6 it is called *fw/j i`kano.n* "a great light", and in Acts 26:13 Paul describes *fw/j* as *u`pe.r th.n lampro,thta tou/ h`li,ou perila,myan me fw/j* "brighter than the sun, shining round me". The primary use in Paul of *fw/j* is in the figurative sense. The creation model of *fw/j* shining into darkness was adopted by Paul and the early Christians from the Old Testament message of hope (e.g., Is 9:2; 60:1-3; Ps 18:28; 112:4) and served as a model for the proclamation of the gospel to a world bound by sin (2Cor 4:4-6). Paul employs the model of *fw/j* penetrating the darkness as a symbol of the power of the gospel in Christ, as well as a symbol of hope in the coming of the Lord and the revealing of the dark and hidden purposes of human hearts (1Cor 4:5). This use of shining light contrasts greatly with Gnostic ideas and especially with the later Manichean views, where the shining light of goodness results in the capture of light particles and provides one of the Gnostic explanation

¹²⁵ D. Daube. 1964. *The sudden in the Scriptures*. Leiden: Brill, pp. 28-34.

¹²⁶ Luke Timothy Johnson. 1992. *The Acts of the Apostles*. Sacra Pagina Series, vol. 5. Collegeville: Minnesota, The Liturgical Press, pp. 162-163. See (LXX Ps 4:6; 35:9; 55:13; 77:14; 88:15; 96:11; 103:2; Wisdom 7:26; Isa 2:5; 60:19; 1John 1:5-7; 1Pet 2:9; Jas 1:17).

for the human dilemma.¹²⁷ We observe that in Acts 9:3 *periastraptw* “to flash around” is constructed with the accusative *peri.*; in Acts 22:6 with *periastraptw*, Luke does not repeat himself schematically; but in Acts 26:13 *periastraptw* “to flash around” is replaced by the verb *perila,mpw* “to shine around”. Also, *perila,mpw* is familiar from Luke 2:9, where it similarly describes the heavenly splendour. But in other respects Acts 9 and 26 often agree in their formulation against Acts 22. Besides, Acts 9 and 26 record that the light shines only around Paul, whereas Acts 26:13 has it shine round his companions too.

We observe that the statement of time, *meshmbri*, an “noon” which is recorded in Acts 22:6 is missing in Acts 9:3. People generally did not travel at night.¹²⁸ It was precisely beside the noonday that the heavenly light appeared as *i`kano.n* “a great” light; but in Acts 26:13 *h`me,raj me,shj* was used to give the accurate time (midday) the heavenly light shone around Paul.

Paul found himself surrounded by an intensely bright *light* and heard a *voice* speaking to him. These are two features that one might expect in a divine revelation. On these two features of theophanies, Howard Marshall points out that:

The bright *light* is to be understood as an expression of divine glory, and, since it is generally held that no man can see God, it is not surprising that the effect of the *light* was to cause blindness. Similarly, when Peter was in prison, his angelic visitor was accompanied by shining *light* (12:7; cf. Matt 17:5). The *voice* is also characteristic of a divine revelation (e.g. Ex 3:1-6; Is 6:8; Lk 3:22; 9:35), but here it is specifically the *voice* of Jesus. Paul, then, can be said to have had an encounter with the risen Jesus in which he heard his voice.¹²⁹

Light does not mean for Luke illumination of a Gnostic kind; it is a physical representation or accompaniment of the divine glory of Christ. Paul himself understood the

¹²⁷ G. L. Borchert. 1993. Light and darkness. *Dictionary of Paul and his letters*. Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin. Eds. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, p. 555-557.

¹²⁸ Ernest Haenchen. 1971. *The Acts of the Apostles: a commentary*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, p. 625.

¹²⁹ I. Howard Marshall. 1980. *The Acts of the Apostles: an introduction and commentary*. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, p. 169.

event as revelation (Gal 1:12, 15), but not in a Gnostic sense. Acts 22:11 suggests physical blinding by a dazzling light. The light came ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ “from heaven”; it is pointless to ask whether Luke meant from heaven or from the sky. These were not distinguishable.”¹³⁰ The word $\epsilon\omega/\jmath$ is also used of God himself, and it is inward illumination—salvation.¹³¹ Also, $\epsilon\omega/\jmath$ is particularly used to designate the fact that it is through a divine revelation that men have been made aware of Christ’s redemptive work.¹³² In the glory of that light, Paul beheld the supreme revelation of God.¹³³ Indeed $\epsilon\omega/\jmath$ is a common feature of theophanies.¹³⁴ Commenting on the two features of theophanies (Light and voice) John W. R. Stott claims that:

Christ revealed himself to Paul by the *light* and the *voice*, not in order to overwhelm him, but in such a way as to enable him to make a free response. Divine grace does not trample on human personality. Rather the reverse, for it enables human beings to be truly human. It is sin which imprisons; it is grace which liberates. The grace of God so frees us from the bondage of our pride, prejudice and self-centredness, as to enable us to repent and believe. One can but magnify the grace of God that he should have had mercy on such a rabid bigot as Saul of Tarsus, and indeed on such proud, rebellious and wayward creatures as ourselves.¹³⁵

However, Blaney explains that “there are six references to miraculous light in the Bible, three in each of the Testaments. Those in the Old Testament are: the *light* which illuminated the

¹³⁰ C. K. Barrett. 1994. *Acts 1-14: a critical & exegetical commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*. vol. 1. ICC. Edinburgh: ICC T. & T. Clark Publishers, p. 449.

¹³¹ For instance, C. H. 1.21. φῶς καὶ ζωὴ ἐστὶν ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατήρ; Acts 9:3, τῷ ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ πεφωτισμένῳ; Acts 13:18, φωτισθεὶς ἀπὸ σοῦ (gnosis).

¹³² O. A. Piper. 1962. Light, Light and Darkness. George Arthur Buttrick, Ed. *The interpreter’s dictionary of the Bible: an illustrated encyclopedia K-Q*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, p. 131. See for divine revelation Acts 9:3; 22:6, 9; Eph 5:13; and 2 Tim 1:10.

¹³³ F. B. Meyer. 2010. *Paul*. Dromore: Revival Publishing, pp. 50-58. In the glory of that light Paul beheld the supreme revelation of God: (i) In the revelation of $\epsilon\omega/\jmath$, Saul of Tarsus saw the real nature of the war which he had been waging war against the religion of Jesus; (ii) $\epsilon\omega/\jmath$ also revealed the inadequacy of Paul’s religious life; (iii) $\epsilon\omega/\jmath$ made Paul to discover the source of his uneasiness of heart and conscience; and (iv) $\epsilon\omega/\jmath$ also revealed to Paul the course of his future life.

¹³⁴ Cf. Ps 27:1; 78:14; Isa 9:2; 42:16; 60:1, 20; Micah 7:8; also in non-biblical use, e.g. Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* 4.2.15 λέγεται φῶς τῷ κύρῳ καὶ τῷ στρατεύματι ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ προφανὲς γενέσθαι.

¹³⁵ J. R. W. Stott. 1991. *The Message of Acts*. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, p. 173.

Israelites while the Egyptians were left in darkness (Ex 10:23); the burning bush by which God made Himself known to Moses (Ex 3:2); and the pillar of fire in which God manifested Himself as leader of Israel (Ex 13:21). (A cloud in this incident is also said to be the vehicle of God's presence to His people). Those in the New Testament are: the *light* which accompanied the announcement of the birth of Jesus (Lk 2:9); the *light* which engulfed Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus road (Acts 9:3; 22:6 and 26:23); and the *light* by which Jesus was transfigured (Matt 17:2).¹³⁶ In particular, H. C. Hahn states that in Acts 9:3; 22:6, 9, 11 and 26:13, φῶς indicates the appearing of the exalted Christ.¹³⁷

However, Eduard Pfaff¹³⁸ claims that the "voice" of Acts 9:7 does not refer to the voice of Christ, but to the voice of Paul. F. F. Bruce states "... τῆς φωνῆς here refers to Paul's voice; his companions heard him speaking, but saw no one to whom the speaking could be addressed."¹³⁹ Pfaff and Bruce's explanations are thoroughly wrecked by Acts 9:4, to which Acts 9:7 refers. Besides, as the parallel accounts show, what Luke specifically intends to express here is that, to a certain degree, Paul's companions can share in the miraculous vision. The account is of a revelation of Jesus from heaven rather than of an appearance of Jesus before his ascension. Therefore, we are not to think of Jesus appearing in such a form that he might (for example) be confused with an ordinary traveller (Lk 24:15). All the emphasis in the present narrative falls on what was said to Paul: "Why do you persecute me?" It is a question aimed at the immediate purpose of Paul. It indicates that, while he thought that he was merely attacking a group of men for their heretical way of worshipping God, he was in reality attacking a group who had a heavenly spokesman and representative. For this reason to attack the Christians was to attack his heavenly figure.

In sum, the three accounts in Acts differ from one another in various details. All make a point of calling attention to the extraordinary light that overwhelmed him with its brightness. The first account of this light, which Luke includes as part of his own narrative, is the simplest of the three: *evxai, fnhj te auvto.n perih, strayen fw/j evk tou/ ouvranou* "and suddenly a light from heaven flashed about him"(Acts 9:3). This account in Acts 22 by Paul himself, speaking to a Jewish audience, basically repeats that version, with the addition that it took place "about noon." But in the third account, also

¹³⁶ H. J. S. Blaney. 1976. Light. Merrill C. Tenney. Ed. *The Zondervan pictorial encyclopedia of the Bible*, Volume Three: H-L. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, p. 932.

¹³⁷ H. C. Hahn. 1986. φῶς. Colin Brown. Ed. *The new international dictionary of New Testament theology*, Volume 2: G-Pre. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, p. 493.

¹³⁸ Eduard Pfaff. 1942. *Die Bekehrung des h. Paulus in der Exegese des 20*. Rome: Jahrhunderts, p. 110.

¹³⁹ F. F. Bruce. 1951. *The Acts of the Apostles: The Greek text with introduction and commentary*. London: Tyndale Press, p. 199.

attributed to Paul, this time defending himself before King Agrippa, he elaborates on the light further still: *h`me,raj me,shj kata. th.n o`do.n ei=don basileu/ouvrano,qen u`pe.r th.n lampro,thta tou/ h`li,ou perila,myan me fw/j kai. tou.j su.n evmoi. poreuome,nouj* “At midday, O king, I saw on the way a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining round me and those who journeyed with me” (Acts 26:13). This appears to suggest that no one had ever seen a light in all creation that was “brighter than the sun.” Therefore, this has been taken to belong to metaphysics rather than simply to physics, as a reference to an “uncreated light.”

According to Jaroslav Pelikan,¹⁴⁰ the biblical precedent for this unique light is found in the account of Moses speaking face to face with the Lord on Mount Sinai. When he descended from the mountain his face shone with a brilliance that was beyond human endurance to behold. He had to veil it when he spoke with the people of Israel (Ex 34:29-35). For Saint Paul, the immediate significance of “such splendour that the Israelites could not look at Moses’ face because of its brightness, fading as this was,” was to serve as an allegory for the relation between the law and the gospel (2Cor 3:7-8). But this divine light on Mount Sinai stood in close connection with the divine light on Mount Tabor at the transfiguration of Christ; and with the divine light that overwhelmed Paul on the Damascus road.

3.3 The companions of Paul (Acts 9:7 and 22:9)

Acts 9:7 records *oi` de. a;ndrej oi` sunodeu,ontej auvtw/| ei`sth,keisan evneoi, avkou,ontej me.n th/j fwnh/j mhde,na de. qewrou/ntej* “The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one”. Luke employs *oi` sunodeu,ontej* to connote the other members of the ‘caravan’. These members of the caravan are identified as Paul’s police escort. The companions of Paul are a squad of Jerusalem temple-police.¹⁴¹ They heard the voice without seeing the speaker and stood speechless with astonishment. It is probable that the statement *’lAq) ytiil’Wz ~yaiPro ~k,in>yae hn"±Wmt.W ~y[iêm.vo ~T,äa; ‘~yrlb’D>* “you heard the sound of words, but saw no form; there was only a voice” in Deuteronomy 4:12 may serve as a model to the companions of Paul who heard the voice without seeing the speaker. Conversely, the witnesses may not participate in the revelation, since, in Acts 22:9, Luke writes that Saul’s companions saw the light but heard nothing. It is observed that only the

¹⁴⁰ Jaroslav Pelikan. 2005. *Acts*. Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, p. 235.

¹⁴¹ Kirsopp Lake and Henry J. Cadbury. Eds. 1933. *The beginnings of Christianity*. Part I: The Acts of the Apostles. Vol. IV: English translation and commentary. London: Macmillan, p. 101.

means of expression differ from one another in various details, but not the sense of the statement. Needless to say, such cases show how little documentary, historical reliance may be placed on auxiliary details of this kind. Likewise, Luke is not troubled by the contradiction that the companions here remain standing, but in Acts 26:14, they fall to the ground with Saul. In this sense, both statements make sense in their context.

Similarly, Charles W. Hedrick¹⁴² avers that, in Acts 22:9, the statement about the companions of Paul seeing the light but not hearing the voice interrupts the conversation between the Lord and Paul. For example, it disrupts the continuity between verses 8 and 10. In Acts 9, the statement logically follows the Christophany and, in that context, serves to emphasise the miraculous character of the total incident. There the men are “speechless,” since they heard “a voice” but saw “no one” (Acts 9:7). In Acts 22:9, on the other hand, the companions of Paul do not react in astonishment. In fact, *no* action on the part of Paul’s companions is described in the narrative, except that they led Paul to Damascus (Acts 22:11). Acts 22:9 is formally a “pause” in the dialogue between Paul and the Lord. As such, it interrupts the progress of the narrative. In terms of position and character, it stands out from its context. In terms of position, it clearly interrupts, for no obvious reason, the dialogue between Paul and the Lord. With respect to character, the verse is explanatory. It is a digression that plays no role in the action of the narrative. The explanatory statement further lessens the miraculous character of the incident, in that it eliminates in Acts 22 the “bodiless voice” that astonished Paul’s companions in Acts 9:7. The voice is now identified as belonging to “the one” speaking to Paul (Acts 22:9). The only physical phenomenon observed by Paul’s companions seems to be the bright light (Acts 22:6) that had blinded Paul (Acts 22:11). In Acts 22, Paul’s companions are completely excluded from the Christophany. The question in Acts 22:10a, lacking in Acts 9, changes the character of the entire incident, and in connection with verses 22:10b and 22:14. It flips the latter half of this narrative into a commissioning narrative. In Acts 22:10a, Paul asks, “What shall I do, Lord?” Luke’s use of κύριος here is not the respectful “sir” of Acts 22:8, but it implies the recognition of Jesus as the Lord of the church, as is clearly shown by the next sentence: “And the *Lord* said to me ...” The thrust of Paul’s question is not as one might expect, “What shall I do about my blindness?” but rather “What shall I do for you, Lord?” In other words, he is saying, “What is my commission?” This is shown by the response of the Lord in Acts 22:10b, “In Damascus

¹⁴² Charles W. Hedrick. 1981. Paul’s Conversion/Call: A Comparative Analysis of the three reports in Acts. *JBL* 100/3: 423-424.

you will be told all that *is appointed* for you to do,” and in Acts 22:14, “The God of our fathers *appointed you*...you will be a witness for him to all men...”

Barrett¹⁴³ writes that Luke was probably interested in Paul’s travelling companions only in that their reaction brought out more forcibly the effect of the event on Paul and established its objectivity. There is no reason to think that they were not Paul’s assistants in the work of persecution. For reasons of security, travellers went in groups rather than singly.¹⁴⁴ The fellow travellers¹⁴⁵ stood, halted by the evident fact that something extraordinary was taking place. According to Hesychius the adjective ἐνεοί means ὅς οὔτε ἀκούει οὔτε λαλεῖ, that is, *deaf and dumb*.¹⁴⁶ For this, Acts gives the meaning dumbfounded, astonished. If this means that they were struck dumb it will probably do, but give no other authority for this sense.¹⁴⁷ A. Steimann points out that:

There can be talk of an irreconcilable contradiction only if the data of one (account) exclude the data of the other. That is not the case. Rather one ought imagine that upon Paul’s falling down and their experiencing the effects of the peculiar light, the travelling companions of Paul are astounded and come to a halt; subsequently they are overcome by the unusual apparition and fall to the ground... or that all fall down together, but unlike Paul, his companions get up and look on at the way things develop in perplexed surprise. When helpful hands assisted the blinded Paul to his feet, he concluded that his companions must have gotten up.¹⁴⁸

J. H. Moulton accepts the view that the apparent contradiction is to be explained by the difference between ἀκούοντες μεν τῆς φωνῆς (Acts 9:7) and τῆς φωνῆς οὐκ ἤκουσαν (Acts 22:9), that is, the genitive of the present verse and the accusative of Acts 22:9. The men were aware of sound but could not distinguish the words used. Turner (M. 3.233) thinks that ‘there may be something in this explanation’, but Moule¹⁴⁹ thinks that New Testament usage of the cases with ἀκούειν defies classification and that it is impossible to find a satisfactory distinction between the genitive of this verse and the

¹⁴³ C. K. Barrett. 1994. *Acts 1-14: a critical & exegetical commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*. vol. 1. ICC. Edinburgh: ICC T. & T. Clark Publishers, pp. 451-452.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. Lk 2:44, συνοδία “a party of travellers or a caravan”)

¹⁴⁵ For συνοδεύειν cf. Herodian 4.7.6; Plutarch, *Antony* 13:921.

¹⁴⁶ The sense may be transferred (cf. Xenophon, *anabasis* 4.5.33, barbarians, not knowing Greek, had to be treated ὡσπερ ἐνεοῖς).

¹⁴⁷ *A Greek-English Lexicon*, compiled by H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, New edition by H. S. Jones and R. McKenzie. Oxford, 1940; Supplement, ed. E. A. Barber. Oxford, 1968, p. 563. J. H. Moulton. 1908. *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*. vol. I. Edinburgh: Prolegomena, p. 66. See ἀκούοντες μὲν τῆς φωνῆς. cf. Acts 22:9, τὴν δὲ φωνὴν οὐκ ἤκουσαν.

¹⁴⁸ A. Steimann. 1934. *Die Apostelgeschichte*. Bonn, pp. 90f.

¹⁴⁹ C. F. D. Moule. 1953. *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek*. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press, p. 36.

accusative of Acts 22:9. In view of the accusative in Acts 22:4, this opinion should probably be accepted. The same verse is against Bruce's view that the voice they heard was Paul's, as he spoke with the unseen Jesus. Luke, without too much concern for rigid consistency, wished in each narrative to express the thought that all recognised a supernatural event but only one understood its meaning.¹⁵⁰ Lüdemann¹⁵¹ takes Acts 22:9 to be a Lucan correction of the statement, "only Saul receives the revelation."

In conclusion, it is observed that the three accounts of the event differ in detail. In Acts 22:9, the exact opposite of this is stated: the companions saw the light but did not hear the voice! In Acts 26:13, the light seems to fall on all, but Paul adds, "I heard the voice." In that version, however, all the travellers fall to the ground, whereas here and in Acts 22:7 only Paul does so.

Therefore, there are still more widespread explanations to the reaction of Paul's companions in this scene: they either fall down (Acts 26:14) or stay standing (Acts 9:7). Depending on how far they stood from where the vision took place, one group of Paul's companions should have remained standing, while the other should have fallen to the ground.

3.4. Paul's blindness (Acts 9:8-9 and 22:11)

Paul's blindness is explained in the statement: *hvgē, rqh de. Sau/loj avpo. th/j gh/j avnew|gme, nwn de. tw/n ovfqalmw/n auvtou/ ouvde.n e;blepen\ ceiragwgou/ntej de. auvto.n eivsh,gagon eivj Damasko,n kai. h=n h`me,raj trei/j mh. ble,pwn kai. ouvke;fagen ouvde. e;pien* "Saul arose from the ground; and when his eyes were opened, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. And for three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank" (Acts 9:8-9). This statement shows that the Christophany is over and the earthly action proceeds. Saul is lifted to his feet, being incapable of rising by himself; and blinded by the light from heaven, he can no longer see. He has to be led by the hand to Damascus because the need of a guide is a

¹⁵⁰ For hearing without seeing cf. Deut 4:12 (φωνὴν ῥμάτων ὑμεῖς ἤκούσατε καὶ ὁμοίωμα οὐκ εἶδατε); Dan 10:7; Sophocles, *Ajax* 15; Euripides, and *Hippolytus* 86. The travellers saw no one; it is implied that Paul saw Jesus (as he claimed to have done: 1Cor 9:1; 15:8). Compare this with *Acts of Thomas* 27 (They heard his voice only but they did not see his form, for they had not yet received the additional sealing of the seal (post-baptismal chrism)). This cannot serve as an explanation of the present passage; Saul himself was not yet baptised. Supernatural beings become visible when and to whom they choose; cf. Especially Homer, *Odyssey* 16: 154-163 (Athene is seen only by Odysseus and the dogs).

¹⁵¹ G. Lüdemann. 1987. *Das frühe Christentum nach den Traditionen der apostelgeschichte: Ein Kommentar*. Göttingen, p. 115.

typical touch for characterising the blind as such. Such is the pitiful state in which the terror of the Christians makes his entry.¹⁵²

According to C. K. Barrett, Saul rose and opened his eyes, and found that he was blind.¹⁵³ Saul's blindness is the result of his supernatural encounter (Acts 9:3; 22:11). Betz¹⁵⁴ compares Lucian, *Dialogi Marini* 14:2 with Saul's blindness, but the story of the Gorgon is not a very close parallel, for example, Acts 13:11, a clear sign of blindness. Wettstein gives many parallels, but the point is too obvious to need illustration. The blindness of Paul at noon may be referring to the !Ar+W"[Ī "blindness" in Deuteronomy 28:28 which denotes one of the curses for disobedience to Yahweh. However, Conzelmann¹⁵⁵ points out that blindness is not a punishment but a mark of the powerlessness of the hitherto powerful persecutor. Led by the hand, and not at all as he intended, Saul entered Damascus; a dramatic touch by Luke.

Notably, it would be wrong to construe Paul's blindness that lasts three days as a punishment. But it could be understood simply as the natural consequence of his beholding the heavenly light.¹⁵⁶ Besides, it is concrete proof of the vision. It is probable that the three-day fast may be understood as a penance which demonstrates Paul's inward transformation.

Luke Timothy Johnson avers that "some Latin *mss* add colour to the account by having Paul say to his companions, "raise me from the ground," and when they raised him, he saw nothing." Other *mss* have οὐδένα "no one" rather than οὐδέν "nothing". Paul will later bring a similar blindness on his opponent, the magician Elymas, as a punishment (Acts 13:11)."¹⁵⁷

¹⁵² It is observed that instead of the statement $h\nu g e, r q h \text{ de. } \text{Sau/loj avpo. th/j gh/j}$, several Western witnesses heighten the pathos of the account by reading $e; f h \text{ de. } \text{pro.j avtou, j, vEgi, rate, me avpo. th/j gh/j (it}^{s,p} \text{vg}^{mss}) \text{ kai. evgeira, ntw n avto, n (it}^h \text{Ephraem)}$. Also, $h\nu g e, r q h$ which is in the 2nd person singular, aorist 1, passive of the verb $evgei, rw$ may mean that Paul could not raise himself.

¹⁵³ For οὐδένε βλέπεν ACEΨT $\bar{\eta}$ have οὐδένα βλέπεν, meaning presumably that he no longer saw Jesus; cf. Mk 9:8

¹⁵⁴ H. D. Betz. 1961. *Lukian von Samosata und das Neue Testament. Text und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur* 76: 5, vol. 21:55.

¹⁵⁵ H. Conzelmann. 1963. *Die Apostelgeschichte. Handbuch zum Neuen Testament* 7. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, p. 58.

¹⁵⁶ Acts 22:9 records that the others also saw the light. F. Blass and A. Debrunner. 1979. *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch*. Göttingen: Bearbeitet von F. Rehkopf, pp. 353-357. Paul's blindness lasted three days. Blass and Debrunner consider $h=n...mh. \text{ ble, pwn}$ to be not strictly a periphrastic tense; the participle (with negative) is adjectival, equivalent to τυφλός cf. Acts 13:11, ἔση τυφλός μὴ βλέπων τὸν ἥλιον may be said to support this with the reading *sic mansit per triduum neque...*

¹⁵⁷ Luke Timothy Johnson. 2003. *The Acts of the Apostles*. Sacra pagina series. vol. 5. London: SCM Canterbury Press, p. 163.

Charles W. Hedrick,¹⁵⁸ however, avers that the blindness is mentioned almost incidentally. It is not caused by scales miraculously introduced by divine action, as it appeared, in Acts 9, but it seems to be a normal sort of blindness that comes from staring too long into a bright light (Acts 22:11).¹⁵⁹ This new “explanation” for the cause of Paul’s blindness clearly contradicts Acts 9:18. In addition, it could not have been a normal sort of blindness as Hedrick imagined because of Luke’s description of a light of heaven not of earth, and transcendent in its whiteness and brilliance, which flashed roundabout Paul. Hedrick claims that Paul’s companions, who now do not hear a “bodiless voice,” have no reason to stare at the bright light and, hence, are not blinded. The failure of Paul’s companions to be blinded was not a problem in Acts 9, since Paul’s blindness there was the result of divine action and not a natural occurrence as in Acts 22:11. Rather than being blind for three days, as it appears in Acts 9:9, Paul received his sight immediately upon entering the city. While Ananias still pronounces the word of healing (Acts 22:13), he is not commissioned *specifically* to heal Paul’s blindness. Also, we do not find the blindness being cured by the dramatic touch of the healer’s hands (Acts 9:17), or other miracle story motifs. However, it must be noted that the baptism (Acts 9:18b) and the eating of food (Acts 9:19) are included in the narrative to demonstrate the effectiveness of the healing. In the same way, Paul’s failure to eat and drink for three days is mentioned immediately after his becoming blind (Acts 9:9) in order to accentuate the effect of the blindness.

3.5. The commissioning (Acts 9:15-16; 22:14-15 and 26:16-18)

In Acts 26: 14, Luke uses *avna, sthqi* also found in Acts 9:6; 22:10, and *sth/qi evpi. tou.j po,daj sou* recorded equally in Ezekiel 2:1&3, to describe the commissioning of Paul. Besides, *eivj tou/to* is explained in *proceiri, sasqai* (Acts 22:14) while *se u`phre, thn kai. ma, rtura* (Acts 22:15).¹⁶⁰ With Acts 26: 14 begins not a special source-report, but a Lucan narrative of the Christophany corresponding to the special situation.¹⁶¹ Luke has shaped the words of the exalted Lord, the content of

¹⁵⁸ Charles W. Hedrick. 1981. Paul’s conversion/call: a comparative analysis of the three reports in Acts. *JBL* 100/3: 424.

¹⁵⁹ *ouvk evne, blepon* is distinguished by only one letter from the reading in **B**, which is probably original.

¹⁶⁰ Martin Dibelius. 1956. *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles*. New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, p. 92.

Dibelius may be right when he avers that the original text *ma, rtura w-n te ei=de, jw-n te ovfqh, setai soi* has been distorted under the influence of the preceding *w; fqhn*.

¹⁶¹ That Paul was and is a pious Jew is a theme already dealt with in Acts 26:4ff. hence it was no longer necessary to mention the devout Jew Ananias, by whom Paul was introduced into the new fellowship; mention of him was indeed prohibited, because the Gentile mission only appears as an absolute necessity when it is directly ordered by the heavenly *ovptasi, a* (Acts 22:21; in Acts 9, the Gentile mission is only mentioned quite un-emphatically in Acts 9:15, a word of Christ to Ananias).

which was well established (sending of Paul to the Gentiles), with the aid of the Old Testament expressions and early Christian edificatory language. There is no mention here of blindness (Acts 26:14). In line with the conception in Acts 16:9ff; 18:9; 22:17ff; 23:11; 27:23), Paul is depicted as the constant recipient of heavenly visions.¹⁶² In Acts 26:16-18, Paul records more of the words of Jesus here than in any of the other accounts. It appears that Paul is summarising the contents of several visions and messages from the Lord in this one account. In this account, Paul appealed to Caesar and emphasised those things that he knew would help his case in his testimony which was given to King Agrippa and his sister Bernice.

The commissioning statement contained in Acts 9:15-16 differs markedly from those in the parallel accounts (Acts 22:14-15; 26:16-18). Acts 9:15-16 is the only commissioning statement that specifically mentions both Gentile and Jewish missions and the commission has a structure and style similar to Acts 1:8.¹⁶³ In Acts 9, Ananias balks at going to Paul because of the reports concerning Paul's persecution of the church (Acts 9: 13-14). At that point the Lord reveals to Ananias that Paul is a "chosen instrument" who will carry the Lord's name to Gentiles, kings and the sons of Israel (Acts 9:15). Notably, *skeu/oj* signifies not only 'vessel' but also 'instrument' or 'tool'. This man, Saul, is a *skeu/oj evklogh/j*. A similar expression, in the plural, occurs at Romans 9:23 (*skeu,h evle,ouj*), 2 Corinthians 4:7 (*ovstraki,noij skeu,esin*) and 2 Timothy 2:21 (*skeu/oj eivj timh,n*). The use of *skeu/oj* is not common and, in the context of Acts 9: 15, it reflects the use of *יָדָא* in the Old Testament. 1Maccabees 2:9 is not parallel. We observe that *skeu/oj, evklogh/j* is a Pauline word¹⁶⁴ and it refers to God's gracious act in determining the salvation of those whom he calls. Assuming the metaphorical use of *skeu/oj* this could be the meaning here: Saul, notwithstanding his past, is nevertheless the one whom I have called to be a Christian; he is one of the elect. It seems however probable that the defining genitive *evklogh/j* is used in Acts 9:15 in a sense that Paul once gives to the adjective *evklektój*.¹⁶⁵ All those mentioned in Romans 16 are Christians; Rufus is singled out as outstanding. Luke, probably with a deliberate attempt to use Pauline language, means that Saul is one whom the Lord has singled out for special service. This is specified in

¹⁶² Acts 22:15: 'witness to what you have seen and heard.' *ma,rtuj* is here not 'martyr'! It anticipates the *marturo,menoj* of Acts 26:22.

¹⁶³ Acts 1:8: "... you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth."

Acts 9:15: "... he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel."

¹⁶⁴ Romans 9:11; 11:5, 7, 28; 1Thess 1:4

¹⁶⁵ Romans 16:13 (...~Rou/fon to.n evklekto.n evn kuri,w|).

the clause beginning *tou/ basta, sai*, the genitive of the articular infinitive being used in consecutive sense in Acts 9:15.

This “commission” is made only to Ananias and is never made to Paul in the narrative or immediately afterwards. In fact, Acts 9:16 implies that the Lord himself will make a revelation to Paul at some future time! Ananias then proceeds to Paul and fulfils in Acts 9:17b the task that the Lord had given him in Acts 9:12; Paul’s sight is restored at the laying on of Ananias’ hands. The action takes place in Acts 9:17b almost as though the revelation to Ananias in Acts 9:13-16 had not happened. Ananias makes no reference to Paul’s commission, as he does in Acts 22:14-15.

The commissioning statement in Acts 22:14-15 appears to be an integral part of the larger narrative, Acts 22:6-21. The commission is made to Paul following his conversion (Acts 22:10a), as a direct result of the Lord’s sending him to Damascus specifically to receive his “appointment” (Acts 22:10b). The commission says that Paul was the one appointed to “hear a voice” from the Lord’s mouth. Hence, the larger narrative excludes Paul’s companions (Acts 22:9); although in so doing it contradicts the narrative in Acts 9. The commission says that Paul was to “see the Just One”; hence, the larger narrative insists that Paul’s companions saw only a bright light. Acts 9:7 had already indicated that they saw “no one.” The commissioning statement understands the combination of “bright light” and “voice” (Acts 22:6-7) as the appearance of the Lord that Paul was appointed to see. Paul’s blindness is not an unexpected corollary to seeing a divine figure. Compare this with the “dazzling apparel” of the two men at the tomb in Luke 24:4 (see Matt 28:2-3), the altered countenance of Jesus at the transfiguration (Luke 9:29), and the experience of Moses in Exodus 33:17-23.

Furthermore, it appears that Luke has rewritten the commissioning statement in Acts 22:14-15 in order to accommodate the larger context of the incident in that setting. In Acts 9:15-16, when referring to the extent of the commission, Luke specifies that it includes the Gentiles as well as the Jews. But in Acts 22:15, he generalises the commission by saying that it includes “all men.” He then transposes the statement about the Gentiles to Acts 22:21, where it becomes the (literary) reason for the anger of the crowds, which leads to Paul’s imprisonment and the further aggravation of the situation (Acts 22:22-30).

The account in Acts 22 assumes and builds upon the account in Acts 9. In Acts 22, the origin of the commission that Ananias recites to Paul (Acts 22:14-15) is not stated. It does not explain why Ananias sought out Paul (Acts 22:12-13). The lack of that information in Acts 22 constitutes a breakdown in the logic of the narrative. The reader of Acts, however, has no

difficulty on this, since he has already been given that information in Acts 9:10-16. Therefore, for the account in Acts 22 to be logically consistent, it must be read in the light of Acts 9.

The commission spoken to Paul in Acts 26:16-18 exceeds its character as commission and becomes homily in Acts 26:18b. It is actually part of the witness to Agrippa (Acts 26:19-23), rather than commission to Paul (26:16-18a). In Acts 26, Luke reports the one element lacking in the accounts in Acts 9 and 22, and that is the *precise commission* that the Lord spoke to Paul on the Damascus Road. Luke has carefully concealed this precise commission from the reader in the accounts in Acts 9 and 22.¹⁶⁶ He maintains the element of suspense by alluding to it in the commission to Ananias (Acts 9:15-16), and in the brief report of Barnabas to the apostles (Acts 9:27)¹⁶⁷, by referring to its contents second-hand through Ananias (Acts 22:14-15), and by having the Lord allude to it in Acts 22:17-21. It is not until Acts 26:16-18 that the suspense is broken and Luke finally tells his (impatient) reader exactly what the Lord said to Paul on the road to Damascus.¹⁶⁸

3.6. Agreement among the three accounts in Acts (Acts 9, 22 and 26)

In the Book of Acts there are three accounts of the vision at Damascus: one made by St Luke on his own account¹⁶⁹, the other two put into the mouth of St Paul¹⁷⁰. Fernand Prat argues that “the three narratives agree in all important points—viz., the occasion, the place, the time of the event, the dazzling light with which the caravan was enveloped, the dialogue between Saul, prostration, the mysterious voice, his temporary blindness, his baptism, his recovery, and the absolute change in his point of view, which suddenly made a persecutor an apostle.”¹⁷¹

Also, Martin Hengel and Anna Maria Schwemer aver that:

Common to all three Lukan reports is a bright light shining ‘from heaven’, the way in which the persecutor falls to the ground, an audition with a reproach to the persecutor and, when he asks a question back, the exalted Christ’s identification of himself as the Kyrios speaking from the light. Whereas the last report before Agrippa II and Festus (Acts 26:16f.) has

¹⁶⁶ For other appearances of the Lord to Paul see Acts 22:17-21, and 23:11. The only vision that Paul has after the account in Acts 26 is an appearance of an angel in Acts 27:23-24.

¹⁶⁷ H. J. Cadbury. 1927. *The making of Luke-Acts*. New York: Macmillan, pp. 236-237.

¹⁶⁸ Charles W. Hedrick. 1981. Paul’s conversion/call: a comparative analysis of the three reports in Acts. *JBL* 100/3: 427.

¹⁶⁹ Acts 9: 1-19

¹⁷⁰ Acts 22:3-21 & 26:12-20.

¹⁷¹ Fernand Prat, S. J. 1926. *The theology of Saint Paul*, vol. 1. Westminster, Md: The Newman Bookshop, p. 26.

commissioning for the mission to the Gentiles (including Luke's interpretation) follow directly as a word of the Lord, in the first and second reports—not so clearly—this follows only after the arrival of the blinded Saul in Damascus through the help of Ananias, for example, in the last narration Luke brings together what he considers to be essential.¹⁷²

In sum, it is observed that the above points of agreement among the three accounts in Acts define the nature of Paul's conversion experience. They provide the outline by which to understand the core elements of Paul's conversion, and thus they give crucial insight into the nature of conversion itself.

3.7. Differences among the three accounts in Acts (Acts 9, 22 and 26)

The analysis of the three accounts in Acts reveals differences among them. Hedrick and Dibelius assert that a traditional legend of the "conversion" of Saul is to be found in Acts 9: 1-19¹⁷³, to which it appears that Luke adds the statement about receiving the Holy Spirit (Acts 9: 17b), the revelation to Ananias in Acts 9:13-16 and possibly also the statement about baptism in Acts 9:18c. Acts 26:12-18 and 22:4-21 are compositions by Luke and their differences from each other and the account in Acts 9 are due to Luke's literary style and method.¹⁷⁴ For the account in Acts 22:4-21, Luke has edited the traditional legend in a radical fashion, but has used certain elements of the traditional legend to compose a completely different narrative in Acts 26:12-18. I disagree with Hedrick and Dibelius in their submission to the traditional legend. The reason is that the three accounts differ not because they reached Luke by different channels but in accordance with the context in which they are placed. In Acts 9 Luke probably supplies the basic facts in as striking a manner as possible while the

¹⁷² Martin Hengel and Anna Maria Schwemer. 1997. *Paul between Damascus and Antioch: the unknown years*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, pp. 38-39.

¹⁷³ Charles W. Hedrick. 1981. Paul's conversion/call: a comparative analysis of the three reports in Acts. *JBL* 100/3, p. 427 and M. Dibelius. 1956. *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles*. London: SCM, pp. 159-160. J. Munck. 1959. *Paul and the salvation of mankind*. London: SCM, p. 17, however takes Acts 22 to be the source and Acts 9 to be a Hellenizes adaptation by Luke, as does T. L. Budesheim. 1976. Paul's Abschiedsrede in the Acts of the Apostles. *HTR* 69: 9-30. Budesheim argues that the speech of Paul in Acts 22: 1-21 is traditional material used by Luke. Compare also Ernst Haenchen. 1971. *The Acts of the Apostles: a commentary*. Philadelphia: Westminster, pp. 328-329.

¹⁷⁴ Dibelius has conclusively shown that the speeches in Acts are Lucan compositions. See M. Dibelius. 1956. *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles*. London: SCM, pp. 138-185, and in particular pp. 158-161. Acts 22:4-21 appears in Paul's speech to the Jews in Jerusalem and Acts 26:12-18 appears in Paul's speech to King Agrippa at Caesarea. Of great importance is the brief analysis of Luke's literary method by William Prentice. 1955. St. Paul's Journey to Damascus. *ZNW* 46: 250-255.

account in Acts 22 is adapted to the Jewish audience to which it is addressed and in Acts 26 there are clear signs that Luke abbreviates his narrative.¹⁷⁵

The apparent clash between Acts 9:7 and 22:9 is, perhaps, the most obvious contradiction and the most difficult to explain. In Acts 9:7, it is stated that the companions of Paul heard the φωνή “voice” but saw no one. In Acts 22:9 it is stated that Paul’s companions saw the light but did not hear the voice of the one speaking to Paul.

Analysing the three accounts in Acts, Fernand Prat points out the underlisted four differences which are not irreconcilable.

(i) According to one account, the companions of Saul hear the voice (Acts 9:7); according to another they do not hear it Acts 22:9. The expression used in the two cases is not the same. ἀκούοντες τῆς φωνῆς (genitive), in Acts 9:7, means: They perceived the sound of the voice (without understanding it); τὴν φωνὴν (accusative) in Acts 22:9, means that they “did not comprehend the voice of the one who spoke to me”(although perceiving the sound).

(ii) Here they see *no one*, Acts 9:7; there they see *a light*, Acts 22:9. Where is the contradiction? Is a light a person?

(iii) In one case they remain standing (Acts 9:7); in the other they fall to the ground (Acts 22:9). Εἰστήκεισαν ἐνεοί does not mean necessarily that *they were standing*, struck with stupefaction. It can be translated: that they were, or they remained, out of themselves, as in Latin *steterunt* signifies in similar cases. One can convince oneself of this by consulting any Greek lexicon.

(iv) Finally, it is objected that the words of Jesus are different in the different narratives. Literally, yes; but in meaning, no. The principal divergence consists in the fact that the author, according to a usage permitted at that time, unites in one single discourse (Acts 26:15-18) words uttered by Jesus Christ on two distinct occasions Acts 22:8 and 21); perhaps also words uttered by Ananias (Acts 22:14-15) in the name of Christ.¹⁷⁶

The most curious thing about the difference among the three accounts is to find these objections precisely among the critics who suspect the author of having forged the discourses in the Acts in order to harmonise them with his own narrative.

¹⁷⁵ C. K. Barrett. 1994. *Acts 1-14: a critical & exegetical commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*. vol. 1. ICC. Edinburgh: ICC T. & T. Clark Publishers, pp. 444-445. The account in Acts 26 shows signs of compression, in the omission of Ananias, the Temple vision (which is in Acts 22 only) and the inclusion of the commission in the initial event outside Damascus; it is more surprising that the words of Jesus should be expanded by the addition of a Greek proverb (Acts 26:14).

¹⁷⁶ Fernand Prat, S. J. 1926. *The theology of Saint Paul*. vol. 1. Westminster, Md: The Newman Bookshop, p. 26.

In conclusion, it is observed that the disagreements in detail between the three versions are less significant than what the agreements tell us about Luke's perception of the event. The turning of a Pharisee- persecutor into the apostle of the Gentiles is a paradox so profound that it requires multiple retellings, with each version bringing out some further nuances of significance.

3.8. Towards a solution

For a solution, many have appealed to the well-known difference in classical Greek between the meaning of ἀκούειν when used with the genitive and when used with the accusative. The argument has been clearly stated by J. L. Lilly¹⁷⁷. In Acts 9:7, ἀκούειν φωνῆς (genitive) means simply that a sound has been heard without reference to intellectual perception of ideas. In Acts 22:9, on the other hand, ἀκούειν φωνήν (accusative) means that the sound heard has been intellectually perceived. Lilly recognises that, in the New Testament, both constructions are used indiscriminately with the meaning of intellectual perception. However, he feels that a difference in meaning is justified in this case because of the use of τοῦ λαλοῦντός μοι “of him speaking to me” in Acts 22:9. This addition implies intellectual comprehension of articulate sounds for Acts 22:9 and suggests that one is, therefore, justified in assuming the classical Greek distinction in meaning between the constructions.

In Acts 9:7, Luke means to say they heard the sound of a voice. In Acts 22:9, he means to say that, although they heard the sound of a voice, they did not understand it. What is negated in the sentence in Acts 22:9 is not the hearing of what was spoken, but the understanding of what was heard.

If one admits the distinction in meaning between the two constructions, there is no contradiction between the two verses. If Luke understood φωνῆς in Acts 9:7 to mean unintelligible “sound” or “noise,” then he may have conceived of an event such as we find in John 12:27-29, where God speaks to Jesus, who perceives articulate speech, while the crowd with him merely heard “sound” or “noise”: “The crowd standing by heard it and said that it had thundered. Others said ‘an angel has spoken to him’” (John 12:29). In the same manner, Luke possibly understood Paul's companions to hear such (vocal) “sounds” without comprehending them as articulate speech. Of relevance here is the unusual incident in Acts 2 where Peter and the other apostles spoke to the crowd during the festival of Pentecost.

¹⁷⁷ J. L. Lilly. 1944. The Conversion of Saint Paul: The Validity of his Testimony to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. *CBQ* 6: 183-184.

Everyone heard but understood in his own native tongue, rather than in the language in which Peter and the others were preaching. In a sense, the incident in Acts 2 is a reversal of what may be true for Acts 9:7. In Acts 2, the crowd heard what should have been gibberish but instead each heard articulate sounds in his own language.

What may have been intended by Luke for Acts 9:7 is that the companions of Paul hear as noise or gibberish what should have been articulate speech. Acts 22:9, then, is meant to clarify Acts 9:7. Here, Luke intends to say that Paul's companions did not *understand* the voice of the Lord that spoke to Paul, although they may indeed have heard audible "sounds" as in Acts 9:7.

Moehring¹⁷⁸, Bratcher¹⁷⁹ and Robertson¹⁸⁰ argue against this solution that recent studies have shown that in the Hellenistic period, there is no evidence that there was a distinction in meaning between ἀκούειν when used with the genitive and ἀκούειν when used with the accusative. In the Hellenistic period, both constructions were used interchangeably with the meaning of intellectual perception and comprehension. Munck (apparently) resolves the contradiction between the passages by tracing the contradiction to the sort of garbled reports that one might expect from eyewitnesses to an event: "These points of disagreement show that Paul alone got the message; the others were unable to understand what happened."¹⁸¹

Haenchen, on the other hand, argues that the contradiction between Acts 9:7 and 22:9 was simply not a problem to Luke. In Acts 9:7 when Luke writes that Paul's companions "heard the voice but saw no one," he merely intended to confirm the objectivity of the event. He did not intend that Paul's companions be considered participants in the event. In Acts 22:9, when he writes that Paul's companions saw the light but heard nothing, he is again confirming the objectivity of the event and excluding Paul's companions as participants in the revelation. "It is only the means of expression that are changed, and not the sense of the statement." This contradiction between Acts 9:7 and 22:9, as well as the contradiction between Acts 9:7 (Paul's companions remain standing) and 26:14 (Paul's companions fall down) give Luke no trouble. "Both statements make sense in their contexts."¹⁸²

¹⁷⁸ H. R. Moehring. 1959. The Verb AKOYEIN in Acts IX: 7 and XXII:9. *NovT* 3: 80-99.

¹⁷⁹ R. G. Bratcher. 1960. ἀκούω in Acts ix:7 and xxii:9. *Expository Times* 71: 243-245.

¹⁸⁰ A. T. Robertson. 1934. *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the light of historical research*. Nashville: Broadman, p. 506. Robertson argues that the difference in case is significant.

¹⁸¹ Charles W. Hedrick. 1981. Paul's conversion/call: a comparative analysis of the three reports in Acts. *JBL* 100/3: 429.

¹⁸² Ernst Haenchen. 1971. *The Acts of the Apostles: a commentary*. Philadelphia: Westminster, pp. 322-233.

What Haenchen says is true. Both statements make sense in their individual contexts when one reads the narratives *in isolation* from one another. When one reads them as supplementary accounts, however, there appears to be a clear contradiction. It is unclear why the contradictions would not trouble Luke, since he evidently intended each subsequent account to build on the preceding account(s). If the contradiction is a problem to modern readers, why should one assume they would not trouble discerning earlier readers?

Hedrick differs from Haenchen's claims that Paul's companions are excluded from the revelation in Acts 9:35. How does he know that? The text clearly says that they heard the voice although they saw no one. The statement seems to imply the hearing and understanding of audible sounds. If this is so, they *would* be participants in the revelation. Does Haenchen mean they *did not understand* what they heard and were therefore excluded? Probably not, since he specifically excludes that interpretation of the passage. He is probably basing his interpretation on the fact that Luke specifically rules out their participation in the revelation in Acts 22:9, where it is asserted that Paul's companions *did not hear* the voice of the one speaking to Paul.

Hence, Acts 9:7 is clarified by Acts 22:9: Paul's companions were not participants in the revelation.

However, in Acts 9:7, the fact is that the companions of Paul *are* participants in the Christophany, since they do *hear* and *understand* what the Lord says to Paul. It is this fact that Luke is *consciously correcting* in Acts 22:9.¹⁸³ He wishes to exclude Paul's companions, because in Luke's theology, the revelation and commission are unique to Paul (Acts 9:27, 22:14-15 & 26:16). What is unclear, however, is how Luke assumed this contradiction/correction would be "understood" by his readers. Possibly, he assumed that they would accept his second edited version, since it was narrated "by Paul," and in a sense was Paul's own account of the incident, or at least the reader would be impressed that way.

There are other indications that Luke is correcting the earlier legend in his later edited version(s) and that he expects his readers to adjust their understanding of the event in the light of its subsequent narration. An example is the equally difficult contradiction between Acts 9:18, where Paul's blindness is caused by "something like scales" on his eyes and Acts 22:11, where Paul's blindness is attributed to the "brightness of the light." These two explanations for the cause of Paul's blindness are mutually exclusive. Because Luke has

¹⁸³ Compare Luke's tendency to eliminate the more vivid or naive elements from the miracle stories in Mark (Mark 1:25-26 & Luke 4:35; Mark 5:4-6 & Luke 8:29; Mark 9:17-27 & Luke 9:38-43). Luke also omits certain miracle stories having such features (Mark 6:45-52, 8:22-26 & 11:12-14) and the miracle stories he adds from his special source are lacking such features (Luke 7:1-17, 13:10-17 & 14:1-6).

eliminated the miracle story motifs found in the account in Acts 9 from the later accounts, it is reasonable to assume that Acts 22:11 is also a correction, *by design*, of Acts 9:18.

Again, what is unclear is what Luke thought his reader would make of the tension. This literary technique of clarifying and/or correcting one narrative by means of another receives further support from the fact that Luke clarifies in Acts 22 and 26 the confusion in Acts 9 as to whether or not Paul's companions saw the light. In Acts 9, no specific reference is made to Paul's companions seeing the light. Acts 9:7 says they heard a voice but saw none. The text does not mention a light in connection with Paul's companions, although one might assume from the text that they saw a light. They were apparently with Paul when the light flashed around him. Acts 22:9 and 26:14 clarify that obscurity on the part of Acts 9. In Acts 22, it is stated that they saw the light and in Acts 26 Paul's companions fell to the ground when the light flashed from heaven, presumably because they had seen it. The seeing of the light by Paul's companions is not precluded by the Acts 9 account; it is simply omitted.

In Acts 26:14, it is also clarified that Paul's companions fell to the ground at the sudden appearance of the bright light. This feature is omitted from both Acts 9 and 22, where Paul's companions are not even introduced into the narrative until *after* the appearance of the Lord to Paul. It is, however, already implied in Acts 9:7 that they had fallen to the ground and subsequently stood when they heard the voice. This is indicated by Luke's use of the Greek pluperfect εἰστήκεισαν: "The men ... had stood." (The pluperfect tense stresses the continuation of a completed state in past time; hence, they *had* stood and were still standing).¹⁸⁴ Luke, apparently, counted on his reader assuming in Acts 9 and 22 that Paul's companions had also reacted to the light and fallen to the ground, but does not bother to clarify that fact until in Acts 26:14.

The literary critical viewpoint naturally suggests that the repetition of the Damascus vision in Acts 22 and 26 as well as the differences in the three accounts derive from different sources. Luke would have had different sources dealing with Paul's conversion at his disposal. The main analyses of the conversion accounts in this frame of reference were carried out by F. Spitta¹⁸⁵, in 1891; J. Jüngst¹⁸⁶, in 1895; H. H. Wendt¹⁸⁷, in 1913; E. Hirsch¹⁸⁸, in 1929; K. Lake¹⁸⁹, in 1933; and E. Trocmé¹⁹⁰, in 1957.

¹⁸⁴ A. T. Robertson. 1934. *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the light of historical research*. Nashville: Broadman, pp. 903-906.

¹⁸⁵ F. Spitta. 1891. *Die Apostelgeschichte: Ihre Quellen und deren geschichtlicher Wert*. Halle, pp. 144ff.; 270-277.

¹⁸⁶ J. Jüngst. 1895. *Die Quellen der Apostelgeschichte*. Gotha, pp. 83 ff.; 223ff.

¹⁸⁷ H. H. Wendt. 1913. *Die Apostelgeschichte*. Meyer 3. Göttingen, pp. 166-168.

¹⁸⁸ E. Hirsch. 1929. Die drei Berichte der Apostelgeschichte über die Bekehrung des Paulus. *ZNW* 28: 305-3012.

Of these authors, Spitta, Jüngst, Hirsch, and Trocmé carry literary criticism to the extreme. For instance, they claim that they can tell us precisely from which source each verse derives. For Spitta and Jüngst, the editor of Acts limited himself to interweaving his sources in very subtle fashion. On the other hand, Wendt, Lake and Trocmé conclude that the author of the work greatly reworked his sources. It would be superfluous to sketch the results of these investigations in detail here. But to appreciate the method, we offer a consideration of the sources distinguished by Hirsch, since his literary critical analysis of the Damascus story is quite distinct and exemplary.

Hirsch saw that the first and third accounts deviate from each other most strongly, while chapter 22 holds an in-between position. The Ananias episode illustrates this very well; it plays a great role in chapter 9, it is shortened in chapter 22, and it is entirely lacking in chapter 26. Hirsch further observes that, the third account of Acts most greatly agrees with the statements of the Pauline letters. Paul does not speak of Ananias in his letters; rather, he stresses that he received his revelation without intermediary. The vision of Christ meant for him his call to be an apostle of the Gentiles. Now it is precisely all these points that correspond with Acts 26. Conversely, Hirsch notes that, there is actually no mention of a call to be apostle of the Gentiles in Chapter 9. “A persecutor of Christians is cast down through Jesus; he is then accorded the Spirit and baptism within the Christian community—this is the whole content of the narrative.”¹⁹¹ Thus, the first and the third accounts are mutually exclusive.

Given these data, the following conclusions may be drawn. In chapter 26, there is an extremely reliable historical tradition. Because of the close relationship of this chapter with the Pauline letters, we can say that we clearly have Paul’s own account. More specifically, this means that “the way in which Paul himself spoke of his conversion underlies (the third account)”¹⁹². Chapter 9, on the contrary, goes back to another source of a more legendary nature. And this source must derive from the Christian community in Damascus because it describes an appearance of Jesus to a member of that community. Paul’s conversion was spoken of in Damascus much like in chapter 9. There the whole incident was considered “as a strict judgement on Paul” which preserved the community from imminent persecution.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁹ K. Lake. 1933. The conversion of Paul and the events immediately following it. *Beginnings* 5:188-195.

¹⁹⁰ E. Trocmé. 1957. *Le livre des acts et l'histoire*. Paris: Lecoffre, pp. 326ff.

¹⁹¹ E. Hirsch. 1929. Die drei Berichte der Apostelgeschichte über die Bekehrung des Paulus. *ZNW* 28: 307.

¹⁹² E. Hirsch. 1929. Die drei Berichte der Apostelgeschichte über die Bekehrung des Paulus. *ZNW* 28: 309.

¹⁹³ E. Hirsch. 1929. Die drei Berichte der Apostelgeschichte über die Bekehrung des Paulus. *ZNW* 28: 307.

Luke reproduced both the Damascus tradition as well as the Pauline conception of the incident “with straight-forward fidelity”¹⁹⁴. In Chapter 22, however, “he reveals to us how he conceived the two accounts could be brought into agreement”. He based his views upon the first account but rightly bent it in the direction of the Pauline tradition. Therefore, the second account is a “mixed form” constructed from chapters 9 and 26.¹⁹⁵

As one can see, the literary critical solution, here exemplified by the work of Hirsch, significantly differs from the method of “conservative” interpreters. The latter strived to harmonise the divergences in the text as much as possible and sought to view the three accounts in terms of an inner unity. Literary criticism, however, does just the opposite. It delves into the differences in the text and strives specifically to elaborate and distinguish the various forms of chapters 9 and 26. Once the antithetical structure of the texts is recognised and traced back to two different sources, literary critics feel that all the differences among the three accounts can be solved without difficulty. Consequently, in line with Hirsch, *in the Pauline tradition*, all of Paul’s companions saw the light and fell down. This agrees with the factual, historical course of events¹⁹⁶. On the other hand, *according to the Damascus tradition*, Paul’s fellow travellers heard a voice, but saw no light. Thus, the matter is quite understandable. The Damascus tradition in fact inserted the legendary motif of the blinding of Paul. In that tradition, the companions should not see the light; otherwise, they also would have been blinded.¹⁹⁷

Generally, it cannot be denied that Hirsch’s solution is neat and well worked out. It seems convincing. Not only does it account for the differences within Acts, but it also answers the disagreements between Acts and the Pauline letters. These discrepancies can now be explained quite extensively and solved easily and convincingly with the help of the two traditions.

However, the neatness and convincing quality of the solution still do not prove its correctness. Haenchen has rightly objected to it. According to Hirsch’s hypothesis, Luke is basically a modern historian, possessing two notable sources. He does not wish to pass over either source, but informs his readers about how he himself would reconstruct the incident behind both sources. The difficulty with this view is that Luke in reality is an early Christian

¹⁹⁴ E. Hirsch. 1929. Die drei Berichte der Apostelgeschichte über die Bekehrung des Paulus. *ZNW* 28: 309.

¹⁹⁵ E. Hirsch. 1929. Die drei Berichte der Apostelgeschichte über die Bekehrung des Paulus. *ZNW* 28: 308.

¹⁹⁶ E. Hirsch. 1929. Die drei Berichte der Apostelgeschichte über die Bekehrung des Paulus. *ZNW* 28: 311.

¹⁹⁷ E. Hirsch. 1929. Die drei Berichte der Apostelgeschichte über die Bekehrung des Paulus. *ZNW* 28: 310.

edificatory author. He does not reveal the least interest in informing his readers about variations in the traditions.¹⁹⁸

In sum, it is observed that literary criticism does not offer a convincing solution to the Damascus story. But it is believed that in many other cases of biblical interpretation, this method is, in fact, extremely useful and necessary. Furthermore, while attempt is made to reject the idea of distinct sources for the Damascus accounts, there is need not to exclude the possibility that individual tradition's items of various origins were contained in the material Luke had about Paul's conversion. An example is the vision in the Jerusalem temple (Acts 22:17-21).

Therefore, it is believed, according to Gaventa,¹⁹⁹ that the differences between Acts 9 and the other accounts of Paul's conversion need not be explained by an appeal to multiple sources or to variations of a single source. Instead, the differences among the three accounts derive from the demands of diverse contexts.

From the study of Paul's Damascus road experience in Luke's account, the following points are worth noting:

- (i) The clergy that is yet to encounter Christ or have personal conversion experience is known through his hostile character towards the works of God and His people. On this Matthew says, $\alpha; \rho \alpha \gamma \epsilon \alpha \upsilon \rho \omega \nu \tau \omega \nu \kappa \alpha \rho \pi \omega \nu \alpha \upsilon \tau \omega \nu \epsilon \upsilon \pi \iota \sigma \tau \omega \nu, \sigma \epsilon \sigma \tau \epsilon \alpha \upsilon \tau \omega \nu,$ j "thus you will know them by their fruits" (Matt 7:20). It is observed that the shepherd of the flock may wear a sheepskin, but some who do this actually seek to harm the flock of God like wolves. The term $\alpha \upsilon \rho \omega \nu \tau \omega \nu \kappa \alpha \rho \pi \omega \nu \alpha \upsilon \tau \omega \nu$ denotes that the true test of ministers of God is their life. Therefore, the lifestyle, character and actions of ministers of God especially those in the pastoral ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria will show the difference.
- (ii) The clergy that claimed to have genuine call of God should have experienced theophany not necessarily in the same way as Paul, but there must be concrete evidence backing his encounter with Christ. An example of the experience of the burning bush which Moses had is the climax of his divine call. (Exo 3:4) When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here am I." $\backslash \nu \text{INE}) \text{hi rm, aYO} \delta \omega: \text{hv, Pmo}$

¹⁹⁸ E. Haenchen. 1971. *The Acts of the Apostles: a commentary*. B. Noble, G. Shinn, H. Anderson and R. McL. Wilson. trans. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, pp. 326ff.

¹⁹⁹ Beverly Roberts Gaventa. 1986. *From darkness to light: aspects of conversion in the New Testament*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, p. 67.

hv,îm orm,aYO°w: hn<©S.h; %ATâmi ~yhiøl{a/ wyl'ae ûar'q.YIw: tAa+r>li
rs"â yKiä hw"ßhy> ar.Y:ïw: In the theophanic statement above, God makes
Himself known to Moses, his newly chosen instrument. Simultaneously, God
states the mission of Moses, which is to deliver the Hebrews from the
powerful hands of the Pharaoh of Egypt. In the light of this, the theophany
experience indicates that it is God's presence and power that can make the
clergy, particularly those in the pastoral ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria,
able to serve Him and carry out His commands.

- (iii) The clergy that has personal conversion experience is bound to have heard from Christ stating clearly to him the definite assignment He had called him to do in His vineyard. An example of this are the commissioning statements of Jesus to Simon Peter: Bo,ske ta. avrni,a mou ... Poi,maine ta. pro,batia, mou ... Bo,ske ta. pro,batia, mou "Feed my lambs...Tend my sheep... Feed my sheep" (John 21:15-17). In these threefold commissioning statements Christ concedes His own office of shepherd to Simon Peter. In the contemporary times, the same has been bequeathed to all the ministers of the gospel including particularly those in the pastoral ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria.

Paul fulfilled all the above requirements owing to his Damascus road experience and call. Therefore, the leadership of Methodist Church Nigeria and her pastoral formative institutions could do well in emphasising on personal conversion experience for her clergy so as to foster effective pastoral ministry of the Church.

CHAPTER FOUR

PAUL'S PERSONAL ACCOUNT OF THE DAMASCUS ROAD EXPERIENCE IN GALATIANS 1:11-17

4.0. Introduction

In the preceding chapter, we discussed Paul's Damascus road experience in Luke's accounts. There, we saw that the agreements are much more important than the disagreements in Acts 9, 22 and 26. We noted that the agreements are due in part to the appearance in all the three accounts of common features of theophanies: the light, the prostration of the recipient of the vision, the supernatural voice, the authoritative commands, and the commissioning. But the differences and "contradictions" among the three accounts are to be explained by Luke's literary technique. The narratives are composed so as to supplement, complement and correct one another. Hence, facts necessary for understanding the event in one of the narratives are provided in the others. In fact, the complete story of Paul's conversion, as Luke understood it, can only be determined by bringing together features from all the three narratives. The entire story is not completely narrated in any of the three accounts. In this chapter, we shall critically examine how this Damascus road experience is narrated by Paul in Galatians 1:11-17.

4.1. Paul's receipt of the Gospel through a revelation of Jesus Christ (Gal 1:11-12)

Ernest Dewitt Burton²⁰⁰, M. J. Lagrange²⁰¹, D. Albrecht Oepke²⁰² and Pierre Bonnard²⁰³ aver that the very first words, *gnwri, zw ga.r u`mi/n* "for I would have you know" in Galatians 1:11, signal that a statement of importance follows. Besides, the statement *Gnwri, zw ga.r u`mi/n avdelfoi, to. euvagge, lion to. euvaggelisqe.n u`p evmou/ o[ti ouv k e;stin kata. a;nqrwpon* "For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not man's gospel" is somewhat irregular, because the *o[ti* does not precede but follows the *to. euvagge, lion to. euvaggelisqe.n u`p evmou/*. All the same, the logical object of *gnwri, zw*²⁰⁴ is not the noun *euvagge, lion*, but the objective clause, namely

²⁰⁰ Ernest Dewitt Burton. 1921. *A critical and exegetical commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*. ICC. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, p. 35.

²⁰¹ M. J. Lagrange. 1950. *Saint Paul Epitre aux Galates*. Paris: J. Gabalda et Cie, p. 9.

²⁰² D. Albrecht Oepke. 1973. *Der Brief des Paulus an die Galater*. Theologische Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament 9. 3rd ed. rev. Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, p. 54.

²⁰³ Pierre Bonnard. 1972. *L'epitre de Saint Paul aux Galates*. CNT 9. 2nd ed. Neuchatel, Switzerland: Delachaux & Niestle, p. 27.

²⁰⁴ The verb *gnwri, zw* appears in the New Testament in 25 passages. It is used most frequently to mean "announce, make known publicly or explicitly, and at times communicates in a solemn way" (Luke 2:15,17;

ο[ti ουvk ε;stin kata. a;nqrwpon (compare Gal 1:13). Also, the vocative avdelfoi is used sparingly in Galatians. However, Paul uses a similar construction in 1Cor 12:3, where he introduces the problem of ecstatic speech, and in 1Cor 15:1, where he introduces the topic of resurrection traditions.

Commenting on Gnwri, zw ga.r u`mi/n avdelfoi,, John Eadie says:

Instead of δέ, which is found in A, D^{2,3}, K, L, κ, Chrysostom and Theodoret and in the Coptic and Syriac versions, γὰρ is read in B, D¹, F, κ¹, and by Jerome, the Vulgate, and Augustine. Tischendorf has γὰρ in his second edition, but δέ in his serventh; and the reading is adopted by Scholz, Griesbach, Lachmann, and the Textus Receptus. Authorities are thus nearly balanced. Possibly the apologetic nature of the section might suggest to a copyist to begin it with γὰρ, argumentative; whereas δέ is only transitional to another topic, or to some additional illustration. It may however be replied, that the insertion of δέ by copyists was influenced by its occurrence with this verb in 1Cor xv.1, 2Cor viii.1.²⁰⁵

For Joachim Jeremias²⁰⁶ and Hans Lietzmann,²⁰⁷ the issue is the gospel Paul preached and how he received that gospel. It is probable that the statement²⁰⁸ can be understood in terms of the fact that Paul did not receive the gospel he preached from men²⁰⁹, nor by tradition²¹⁰, nor by instruction²¹¹, but by revelation²¹². Also, the attention is called, not so

John 15:15;Rom 9:22,23;16:26;2Pet 1:16). In all these passages refers to revelation of the salvation from God that comes through Jesus Christ. This religious connotation of gnwri, zw in the sense of “proclaim God’s plan of salvation, the salvation event in Christ” determines the usage of the verb, especially in John; and it is within this range of meaning also belong Gal 1:11. See Knoch, O. 1990. Gnwri, zw. *Exegetical dictionary of the New Testament*. Vol. 1. Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider. Eds. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, pp. 255-256.

²⁰⁵ John Eadie. 1979. *A commentary on the Greek text of the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, pp. 33 & 34.

²⁰⁶ Joachim Jeremias. “ἄνθρωπος”. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* 1:364

²⁰⁷ Hans Lietzmann. 1971. *An die Galater*. HNT. 4th ed. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), p. 6.

²⁰⁸ The statement: Gnwri, zw ga.r u`mi/n avdelfoi, to. euvagge,lion to. euvaggelisqe.n u`p evmou/ ο[ti ουvk ε;stin kata. a;nqrwpon “For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not man’s gospel”.

²⁰⁹ Presumably the ουvde in the first place modifies the verb. Nevertheless, the evgw which is expressly added also gets some of the emphasis. Paul, too, required a revelation in order to appropriate the gospel. However, not all that he knew about Jesus was by revelation; he must have learnt certain things from other Apostles of Jesus Christ (cf. 1Cor 15:1-8 and Gal 1:18ff).

²¹⁰ Herman N. Ridderbos. 1953. *The Epistle of Paul to the churches of Galatia: the English Text with introduction, exposition and notes*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., p. 58. The word pare,labon is the technical term for oral tradition, as it was exercised particularly also in the rabbinical schools and also was taught to the people.

²¹¹ The term ou;te evdida,cqhn is a specific reference to academic instruction. In this connection, the immediately preceding pare,labon is presumably to be taken as referring to the general, as distinguished from the school, tradition. The words para. avnqrw,pou modify also the ou;te evdida,cqhn. Otherwise the evdida,cqhn would be too loosely independent from the rest of the predication

much to the way in which Paul came in contact with the gospel, as to the origin of the gospel. Nevertheless there is emphasis on the immediacy of Paul's calling to the gospel directly through Christ. It had been a supernatural revelation. This is by which he had become serviceable to Christ. The apostle is here plainly referring to the event at Damascus (Acts 9:3ff). There Christ had appeared to him. On this Abogunrin says:

In Galatians 1:12 he (Paul) speaks of this appearance as an *avpoka, luyij*: a glorious manifestation where Christ showed himself to Paul as the glorified Son of God. It also has the idea that what Paul saw reveals in what form Christ will appear at the end-time. In 2Cor 4:4-6, Paul alludes to his conversion by saying that God has caused a glorious light to shine in his heart purposely to radiate the light of the knowledge of God's glory, the glory on the face of Christ, who is God's perfect image. After the dramatic experience, all that matters to Paul is "to know Christ and the power of his resurrection" (Phil 3:10, 20, 21).²¹³

Christ's appearance to Paul does not necessarily follow, of course, that up to that moment Paul knew nothing about Jesus; but there he was persuaded of the objective divinity and truth of the Messiah confessed by the church (Gal 1:13).

The gospel preached by Paul is not *kata. a;nqrwpon* "after man."²¹⁴ The phrase *kata. a;nqrwpon* does express "for in form, quality, and contents, it was not human or manlike; it was godlike in its truths, and in their connection and symmetry. It was God's style of purpose and thought—in no sense man's, and all about it, in disclosure and result, in adaptation and destiny, proves it to be [after] Him whose [ways are not our ways]."²¹⁵ This expression appears elsewhere in Paul's letters (Rom 3:5; 1Cor. 3:3; 9:8; 15:32a) in contexts where it appears to be the equivalent of *kata. sa,rka* (Rom 8:4-5, 12-13; 1Cor 1:26; 2Cor. 1:17; 10:2). Neither *kata. a;nqrwpon* nor *kata. sa,rka* refers simply to

²¹² Generally, the word *avpoka, luyij* which in Hebrew means *הִרְאָה*, connotes an uncovering, laying bare. It denotes a revelation, a disclosure of divine truth, or a manifestation from God. It is announcement from God's side of what lies beyond human reach. It assumes, often, not merely a manifestation, a disclosing in the objective sense, but also an influencing of the human spirit in such a way that it can distinguish the divine revelation as being such (cf. Matt 16:17). However, in Gal 1:12 *avpoka, luyij* means not merely a change that invaded and seized upon Paul's mind, but also and primarily the objective intervention of Christ. In other places, Paul puts this event on the same level of fact as the appearances of the Risen One. There he describes the event with the words *e`o, raka* and *w;fqh* respectively (1Cor 9:1 and 15:8).

²¹³ S. O. Abogunrin. August 28, 1978. *The theology of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, with particular reference to Pauline kerygma and soteriology*. PhD Thesis. Department of Religious Studies. University of Ibadan, Ibadan. x+ 458pp, p. 261.

²¹⁴ Winer, §49. Xen. *Mem.* 4:4, *κατ' ἄνθρωπον νομοθέτον*; Sophocles, *Ajax*, 747, *μὴν κατ' ἄνθρωπον φρονεῖ*; *Ædip. Col.* 598, *ἢ κατ' ἄνθρωπον νοσεῖς*. The phrase does not express origin, as Augustine, Lapide, and Estius assert, though it implies it. The Syriac renders ... "from," as it does *ἀπό* in Gal 1:1 and *παρὰ* in Gal 1:12.

²¹⁵ John Eadie. 1979. *A commentary on the Greek text of the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, pp. 34 & 35.

human relations or human logic, but each expression involves some contrast between the deeds and standards of those who are confined to the sphere of the purely human and those deeds and standards that belong to the new life available in Christ.

John Eadie avers that the clause *to. euvagge, lion to. euvaggelisqe. n u`p evmou/ o[ti ouv k e;stin kata. a;nqrwpon* “that the gospel which was preached by me is not man’s gospel” may characterise his gospel wherever preached, *o] khru, ssw evn toi/j e;qnesin* “the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles” (Gal 2:2). But the pointed language of verses 6-9 specialises it as the gospel preached by him in Galatia. The attraction here is a common one, especially after verbs of knowing and declaring, the principal clause attracting from the dependent one, as if by anticipation.²¹⁶ The noun and participle give fullness and impressiveness to the statement, as if referring back to verses 8 and 9 (compare Gal 1:16 and 2:2). Turner presses too much upon the phrase, when he gives as its meaning, “in character with human weakness and infirmity.”²¹⁷

Paul claims that his gospel is not “human” because it did not come from human beings *ouvde. ga.r evgw. para. avnqrw,pou pare,labon auvto, ou;te evdida,cqhn*. On this, John Eadie²¹⁸ observes that *γὰρ* assigns the ground: The gospel I preach is not according to man, for man did not teach it to me. Through no human medium did I get it, not even from James, John, or Cephas, who are reckoned “pillars.” I got it from the same source as they—from the one Divine Teacher. I was no more man-taught than they were, for I had apocalyptic intercourse with the Lord as really as they had personal communications; and I received what they received. This side-glance at the other apostles is plainly implied in the emphatic position or relation of the first three words, *οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐγὼ*.²¹⁹ I am not sure John Eadie is correct in his interpretation of *ouvde. ga.r evgw. para. avnqrw,pou pare,labon auvto,* “For neither did I receive it from man.” Does he mean that all about the life, death, resurrection and ascension which form the contents of the gospel were all revealed to Paul? Is that the pattern of revelation in the Bible? The one

²¹⁶ 1Cor 3:20, 2Cor 7:3; Winer, §66:5; Krüger, §61:1

²¹⁷ John Eadie. 1979. *A commentary on the Greek text of the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, pp. 34 & 35.

²¹⁸ John Eadie. 1979. *A commentary on the Greek text of the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, p. 35.

²¹⁹ *Οὐδὲ γὰρ* is different from the absolute *οὐ γὰρ*, and also from *οὐδὲ ἐγὼ γὰρ*, which might give a different turn to the thought. The pronoun expresses emphatic individuality, *γὰρ* and occupies its usual place. Again, the reading *οὐδὲ* is found in A, D¹ F, x, and is but ill supported, being probably an unconscious assimilation to the previous particle commencing the verse. The adverb *οὔτε* often occurs similarly, and, as Winer says, divides the negation. The *οὐδὲ* belongs only to the previous clause, and its connection with the foregoing verse. The *οὔτε* is not co-ordinate with *οὐδὲ*, but subordinate. Furthermore *avlla.* is strongly adversative.

medium was revelation, and that revelation came from Christ; the genitive being that of author as in formal contrast to *para. avnqrw, pou*, denoting origin. But one may say that a revelation from Jesus Christ is also a revelation of Jesus Christ, Himself being theme as well as source. Thus, the phrase *para. avnqrw, pou* “from man” though not grammatically, yet really and exegetically, includes a contrast also with *kata. a;nqrwpon*, and virtually asserts of his teaching what he had declared of his apostleship, that it was *ouvκ avpV avnqrw, pwn ouvde. diV avnqrw, pou* “not from men nor through man” (Gal 1:1).²²⁰ Hence, Paul proceeds to give an autobiographical proof of his position: that his gospel came from direct communication with Christ; that it was as original and trustworthy as those of the others who were apostles before him; that for a long period after his conversion he had no communication with any of them; that three years elapsed before he saw one of the twelve, and then he saw Peter only for a fortnight; and that additional fourteen years passed away before he had any interview with the pillars of the church. His gospel was, therefore, in no sense dependent on them, nor had his first spheres of labour been either assigned or superintended by them. He had felt no dependence on them, and was conscious of no responsibility to them. Therefore, God gave Paul separate and supreme apostolic authority; and his Damascus road experience sealed and sanctioned the message which was the work of his life to publish.

Agreeing with Eadie’s position on *para. avnqrw, pou*, Gaventa asserts that Paul specifies that the revelation was *VIhsou/ Cristou/*, which may mean either that it came from Jesus Christ (subjective genitive) or that it was about Jesus Christ (objective genitive). A good example of this ambiguity is the English phrase “the persecution of Paul,” which may refer either to Paul’s persecution of believers (subjective genitive) or to the persecution Paul himself later experienced (objective genitive). This is because Gal 1:16 specifies that God revealed “the Son” to Paul. Most commentators²²¹ conclude that *VIhsou/ Cristou/* in Gal 1:12 is an objective genitive. Instead, Paul received his gospel *δι’ ἀποκαλύψεως* “through revelation.” Before we conclude that *ἀποκαλυψις* “revelation” refers to a specific vision or dream, a miraculous encounter such as that described in Acts 9, we need to recall that the

²²⁰ John Eadie. 1979. *A commentary on the Greek text of the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, pp. 35 & 36.

²²¹ John Eadie. 1979. *A commentary on the Greek text of the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House; Herman N. Ridderbos. 1953. *The Epistle of Paul to the churches of Galatia: the English Text with introduction, exposition and notes*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. Ernest Dewitt Burton. 1921. *A critical and exegetical commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*. ICC. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark; M. J. Lagrange. 1950. *Saint Paul Epitre aux Galates*. Paris: J. Gabalda et Cie; et al.

indefinite article “a” does not exist in Greek. It is, therefore, not at all clear that Paul is recalling some particular revelatory *event* or *occurrence*.

Paul’s use of ἀποκα, λυγιј “apocalypse, revelation” and the verb ἀποκαλυπτειν “to reveal” elsewhere makes it even less certain that he has reference here to a vision or a miraculous encounter. Ὑποκα, λυγιј and ἀποκαλυπτειν in Paul’s letters most often refer to the ἔσχατον. Revelation is linked directly to God’s action in the end time (for example, Rom 2:5; 8:18, 19; 16:25; 1Cor 1:7; 3:13; Gal 3:23). Paul’s reference in Gal 1:11-12 must be read in the context of this larger revelatory event. He writes here not about a private event but about God’s revelation and the attack of that revelation upon Paul’s prior life.

Oscar Cullmann²²² states that Paul’s stress here on ἀποκα, λυγιј “revelation” seems to conflict with other places in his letters where he draws on tradition. For example, in 1Cor 15:1-11, he insists on the authority of the tradition about the resurrection of Jesus (compare also 1Cor 11:2, 23; 1Thess 2:13). William Baird²²³, W. D. Davies²²⁴ and J. H. Schüz²²⁵ have attempted to resolve this conflict by arguing that Paul understands all traditions to have their origin in the risen Lord. According to this view, when Paul writes in 1Cor 11:23 that he received the tradition about the supper ἀπὸ τοῦ κυρίου, he means that the risen Lord is the immediate origin of the tradition. However, this resolution of the problem does not adequately address the very different settings in which Paul refers to tradition and to revelation. In Galatians 1, he explains how he received the Gospel; in 1 Corinthians 11, and especially in 15, he has reason to call to mind the shared form that Gospel took in the community. That is, tradition and revelation have different functions.

In conclusion, it is observed that Paul must certainly have distinguished in his own mind between the sense in which the gospel which he preached came to him διὰ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ/ “through a revelation of Jesus Christ”— οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐμαρτυροῦμαι ὅτι παρέλαβον αὐτὸ, οὐτε ἐμάθηκα “for I did not receive it from man”, he emphasises, “nor was I taught it” (Gal 1:12). This passage constitutes Paul’s chief defense against the accusations of his opponents. He maintains under oath that he received his Gospel not from men, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. In declaring that his Gospel is not after man, Paul does not

²²² Oscar Cullmann. 1956. *The early church: studies in early Christian history and theology*. A. J. B. Higgins. Ed. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, pp. 60-69.

²²³ William Baird. 1957. What is the Kerygma? A Study of 1Cor 15:3-8 and Gal 1:11-17. *JBL* 76: 189-191.

²²⁴ W. D. Davies. 1966. *The setting of the sermon on the Mount*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 355-362.

²²⁵ J. H. Schüz. 1975. Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority. *Society of NTS, Monograph Series* 26. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 54-58.

merely wish to state that his Gospel is not mundane. The false apostles made the same claim for their gospel. Paul means to say that he learned his Gospel not in the usual and accepted manner through the agency of men by hearing, reading, or writing. He received the Gospel by special revelation directly from Jesus Christ.

Therefore, J. B. Lightfoot's²²⁶ comment may not be overemphasised. He avers that, in the first clause “ἀπ’ ἀνθρώπων”, Paul distinguishes himself from the false apostles, who did not derive their commission from God at all; in the second “δι’ ἀνθρώπου” he ranks himself with the twelve, who were commissioned directly from God. He views the prepositions as retaining their proper sense, and this seems indisputable. In the light of such language, it seems likely that Paul did make a distinction between “apostles of Jesus Christ” and “apostles of the churches” (compare 2Cor 8:17); that Paul’s apostolic commission did not come from men “ἀπ’ ἀνθρώπων”, nor did it come through a human intermediary “δι’ ἀνθρώπου”.

4.2. Paul’s call through God’s grace (Gal 1:15)

The sudden conversion of a bigoted, cruel man into a great-hearted, selfless servant of Christ is a mystery that is ultimately beyond rational understanding.²²⁷ It is probable that Paul’s call through God’s grace is responsible for this mystery as he puts it: ο[τε δε. ευδο, κησεν ἰο` γεο. jθ ο` avfori, saj me evk koili, aj mhtro, j mou “But when he who had set me apart before I was born”(Gal 1:15).

The noun *euvdoki*, a which derives from the verb *euvdoke, w* and וְצִוְּ (good pleasure, good-will, satisfaction, and approval) gives expression to the sovereign freedom as well as the infinite riches of the divine disposition which is represented at this point, not as preceding, but as coinciding, with the culmination: *avpoka, luyij*. The emphasis falls on the sovereignty of the divine grace manifested to Paul.

Eadie²²⁸ quotes Jerome, Grotius, Semler, Rückert, Wieseler, and Hofmann, who advocate that Paul means to say that God destined him from his birth to his vocation, no matter how wayward and unlikely the career of his youth had been. However, Ridderbos says Paul stresses the fact that God had much earlier appointed him for apostleship. Therefore, whatever impediments he had himself interposed, these could not nullify God’s plan for him. In this context, Paul is talking about the counsel of God *kai. kale, saj dia. th/j*

²²⁶ J. B. Lightfoot. 1876. *St. Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians*. London :Macmillan, p. 71

²²⁷ William Neil. 1967. *The Letter of Paul to the Galatians Commentary*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 26.

²²⁸ John Eadie. 1979. *A commentary on the Greek text of the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, pp. 42 & 43.

ca, ritoj auvtou/ which governs all things, most especially his work of redemption and the preparation and training of His agents as Jeremiah rightly puts it: $\text{~}^{\wedge}\text{yTi}(t;n> \sim\text{yI}\beta\text{AGI}; \text{aybi}\hat{\text{i}}\text{n}'' \text{~}^{\wedge}\text{yTi_v.D}; \text{q.hi} \sim\text{x,r}, \text{Pme ace}\hat{\text{f}}\text{Te} \sim\text{r,j}, ^2\text{b.W} \text{~}^{\wedge}\text{yTi}\hat{\text{e}}[\text{.d}; \text{y}>; \text{'!j,B,'b} \hat{\text{I}}^{\wedge}\text{Ür}>\text{C'a,}\hat{\text{D}} \text{~}^{\wedge}\text{r}>\text{ACa,}\hat{\text{A}}. \sim\text{r,j}, \text{'B}$ “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.” (Jer 1:5). The fact that Paul is obviously alluding to it shows how greatly he was convinced by God of his special election and appointment. The calling of which he speaks afterward is not identical with his separation, but refers to his Damascus road experience. The grace of God, through which this calling took place, was not only its motive but also its means. This grace it was that operated in Paul’s calling and made him willing and fit to carry it out.²²⁹ The words ἐκ γενετῆς do not mean from eternity, though, indeed, every act of God is but the realisation of an eternal purpose; nor do they mean, before he was born. To support this sense, reference is made to Jeremiah 1:5; but there the language is different, $\text{pro. tou/ me pla, sai se evn koili, a|}$.

L. Cerfaux says it is interesting that when Paul writes of his conversion and call to apostleship, he uses biblical allusions. He speaks of himself as ἀφορίζειν “set apart” (Gal 1:15); this verb is used in LXX to describe the setting apart of something as holy to the Lord (Exod 13:12a; 19:23; 29:26; and Lev 20:25-26). Paul evidently sees his calling as a type of consecration. He also describes himself as set apart ἐκ κοιλίας “from my mother’s womb” (Gal 1:15). The same phrase occurs in LXX Isa 49:1, in which the Servant describes himself as called to his salvation-historical role from before his birth: ἐκ κοιλίας μητρός μου ἐκάλεσεν το ὄνομα μου “from my mother’s womb he [Yahweh] called my name”. It is clear that Paul understands his own calling to apostleship to be parallel to the calling of the Servant; Paul sees his salvation-historical role as being Servant-like.²³⁰ In addition, Jeremiah’s call to being a prophet is described as having occurred before his birth (Jer 1:5): “Before I formed you in the womb (LXX ἐν κοιλίᾳ) I knew you; before you came forth from your mother (LXX ἐκ μήτρας) I consecrated you: I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.” Paul, no doubt, is implicitly comparing his call to being an apostle to Jeremiah’s call.²³¹

²²⁹ Herman N. Ridderbos. 1953. *The Epistle of Paul to the churches of Galatia: the English Text with introduction, exposition and notes*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., pp. 62-63.

²³⁰ L. Cerfaux. 1962. *Le chrétien dans la théologie paulinienne*. LD 33. Paris: Cerf, pp. 72-81.

²³¹ Possibly, another allusion to the prophet Jeremiah occurs in 1 Cor 9:16-17 = Jer 20:9.

Furthermore, it is observed in the statement *kai. kale,saj dia. th/j ca,ritoj autou/* “and had called me through his grace” that Paul brings out another essential link, that of vocative, as a second step in his progress. The participles are closely connected, no article being before the second one; the designation showed itself in the *κλήσις*. The *διὰ* is instrumental—by means of His grace (1Cor 15:10); and the call came to him near Damascus. This is the plain historical sense and allusion. The apostle refers to the period of his conversion, and to its medium, as not of merit but of grace.

Henry Alford argues that:

It was God’s act, determined at his very birth (compare especially Acts xiii.2), and effected by a special calling: viz., that on the road to Damascus, carried out by the instrumentality of Ananias. To understand *καλέσας* of an act in the divine Mind, as, is contrary to our Apostle’s usage of the word, compare ver. 6; Rom.viii.30al. This calling first took place, then the revelation, as here.²³²

The profound cause of the change which then followed Paul’s Damascus Road experience must be sought in the divine *εὐδοκία* “good pleasure”. Out of this wholly gracious goodwill, God had chosen Paul; He had set him apart from before his birth. This election resulted in a call. The one whom God had chosen was called by his grace.²³³ A. M Denis²³⁴ claims that the call was presented to Paul in the form of a manifestation of God’s Son, as a “revelation” which, to a certain degree, anticipated the glorious manifestation of the end-time. For Paul, the revelation of the glory of God’s Son was a call from God, a summons. It was granted to him with a view to a mission: “that I might proclaim Him among the Gentiles.” Although, the text does not specify the thought, we may believe that insofar as he became the apostle of the Gentiles, Paul found himself inevitably in conflict with the Jewish tradition which, up to then, had been so precious to him.

In sum, all of the descriptions of God’s actions in Gal 1:15 explicitly or implicitly refer to the fact that Paul now has a task. Paul’s assertion that he had been set apart before birth echoes the calls of Isaiah 49:1 and Jeremiah 1:5. Like the prophets, his vocation had been determined even before his birth. Paul also refers to God as the one who called him through grace. While Paul understands that all of God’s action for human salvation occurs by

²³² Henry Alford. 1976. *Alford’s Greek Testament: an exegetical and critical commentary*. vol.3. Grand Rapids: Guardian Press, 8.

²³³ Paul was a recipient of “mercy”: 1Cor 7:25; 2Cor 4:1.

²³⁴ A. M. Denis. 1957. “L’investiture de la fonction apostolique par ‘apocalypse’”. *Etude thématique de Gal 1:16.* *Revue biblique* 64: 335-62 and 492-515.

means of grace, for example, Rom 3:24,4:16, 5:2, and 5:15. Paul often associates grace with his own apostolic mission (1Cor 3:10, 15:10, and Gal 2:9).

4.3. God's revelation of His Son in Paul (Gal 1:16a)

Examining the statement $\alpha\nu\kappa\alpha\lambda\upsilon,\gamma\alpha\iota\ \tau\omicron.\nu\ \upsilon\iota\`{\omicron}.\nu\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon/\ \epsilon\nu\ \epsilon\upsilon\mu\omicron\iota.$ “was pleased to reveal his Son to me” (Gal 1:16a), Calvin, Rosenmuller, Koppe, and Flatt observe that the infinitive is not connected with one or both of the participles, but with $\epsilon\upsilon\upsilon\delta\omicron,\ \kappa\eta\sigma\epsilon\upsilon\omicron,$ and its aorist form denotes the past and completed act. The phrase $\epsilon\nu\ \epsilon\upsilon\mu\omicron\iota.$ “in me”—in my soul, in my inner self—cannot mean “to me”; nor is it to be taken for the simple dative, for what then should be the force of the preposition? In Matt 11:27; 1Cor 2:10; Eph 3:5, and Phil 3:16, the simple dative following the verb has a different meaning. Also, the phrase $\epsilon\nu\ \epsilon\upsilon\mu\omicron\iota.$ does not mean to say that the revelation consisted solely of an internal experience, but it had an external objective side. However, the problem is whether the phrase $\epsilon\nu\ \epsilon\upsilon\mu\omicron\iota.$ “in me” stresses especially the internal knowledge and change, consequent upon the revelation in Paul, or whether it could be regarded as supplanting the single dative. Nevertheless, too much emphasis ought not to be placed on the internal character of the revelation, and *to me*, or simply *me*, is preferable to *in me* as a translation.²³⁵ Jerome, Pelagius, Grotius, Estius, Lightfoot, and Bagge assert that, the phrase cannot mean “through me”. Also, P. Lombard says the phrase cannot mean “on me”. Lightfoot’s objection to the natural meaning is only a hasty anticipation of the following clause, which tells the purpose of the revelation.²³⁶

Bornkamm contends that the phrase $\epsilon\nu\ \epsilon\upsilon\mu\omicron\iota.$ should not, however, be taken to suggest a merely inward revelation without a corresponding external object, for there is little doubt that the preceding phrase $\alpha\nu\kappa\alpha\lambda\upsilon,\gamma\alpha\iota\ \tau\omicron.\nu\ \upsilon\iota\`{\omicron}.\nu\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon/$ refers to Paul’s vision of the risen Christ (also attested to in 1Cor 9:1 and 15:8) on the road to Damascus. The phrase $\epsilon\nu\ \epsilon\upsilon\mu\omicron\iota.$ underscores the idea of inwardness already implied by the verb $\alpha\pi\omicron\kappa\alpha\lambda\upsilon\pi\tau\omega,$ which connotes a disclosure involving perception and understanding on the part of the recipient.²³⁷ It is likely that Paul’s inward, spiritual apprehension of the Christ who was revealed to him came about during the three sightless days following his encounter with the risen Christ (compare Acts 9:9, 18f.); the inward

²³⁵ The usage occurs more frequently in verbs of knowing, and making known; the $\epsilon\nu\ \nu$ then designates not only the person through whom the communication comes, but also the one who receives it.

²³⁶ John Eadie. 1979. *A commentary on the Greek text of the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, pp. 43 & 44.

²³⁷ Günther Bornkamm. 1995. *Paul*. Translated into English in 1971 by D. M. G. Stalker. Minneapolis: Fortress press, p. 21.

illumination and the physical vision were part of God's revelation to him. W. Michaelis²³⁸ says that vision and revelation are thus closely linked together. This is also indicated in 1Cor 15:8, where the word used for Christ's appearance to the apostle carries beyond the idea of vision the force of revelation. In 1Cor 9:1, the objectivity of the vision is presented as guaranteeing the authenticity and hence the validity of Paul's vocation.

Ronald Y. K. Funk²³⁹ points out that the expression *to.n ui`o.n auvtou/* is most likely not used simply as a recognised title for the Messiah: Paul's consistent use of it elsewhere to refer to Christ's divine sonship in the unique, ontological sense (Rom 1:3ff; 1Cor 1:9, 15:20-28; Gal 4:4; and 1Thess 1:10) suggests that the term should be similarly understood here. Paul is claiming, then, that he received insight into the unique nature of Jesus' sonship (compare Acts 9:20). But his encounter with the risen Christ must also have meant that he recognised that Jesus was indeed the Messiah (compare 1Cor 15:3, 8); and since the early Christians believed that God had made Jesus Lord as well as Messiah (compare Acts 2:36), it may reasonably be assumed, that with the recognition of Jesus' messiahship, there was also the recognition of his being the Lord (compare 1Cor 9:1).

Eadie²⁴⁰ says the object of this revelation was "His Son"; not the truth about Him, or His work, or His death, or His glory, but Himself—Himself including all. His person is the sum of the gospel. This revelation may have been, in some sense, subsequent to the direct call, or it may refer also to the appearance of the Redeemer near Damascus qualifying him for the apostleship (1Cor 9:1). It gave him full and glowing views of the Redeemer's person, including His various relations to God and to man—such views as fixed the apostle's faith upon Him, centred his love in Him, and enabled him to hold Him out in his preaching the one living and glorified Saviour. It was by no process of reasoning that he came to such conclusions, by no elaborate and sustained series of demonstrations that he wrought out his Christology. God revealed His Son in him, divine light was flashed in upon him, so that he saw what he had not seen before, fully, suddenly, and by a higher-than-intuitive suggestion. He had not been taught, and he did not need to be taught, by any of the apostles.

The statement *avpokalu,yai to.n ui`o.n auvtou/ evn evmoi* "was pleased to reveal his Son to me" suggests that this inner revelation meant translation of the historical Christ into the present Christ; of the Christ according to the flesh into the Christ of

²³⁸ W. Michaelis. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* V: 358 (s. v. ὁπάω).

²³⁹ Ronald Y. K. Funk. 1988. *The Epistles to the Galatians*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, pp. 64-65.

²⁴⁰ John Eadie. 1979. *A commentary on the Greek text of the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, p. 44.

spiritual consciousness. This translation denotes in one hand, the extracting of a thought from the visible or representative envelope, and in the other hand, the recasting of this thought into another form of our own intelligent selection.²⁴¹ By this process, faithfully carried out, we make the thought our own. We bring it out of its mere external relation to the mind as an object, and make it a part of our mind as subject. It is no longer something that we contemplate merely with the mind's eye, and which passes from memory when our attention is withdrawn, but it is now bound up with our mind, and must remain part of our conscious being. No wonder Paul was not required to grope his way through preconceptions and prejudices to a slowly maturing revelation, but learned with all the suddenness of a surprising and blinding vision what his fellow apostles had learned with dull, reluctant, and hesitating receptivity. The divinity of the Lord came upon him almost as the dawning of a glorious summer morning after the deep darkness of the night, and he was able to grasp moreover the larger, deeper meaning of the Saviour's death and resurrection with a quickness and breadth of apprehension which had not been given to the rest. Furthermore, it is probable that Paul actually identified himself with Christ. The reason is that there may be no strain of language to say that in the consciousness of Paul, Christ was inseparable from himself. He could not abstract the ego, as metaphysicians would say, from a non-ego. He could not think of himself without thinking of Christ: *Cristw/| sunestau, rwmαι* "I have been crucified with Christ" (Gal 2:20).

In conclusion, it is observed that *avpokalu, yai to.n ui`o.n auvtou/* given to Paul in his Damascus experience of the Christophany meant his realisation that the crucified and risen Jesus was indeed the Messiah, Lord, and, in the unique sense of the term, Son of God. The last term *ἐν ἐμοί*, for Paul, does not imply the uniqueness of Jesus. But in Gal 1:16a it can connote all that was revealed to Paul at his call to be an apostle to the nations.

4.4. Paul an apostle to the Gentiles (Gal 1:16b)

In his exposition of the statement *i[na euvaggeli, zwmai auvtο. n evn toi/j e;qnesin* "that I might preach him among the Gentiles", Eadie²⁴² points out that the Son of God was the living theme of his preaching, and the good news about Him was what is stated in the fourth verse—that *tou/ do, ntoj e`auto.n u`pe.r tw/n*

²⁴¹ James Hastings. Ed. 1973. *The great texts of the Bible: II Corinthians and Galatians*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, pp. 341-342.

²⁴² John Eadie. 1979. *A commentary on the Greek text of the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, pp. 44-46.

a`martiw/n h`mw/n “who gave himself for our sins”—the theme which the apostle elsewhere characterises thus, h`mei/j de. khru,ssomen Cristo.n evstaurwme,non “but we preach Christ crucified” (1Cor 1:23). The enlightenment of the apostle was not for his own individual luxury; it was to fit him to make known what had been so conveyed to him (Acts 12:15, 21 and 26:17-19). The i[na points out the purpose, and the present tense of the verb describes the work of evangelisation as no passing or isolated act, but an enduring function. And the sphere of his labour is distinctly avowed—“among the heathen” (Rom 1:5, 13, 11:13, 15:16; Eph 3:8; and 1Tim 2:7). The verb εὐαγγελίζω has already been used with the simple dative, verse 8, and with the accusative, Gal 1:9. It is followed by evn —among the heathen peoples or all other races beyond the chosen seed. He forgot not his own people—they were ever dear to him; but his characteristic work—to which he had been set apart, called, qualified—was to be the apostle of the Gentiles; and this, so specially his own office, he magnified.

Martin Luther submits that:

Paul summarises his whole theology in a few words, as he often does: i[na euvaggeli,zwmai auvto.n evn toi/j e;qnesin “to preach Christ among the Gentiles”. It is as though he were saying: “I refuse to burden the Gentiles with the Law, because I am the apostle and evangelist of the Gentiles, not their lawgiver”. Thus he aims all his words against the false apostles. It is as though he were saying: “You Galatians, you have not heard me teach the righteousness of the Law or of works; for this belongs to Moses, not to me, Paul, who am the apostle to the Gentiles. It is my office and ministry to bring you the gospel and to show you the same revelation that I myself have had. Therefore you should not listen to any teacher who teaches the Law. For among the Gentiles not the Law but the Gospel should be preached, not Moses but the Son of God, not the righteousness of works but the righteousness of faith. This is the proclamation that is proper for the Gentiles.”²⁴³

Bornkamm claims that “the principal factor in the subjectivist misconception just noticed, which affects the whole picture of Paul, is the meaning generally attached to the word “reveal” in Gal 1:15-16. It is taken as vision and experience, and connected with the vision of the risen Christ which Paul most certainly had on the way to Damascus (1Cor 15:8, and 9:1). That this was the occasion of the apostle’s conversion and call is not in dispute.”²⁴⁴

²⁴³ Jaroslav Pelikan. Ed. 1963. *Luther’s Works*. vol. 26. Lectures on Galatians 1535. Chapters 1-4. Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, pp. 73 &74.

²⁴⁴ Günther Bornkamm. 1995. *Paul*. Translated into English in 1971 by D. M. G. Stalker. Minneapolis: Fortress press, p. 21.

Revelation, according to Eadie²⁴⁵ is opposed to knowledge gained by prolonged and patient thought. It is unlike the common process by which an intellectual conclusion is reached, the inference of one syllogism forming but the premise of another, till by a series of connected links, primary or abstract truth is reached. It is sudden and perfect illumination, which lifts the receptive power into intense susceptibility, and lights up the disclosed theme. It is immediately and fully apprehended in its evidence and reality. We do not know what the process is, what the waking up of the higher intuition is, or what the ecstasy which throws into momentary abeyance all the lower faculties is. It may resemble that new sphere of vision in which genius enjoys gleams of unutterable beauty, or that “demonstration of the Spirit” which gives the truth new aspects of richness and grandeur to the sanctified soul in some mood of rapt mediation. But still, it is different and higher far both in matter and purpose. It was God’s revelation of His Son—not glimpses of the truth about Him, but Himself; not merely summoning his attention to His paramount claims, so as to elicit an acknowledgement of them,—not simply presenting Him to his intellectual perception to be studied and comprehended—nor even shrining an image of Him in his heart to be loved and cherished—but His Son unveiled in living reality. In him—in his inner self, not in any distinct and separate realm of his being—with the conscious possession of all this infallible and communicable knowledge which was given perhaps first in clear and vivid outline—παρέλαβον—and then filled in surely and gradually—ἐδιδάχθην.

In sum, the statement *i[na euvaggeli,zwmai auvto.n evn toi/j e;qnesin* “that I might preach him among the Gentiles” connotes God’s purpose in revealing his Son to Paul; and he must proclaim this revelation of the Risen Christ to all who were in Gentile lands²⁴⁶—a thought already implied by analogy with the Old Testament figures mentioned earlier (Jeremiah, the Servant of Yahweh). Paul tells here not the story of his conversion, but of his calling. In carrying out this mission, he immediately²⁴⁷ adopted the policy not to turn to²⁴⁸ men²⁴⁹ for counsel; so he could remain independent of them. This

²⁴⁵ John Eadie. 1979. *A commentary on the Greek text of the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, pp. 45-46.

²⁴⁶ The apparent contradiction between God sending Paul (here) and the risen Christ sending him (Acts 26:17) is resolved by the considerations that “it is characteristic of his theology to assign identical functions or attributes to God and to Christ,” and that “it would be entirely congruous with his general position that he should speak of the whole experience as due to the initiative of God”.

²⁴⁷ *euvqe,wj ouv* is stronger than *ouvq euvqe,wj*. It means to say Paul at once, right from the beginning, was aware of his independence, and that he acted accordingly. This is to say more than that he did not immediately turn to others.

²⁴⁸ *prosanati,qesqai tini,:* to take counsel with someone, to turn to someone in order to learn his attitude.

confirms the thought (compare Gal 1:1 &12) that the gospel was revealed to Paul at the same time as, and as an inalienable component of, his call to apostleship. By themselves, Gal 1:15-16a might be taken to reflect only Paul's thinking at the time of writing; but read (as they must be read) in connection with Gal 1:16b-17, they confirm that, for Paul, conversion and call to the apostolate coincide in time, and that both were rooted in his experience of the Christophany on the Damascus road.

4.5. Areas of differences between Acts and Galatians

Wilckens argues that it is remarkable that, in Galatians, Paul does not narrate his vocation at all like he does in Acts 22 and 26. Although the event was the turning point of his life, he mentions it only in very few passages, and even in these he does so "in all brevity—and in passing."²⁵⁰ Wikenhauser²⁵¹, however, contends that this is due to the quite different types of writing involved; in Acts the incident has to be narrated, while in a letter Paul needs only to allude to what he has already told his addressees. But does this explain Paul's terseness on the subject of his vocational vision? Specifically in the case of the Galatians, among whom his apostolic status was called into doubt, it would have been more sensible to speak at length about what his call entailed. Paul, in fact, mentions that incident only in a subordinate clause (Gal 1:15). This scarcity of information seems to derive from Paul's personal, deep reserve. For instance, in 2Cor 12:1-4 Paul expresses himself concerning his "visions and revelations." He mentions the subject only in self-defence; and he changes into the third person ("I know of a man ..."); then he abruptly breaks off in 2Cor 12:5. It would seem that he found it unpleasant to speak of such things. This leads us to the question of whether Paul ever told anyone of his call in the way he is said to in Acts 22 and 26. He certainly often emphatically stressed that "I have seen the Lord", and that not only in 1Cor 9:1.²⁵²

²⁴⁹ Literally *flesh and blood* (compare Eph 6:12 and Matt 16:17). It means the human, the creaturely, in itself, in its frailty (compare Acts 2:17—where, however, *flesh* stand alone); it corresponds to rabbinical *basjar wedam*. See Herman N. Ridderbos. 1953. *The Epistle of Paul to the churches of Galatia: the English Text with introduction, exposition and notes*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., pp. 64-65.

²⁵⁰ U. Wilckens. 1959. Die Bekehrung des Paulus als religionsgeschichtliches Problem. *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 56: 273.

²⁵¹ A. Wikenhauser. 1961. Die Apostelgeschichte. *RNT* 5: 179-181.

²⁵² Gerhard Lohfink. 1976. *The conversion of St. Paul: narrative and history in Acts*. Translated and edited by Bruce J. Malina. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, p. 24.

Loisy²⁵³ states that Paul's statement "I have seen the Lord" points to another discrepancy. As unequivocal as this Pauline statement sounds, according to Acts, it would seem that Paul never saw the Lord at all. Acts states that Paul was flooded by a heavenly light. From this, one gets the impression that he, like Moses before the burning bush, saw only a vision of light, and not the shape or form of Christ. But is this impression correct? The text states that Paul's companions saw "no one". This seemingly implies that Paul surely saw "some one." Besides, Ananias says: "The God of our fathers appointed you ... *to see the Just One* and to hear a voice from his mouth" (Acts 22:24). And similar statements are to be found in Acts 9:17, 27 and 26:16. However, some exegetes, like Bisping²⁵⁴, Wilkenhauser²⁵⁵ and Wendt²⁵⁶, are divided on the interpretation of this matter in Acts.

The fundamental question is: what does Luke really intend to say? That Paul saw the Lord himself is rather obvious for Luke. Even a statement like Acts 24:14 shows this. But at the same time, he clearly avoids stating something like this directly in his report of the vision. For example, Luke reports Paul saying before Agrippa and Festus: "... I saw on the way a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining round me and those who journeyed with me" (Acts 26:13). But Paul does not continue—and this is the point: "... and in this light *I saw someone* who said to me ..." Rather, Paul states that he heard a voice speaking. The indirectness of this report is clear. Luke, therefore, leaves the question as to *how* Paul actually saw Christ quite consciously undecided. And if he does intend to leave his description open-ended and blurry, we certainly ought not to attempt to do anything with this blurriness.²⁵⁷

Bauernfeind²⁵⁸ explains why Luke describes Paul's vision the way he does by looking at the way he describes the Easter appearances of Christ in chapter 24 of his gospel and in chapter 1 of Acts. In the context of the Easter appearances, it is simply unthinkable for him to say of the apostles: "They saw a light and heard a voice." There is no mention at all of a light emanating from or shining about the figure of Christ. Rather, the apostles responded quite directly to the risen Jesus. They even ate and drank with him.²⁵⁹ The apparition character of

²⁵³ A. Loisy. 1920. *Les Actes des des Apôtres*. Paris: J. Gabalda et Cie, p. 394. Loisy opines that the light is all that Paul saw. It is the word of Christ that Saul comes to understand, which reveals to him that Jesus is in that light.

²⁵⁴ A. Bisping. 1866. *Erklärung der Apostelgeschichte*. Münster, p. 158.

²⁵⁵ A. Wilkenhauser. 1961. *Die Apostelgeschichte*. RNT 5: 108.

²⁵⁶ H. H. Wendt. 1913. *Die Apostelgeschichte*. Meyer 3. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, p. 163.

²⁵⁷ That Luke purposely leaves certain questions unresolved and hanging in the air is also to be observed elsewhere in Acts. For example in Acts 1:6, he does not specify which group of persons was present at the Ascension.

²⁵⁸ O. Bauernfeind. 1939. *Die Apostelgeschichte*. THKNT 5: 12.

²⁵⁹ Luke 24: 30, 41-42; Acts 1:4, 10:41.

these encounters is intimated only through Christ's manner of coming and vanishing.²⁶⁰ G. Lohfink points out that the description of the risen Jesus here, which so sharply contrasts with that of the Damascus incident, corresponds well with the fact that, according to Luke, the Resurrection appearances last only 40 days and come to a close with the Ascension of Christ. In this perspective, the Ascension forms a solid line of demarcation in Luke's two-volume work.²⁶¹ And the conclusion is obvious: *for Luke the appearance of Christ outside Damascus simply does not belong to the Easter appearances of Jesus.* By leaving what Paul actually saw undecided—was it only a shining light or a figure in this light—Luke reveals one of his methods of contrasting the vision outside Damascus with the Easter appearances of the 40 day period.²⁶² It is observed that these anticipated considerations are necessary to highlight an even more striking difference between Luke and Paul. What proves right for Paul is the opposite of what Luke intimates. For Paul, the Damascus vision does, in fact, belong to the series of Easter appearances of Jesus. This follows clearly from the important text, 1Cor 15:3-9: “For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.”

H. Lietzmann²⁶³ says Paul gives the Corinthians the testimony which serves as proof for the Resurrection of Christ. And he follows the fixed tradition of the primitive Church, at least in the statements beginning with “that.” Now it is important that he lists himself among the witnesses to the resurrection. In this, he presupposes that the appearance accorded him is quite similar to those he has enumerated earlier. The only point of difference he sees in it all is that he was unworthy of his call.

Moreover, Gerhard Lohfink²⁶⁴ observes that, although Paul does not deny his connections to the traditions of the primitive Church²⁶⁵, he is convinced that he received his

²⁶⁰ Luke 24:31, 36, 51; Acts 1:9.

²⁶¹ G. Lohfink. 1965. Eine alttestamentliche Darstellungsform für Gotteserscheinungen in den Damaskusberichten (Apg 9; 22; 26). *BZ* 9: 43-48.

²⁶² In the Christophany experienced by Stephen (Acts 7:55-56), the “opened heavens” indicates that the structure of this appearance is different from the Easter appearances.

²⁶³ H. Lietzmann. 1949. *An die Korinther I, II.* HNT. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, p. 78.

²⁶⁴ Gerhard Lohfink. 1976. *The conversion of St. Paul: narrative and history in Acts.* Translated and edited by Bruce J. Malina. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, pp. 29 & 30.

²⁶⁵ Cf. e.g., 1Cor 15:3f. and Gal 2:2.

call and his gospel directly from God: “Paul, an apostle—not from men nor through man—but through Jesus Christ and God the Father.” The letter to the Galatians begins this way Gal 1:11 and 12 say: “For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not man’s gospel. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ.”

Does this passage indicate a final difference between Luke and Paul on the nature of an apostle? At least, according to Acts 9 and 22, Paul at first received no revelation which told him what to do. He finally learnt what God had planned for him only through Ananias. H. Conzelmann interprets the data of Acts thus: “Differently than in Gal 1:12f., Paul does not learn the gospel in the vision itself; he is referred to the Church as mediatrix of doctrine.” G. Klein states this view even more pungently: in Acts, the conversion and call of Paul are not identical. As a representative of the Church, Ananias played the decisive role for Paul. In this way, he received his legitimacy only by his being inserted into the tradition of the Church. He was deprived of any basis enabling him to understand his call and office as coming directly from God.

In conclusion, by comparison with the familiar narratives of Acts, the description of Paul’s conversion and call in Galatians is meagre indeed. We find no trip to Damascus as part of an official inquisition, although Damascus is once connected with the conversion (Gal 1:17; compare 2Cor 11:32). We have here no narration of a miraculous event, no light, no voices, no companions, and no blindness. In short, we cannot write about the conversion as the first chapter in a biography of Paul the Christian.

All the aforementioned differences between Acts and Galatians naturally lead to the question whether the author of Acts was really a fellow worker and sometime companion of Paul. From all that has been said, it is evident that it is impossible to presuppose that Luke had been directly informed about the Damascus vision by Paul himself.

4.6. Towards a solution

The report in Acts is not an exact verbal representation of what really happened, yet it certainly is not pure fiction either. Rather it is a report of a well-attested historical tradition (compare Galatians) as well as Luke’s interpretation and explanation of this historical tradition presented in conventionally accepted literary forms and literary techniques.²⁶⁶

A close analysis of Galatians 1 made Gaventa to state that:

²⁶⁶ Gerhard Lohfink. 1976. *The conversion of St. Paul: narrative and history in Acts*. Translated and edited by Bruce J. Malina. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, p. 101.

At least the following observations regarding Paul's "conversion" can be carried into the remainder of the chapter: (1) Paul gives no indication of remorse or guilt concerning his past; (2) he characterizes the "revelation of Jesus Christ" as a radical disruption of his previous life; his previous cosmos has been crucified (compare Gal 6:14); (3) the gospel of Jesus Christ is directly connected with Paul's mission among the Gentiles; (4) there is in v. 17 some vague and unspecific connection between the revelation and the area around Damascus.²⁶⁷

However, the fact that Paul himself tells us very little about the circumstances of the conversion should not prevent us from understanding the significance of the comments that are given. In the first place, Paul consistently leaves the impression that this change was sudden and unexpected, although he never says so explicitly or directly. This impression is strongest in Gal 1:11-17, where Paul shifts abruptly from a description of his earlier life (Gal 1:15-17). There is no explanation of Paul's thinking, no description of an event. Instead, we find a sharp contrast between past and present. The same is true of Philippians 3, where Paul describes himself as having been seized by Christ (v. 12) and, to a lesser extent, of 1Cor 15:8-11. If Paul was aware of a prolonged period of searching and questioning, he gives the reader no indication of this struggle.

Bornkamm²⁶⁸ observes that common to both Acts and Galatians are God's overcoming of the man whose impassioned zeal for the Jewish faith made him a persecutor of Christ and his church. Therefore, it was not the conversion of a penitent sinner. Both sources agree that, with sovereign authority, the exalted Lord made the persecutor into his witness. At the same time, there are not a few differences between Acts and Galatians. Significantly, Luke's accounts are silent on Paul's call to be an apostle, ranged in equal status with the Twelve. Instead, blinded by Christ's appearance to him, and then in Damascus miraculously healed by the orthodox disciple Ananias, who also baptized him (Acts 9:18, 22:12ff.), Paul comes back to Jerusalem. Only then, in the temple and by means of a fresh vision, is he given his vocation: Christ sends him away from the obstinate Jews to the Gentiles (Acts 22:17-21). Thus, Acts makes his missionary work in the Gentile world originate in Jerusalem (Acts 9:23ff), in contradiction to Galatians 1. It also says that directly after Paul's conversion, Barnabas introduced him to the Jerusalem church and the Twelve. From this time on, he carries out his great work, not as an apostle, but as the authorised representative of the one

²⁶⁷ B. R. Gaventa. 1986. *From darkness to light: aspects of conversion in the New Testament*. Philadelphia: Fortress, p. 28.

²⁶⁸ Günther Bornkamm. 1995. *Paul*. Translated into English in 1971 by D. M. G. Stalker. Minneapolis: Fortress press, pp. 24-25.

apostolic church. In what he says, Luke, most certainly, did not just give free play to fancy, but worked up traditions that had come to him orally, even if in the light of what Paul himself says we have to challenge their accuracy in detail. The total picture admittedly displays traits typical of Luke's understanding of history and of the church. Above all, however, Luke knows nothing of what Paul himself says was the decisive factor in his conversion—and here the theological differences are at their deepest. To the end of his life, Luke's Paul continues to be an orthodox Jew and Pharisee; for Christ's sake the real Paul gave up the Law as a means of salvation.

Paul himself has little to say about his conversion and call, and when he does mention them it is with reserve. But we can now see that this is not something to deplore. The power of the concern for the gospel which lighted upon Paul and became his own is also revealed in the way in which he speaks of his conversion. This, again, confirms that, for him, the one thing of importance was the gospel he was given, and not his own person.

The study of Paul's Damascus road experience in Galatians is noteworthy at a number of points.

- (i) Personal conversion experience enabled the ministers of God to have direct communication with God. This is true of Isaiah, *ʼynIxEl'v. ynlin>hi rm:βaow" Wnl'_%l,yE) ymiäW xl;Pv.a, ymiî-ta, rmeêao 'yn"doa] lAqÜ-ta, [m;úv.a,w* "“And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Then I said, “Here am I! Send me.””(Isaiah 6:8). Isaiah, whose anxiety to serve the Lord was no longer suppressed by the consciousness of his own sinfulness, no sooner heard *'yn"doa] lAq*, than he exclaimed, in holy self-consciousness, “Behold me here; send me.” In this theophanic statement, Isaiah was privileged to have direct communication with God about his ministry. Likewise, God never stops communicating directly with the clergy of our generation who have encountered Him.
- (ii) The grace of God lavished on the clergy with personal conversion experience makes them willing and fit to carry out God's demands to His people. It sets apart every clergy for ministry in His vineyard. In our modern days, the grace of God is still available for the clergy with personal conversion experience. It fosters the actual call of God in their lives particularly those in the pastoral ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria.

- (iii) Personal conversion experience enabled Paul to come to the surpassing knowledge of Christ, and acknowledge Him as the crucified and risen Jesus, the Messiah, Lord and the Son of God. Similarly, the clergy of our generation, especially those in the pastoral ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria can equally come to the acknowledgement of the same owing to personal conversion experience.
- (iv) As a corollary to the above, Damascus road Christophany enabled Paul to effectively witness Jesus Christ to the Gentiles. It is probable, therefore, that the bedrock of effective witnessing in Methodist Church Nigeria is personal conversion experience of the clergy in their pastoral ministry.

CHAPTER FIVE

PAUL'S CALL AND MINISTRY

5.0 Introduction

In the preceding chapter, we examined the divine origin of the gospel Paul preached and the divine source of Paul's call (Gal 1:11-12 and 15-17). Paul's discussion of the revelation he received is couched in the language of Old Testament prophetic calls (an example is Jer 1:5). Such a language emphasises Paul's role as the one called to proclaim the word of God and points to the divine origin of the word that is proclaimed. The object of this divine revelation is Jesus Christ. This was the word of God that Paul was called to proclaim among the Gentiles. Paul used his Damascus road experience to show that his gospel to the Gentiles is rooted in divine revelation and divine calling.

The differences between the accounts of Paul's Damascus road experience in Acts and Galatians are rooted in their different purposes. Essentially, the three Acts narratives

agree with one another, and with the evidence contained in Galatians. Acts and Galatians are concerned with the relationship between Jews and Gentiles and see Paul's call as apostle to the Gentiles as an important factor in that relationship. Both see Paul's Damascus road experience as a revelatory and transforming event in Paul's life. In this chapter the focus is on Paul's call and ministry in Luke's accounts and in some of Paul's letters.

5.1 Paul's call in Luke's accounts

5.1.1 Paul, a chosen instrument of God

Jaroslav Pelikan²⁶⁹ contends that Acts 9:15 serves as a dividing line between the two major sections of the Acts of the Apostles. The parting words of Christ before the ascension²⁷⁰ provided the charter to his eleven remaining disciples to look beyond the confines of the Holy City and the Holy Land towards the wider world. The choosing of Paul carried with it a "roving commission" to him towards the constituencies enumerated here.

The word σκεῦος means "a vessel, utensil for containing anything". In Acts 9:15, it is rendered σκεύη ὀργῆς "vessels of wrath or persons visited by punishment" and σκεύη ἐλέους "vessels of mercy or persons visited by divine favour". Ἐκλογῆς is the genitive singular of ἐκλογή.²⁷¹ Ἐκλογή means "a choice, selection". In the New Testament, ἐκλογή always denotes the "divine choice". Therefore, the phrase σκεῦος ἐκλογῆς generally connotes "a chosen vessel".²⁷²

Also, Löning says that the title σκεῦος ἐκλογῆς is translated "chosen vessel" in Authorised Version, "chosen instrument" in the Revised Standard Version, and "instrument whom I have chosen" in the New Revised Standard Version.²⁷³ In 2Cor 4:7, σκεῦος "vessel" seems to carry connotations of passivity, as that which receives and contains, and would suit the Paul who in a mystical rapture (and in the passive voice) "was caught up into paradise... and ... heard things that cannot be told, which may not utter" (2Cor 12:4). The translation of σκεῦος "instrument" connotes activity, "not only being faithful but being a teacher"—which fits the Paul of Acts.²⁷⁴ On the word σκεῦος, Calvin aptly comments that: "The word 'instrument' doth show that men can do nothing, save inasmuch as God useth their industry at

²⁶⁹ Jaroslav Pelikan. 2005. *Acts*. Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, pp. 124-125.

²⁷⁰ "You shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8)

²⁷¹ *The Analytical Greek lexicon: consisting of an alphabetical arrangement of every occurring inflexion of every word contained in the Greek New Testament Scriptures, with a grammatical analysis of each word, and lexicographical illustration of the meanings: a complete series of paradigms, with grammatical remarks and explanations*. London: Samuel Bagster & Sons Ltd., 1967, p. 368.

²⁷² Abbott-Smith G. 1986. *A manual Greek lexicon of the New Testament*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark Ltd., p. 140.

²⁷³ Karl Löning. 1973. *Die Saulustradition in der Apostelgeschichte*. Münster: Aschendorff, pp. 32-43.

²⁷⁴ Theophylact. *Exposition of the Acts of the Apostles* 9.16:125-644.

his pleasure. For if we be instruments, he alone is the author; the force and power to do is in his power alone.”²⁷⁵

Adam Clarke contends that:

σκεῦος ἐκλογῆς is properly a Hebraism, for an excellent or well-adapted instrument. Every reader of the Bible must have noticed how often the word chosen is used there to signify excelling or eminent: so we use the word choice, “choice men,” eminent persons; “choice things,” excellent articles. So in Jer 22:7: They shall cut down the choice cedars,... They shall cut the most EXCELLENT of thy cedars; or thy cedar trees, which are the most excellent of their kind, they will cut down. Whoever considers the character of St. Paul, his education, attainments in natural knowledge, the distinguished part he took—first against Christianity, and afterwards, on the fullest conviction, the part he took in its favour—will at once perceive how well he was every way qualified for the great work to which God had called him.²⁷⁶

The term σκεῦος ἐκλογῆς then denotes any instrument which may be used to accomplish a purpose, perhaps particularly with the notion of conveying or communicating. In the Scriptures, it is used to denote the instrument or agent which God employs to convey his favours to mankind; and is thus employed to represent the ministers of the Gospel, or the body of the minister (2Cor 4:7; 1Th 4:4; cf. Isa 13:5). Paul is called “chosen” because Christ selected him, as he did his other apostles, for this service.

For Luke Timothy Johnson²⁷⁷, the term σκεῦος can mean any sort of instrument (1Thess 4:4; Heb 9:21), and sometimes is used in contexts of divine instrumentality²⁷⁸. But in this case, the translation “vessel” is appropriate because it “carries/bears” the Lord’s name. The image is remarkably like that used by Paul himself in 2Cor 4:7. This designation of Paul as “chosen,” in turn, associates him with the description of Jesus as the “elect one” (Luke 9:35; 23:35). In this sense, σκεῦος ἐκλογῆς literally means “a vessel of election”.

Similarly, John Gill says that Paul was a choice and excellent one, full of the heavenly treasure of the Gospel, full of the gifts and graces of the Spirit. He was fit and qualified for the use and service of Christ. He was “a vessel of desire” or “a desirable one”, according to the Jews. In other words, he was, to render the words σκεῦος ἐκλογῆς literally, “a vessel of election”; both an instrument gathering in the election, or the elect of God, through the

²⁷⁵ John Calvin. 1949. *Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*. 2 vols. Henry Beveridge. Trans. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1: 380.

²⁷⁶ Adam Clarke. *Adam Clarke’s Bible Commentary on Acts*.

²⁷⁷ Luke Timothy Johnson. 1992. *The Acts of the Apostles*. Sacra Pagina Series. vol.5. Collegeville: Minnesota, The Liturgical Press, p. 165.

²⁷⁸ LXX Jer 27:25; Rom 9:21-23; and 2Tim 2:20-21.

preaching of the Gospel. Paul was himself chosen of God, both to grace and glory, a vessel of mercy, and of honour prepared for glory. He was separated, predestined and appointed to the Gospel of God, to preach it among the Gentiles.²⁷⁹

Marshall Howard²⁸⁰ avers that the Lord has already decided to call Paul to his service. He has chosen him as his σκεῦος for the task of bearing his name before Gentiles, kings and the people of Israel. In this context, the thought of divine choice corresponds with that expressed in Acts 22:14²⁸¹, Acts 26:16²⁸², and with Paul's own conviction in Gal 1:15. Furthermore, John Hargreaves²⁸³ contends that Paul was chosen as σκεῦος of God to discover God's will, to treat Jesus (the Just One) as God's voice, and to listen to that voice rather than the voice of the world around.

Kruse²⁸⁴ notes that in the context of Galatians 1:15, the words σκεῦος ἐκλογῆς reveal that:

- (a) Paul had been chosen by God for this task even before he was born (as had been some of the prophets of the Old Testament (Is 49:1, 5 and Jer 1:5),
- (b) Paul's own realisation of this calling came to him by a revelation from God at a time determined by God himself,
- (c) it had nothing to do with anything deserving on Paul's part; it came through God's grace,
- (d) it involved a revelation by God of his Son Jesus Christ to Paul so that he might preach Christ to others,
- (e) the preaching ministry to which Paul was called had a specific scope: to the Gentiles, and
- (f) it came directly from God, without human mediation.

In sum, the words σκεῦος ἐκλογῆς well describe Paul's own conviction that God had chosen him for special work (Gal1:15); that God intended him to go to the Gentiles and to the Jews (Eph 3:1). It is probable that Paul's pastoral ministry in Gentile and Jewish worlds resulted from his Damascus road experience.

²⁷⁹ John Gill. 2011. Acts 9:15-John Gill's exposition on the Bible New Testament.

Retrieved from www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills...of.../acts-9-15.29.03.2011.

²⁸⁰ I. Howard Marshall. 1980. *The Acts of the Apostles: an introduction and commentary*. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, pp. 171-356.

²⁸¹ God had foreordained Paul to be his servant. Paul's choice and call were prior to his response (Acts 3:20 and 26:16). That is why God had revealed *the Just One* (Messiah) to Paul.

²⁸² The reason why the Lord had appeared to Paul was in order to appoint him as a servant and witness, either to, or perhaps on the basis of, the things which Paul had already seen and would yet see.

²⁸³ John Hargreaves. 1990. *A guide to Acts*. London: SCPK, pp. 91- 215.

²⁸⁴ C. G. Kruse. 1993. Call, calling. In Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin. Eds. *Dictionary of Paul and his letters*. Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, p. 85.

5.1.2 Paul, set apart by the Holy Spirit

Barrett²⁸⁵ says that the Spirit's command leads to a special commission for Paul. He is to be set apart for a special work.²⁸⁶ It is interesting and important that Paul uses ἀφορίζειν of himself and of his call.²⁸⁷

In the Septuagint, according to Madame Cecilia,²⁸⁸ ἀφορίζειν is used of any person or thing consecrated to God. The urgency of the command is shown by the adverb δῆ, “now,” “truly,” or “indeed,” which has no counterpart in our rendering. It may be compared to the use of “donec” in French.²⁸⁹

Howard Marshall²⁹⁰ contends that the Spirit appoints leaders in the church²⁹¹ and guides the church at crucial points. However, the Spirit speaks through human agencies.²⁹² It is evident that one of the prophets in the church received the message which called on the Antioch church to put aside Paul and Barnabas for a task to which God was calling them. How the church had to be willing to give up the service of God's work elsewhere has often been noted. The nature of the task²⁹³ is not revealed at this point, possibly for literary effects, but it is clear that missionary work must have been indicated. Whether the missionaries were given directions for their route at this point or later²⁹⁴ is not stated. Luke emphasises that God inaugurated mission. On this, James Dunn²⁹⁵ says Luke asserts that the commissioning of Paul was by the hands of the church in Antioch. Just as Peter's response to heavenly vision and the Spirit's prompting was confirmed by the church in Jerusalem (Acts 11:1-18), the Spirit's commissioning of Paul was channelled through the church in Antioch (Acts 13:3). In the light of this, the clearly manifest will of the Holy Spirit is of great importance.

The laying-on of hands by the prophets and teachers of Antioch might be the sign of ad hoc commissioning of Paul. It is evident that the event denotes Paul's elevation to the

²⁸⁵ C. K. Barrett. 1994. *A critical and exegetical commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*. vol.1. London: T. & T. Clark Ltd., p. 605.

²⁸⁶ Num 16:9; 1Chr 23:13.

²⁸⁷ Rom 1:1, ἀφορισμένος εἰς εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ ; Gal 1:15, θεὸς ὁ ἀφορίσας με.

²⁸⁸ Madame Cecilia. 1925. *The Acts of the Apostles*. book 1. with introduction and annotations. New York: Benziger Brothers, pp. 255-256.

²⁸⁹ Dites-moi donc.

²⁹⁰ I. Howard Marshall. 1980. *The Acts of the Apostles: an introduction and commentary*. Leicester: InterVarsity Press, p. 216.

²⁹¹ Acts 20:28.

²⁹² Acts 4:25.

²⁹³ For this use of work to indicate evangelism and mission, Acts 14:26 and Acts 15:38.

²⁹⁴ Acts 13:4.

²⁹⁵ James D. G. Dunn. 2009. *Beginning from Jerusalem: Christianity in the making*. vol. 2. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, p. 419.

apostolate, although it has been noted often that Paul was not called apostle till after this event.²⁹⁶

George Arthur Buttrick contends that:

The laying-on of hands usually symbolises the bestowal of the Holy Spirit, which at the very beginning seems to have been connected with this rite rather than with baptism (Acts 19:5-6 and on Acts 8:17). The rite is taken over from the Old Testament, where it symbolises the establishment of some vital connection between two persons, and the transference of some power or responsibility from the one to the other. Thus Moses, when appointing Joshua his successor, laid his hands on him, by which act he “put some of his honour upon him” (Num 27:23, 20). So the apostles in Acts frequently do in healing, confirming, and ordaining.²⁹⁷

It is apparent that the laying-on of hands does not necessarily bring to Paul the bestowal of some special charisma, for his Damascus road experience means so much to him. However, the laying-on of hands is the formal sign of appointment to office, as it was in the admission of new members of the Sanhedrin. It would be dangerous, to base on Acts 13:2 a full doctrine of apostolic succession as does Rackham. Also, Buttrick says of Chrysostom that “The hand of man is laid on, but all is the work of God; and it is his hand that touches the head of the candidate, if he is rightly ordained.”²⁹⁸

Williams says, “Luke’s conception of the ceremony described here was something very much more than a service of parting benediction.” Luke and his readers may have thought of it in terms of the “ordination” service of their own day²⁹⁹, where Paul claims that he was an apostle not from men nor through man but through Jesus Christ.

Reginald White asserts that “Paul explains by recounting his Judaist upbringing and his Damascus road experience. This is where he learnt the truth, and received both commission and authority. Knowledge, facts, forms, sayings were by revelation. Paul knew what Simon Peter knew at Caesarea Philippi, after many months of watching, listening, and learning in the company of the Master-Teacher Himself: the blessedness of an immediate, self-authenticating, irrefutable, divine revelation from the Father in heaven, of the meaning behind the facts and the power within the message—and of who Jesus really was.”³⁰⁰

²⁹⁶ C. S. C. Williams. *A commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*. London: Adam & Charles Black, p. 155.

²⁹⁷ George Arthur Buttrick. Ed.1954. *The interpreter’s Bible*. vol. ix. New York: Abingdon Press, p. 90.

²⁹⁸ George Arthur Buttrick. Ed.1954. *The interpreter’s Bible*. vol. ix. New York: Abingdon Press, p. 90.

²⁹⁹ 1Tim 4:14, and contrast Gal 1:1.

³⁰⁰ Reginald E. O. White. 1962. *Apostle extraordinary: a modern portrait of St. Paul*. London: Pickering & Inglis Ltd., p. 26.

Prospero Grech³⁰¹ says, Just as Jesus had begun His preaching with the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and the church began her mission with Pentecost, so the great apostle to the Gentiles was called explicitly by the Holy Spirit from whom he received a special power, that his preaching would not be “in the plausible words of wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit and power, that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but on the power of God” (1Cor 2:4ff).

In sum, it was a momentous hour in the history of the church when the Holy Spirit, Christ’s Vicar, the Director and Administrator of the church set apart Paul for missionary work. Perhaps, that was the birth-hour of modern missions. The saying, “the office of the priesthood in all its degrees presupposes a divine call” may be true of Paul because of the laying-on of hands and the Damascus road experiences which he had.

5.1.3 Paul, a witness for God

William asserts that “As the apostolic kerygma included apparently the element of apostolic witness, Paul could claim as an apostle to witness like the other apostles to what he had heard and seen of the Lord, though probably he had not seen Him in the flesh, despite the superficial interpretation of 2Cor 5:16.”³⁰²

Paul is to bear the Gospel of Christ, which is a declaration of his person, perfections, glories, and excellencies, of his offices, grace, righteousness, and salvation. He is to preach it, to carry it about, spread abroad, and propagate it. In allusion either to the prophets of old, whose prophecies are often called a “burden”, which they bore and carried to the several nations to whom they were sent; or to the Levites bearing the tabernacle of the Lord, and its vessels, “purify yourselves, you who bear the vessels of the Lord” (Is 52:11). On this Aben Ezra says, “they are the Israelites, ‘that bear the law’”. But Saul is a chosen vessel to bear the Gospel; or to the sower of seed, (Ps 126:6) “before the Gentiles”, or nations of the world. He is an apostle, and teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity. The Gospel of the uncircumcision was particularly committed to him: and before “kings”, as he did before Agrippa, king of the Jews, and before Nero, Emperor of Rome. His bonds for the Gospel, and so the Gospel through his bonds became manifest in all the palace, or court of Caesar.³⁰³

Luke Timothy Johnson says the declaration ἔση μάρτυς αὐτῷ “you will be his witness” places Paul in succession to the other apostles who were defined primarily in terms

³⁰¹ Prospero Grech, O. S. A. 1966. *Acts of the Apostles explained: a doctrinal commentary*. New York: Alba House, June 30, p. 75.

³⁰² C. S. C. Williams. *A commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*. London: Adam & Charles Black, p. 244.

³⁰³ John Gill. 2011. Acts 9:15-John Gill’s exposition on the Bible New Testament. Retrieved from www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills...of.../acts-9-15.29.03.2011.

of this function of bearing witness to the resurrection. For Paul, the resurrection of Jesus Christ came by way of what he has “seen and heard” in this experience.³⁰⁴

In sum, it is evident that the purpose of the revelation was that Paul should become a witness, describing and proclaiming what he had “seen and heard” probably his Damascus Road experience to both Jews and Gentiles. In the light of this, Paul is seen to be on trial, not merely on a charge of defiling the temple and attacking Judaism but above all a witness to Jesus Christ.

5.2 Paul’s call in Galatians

Michael J. Gorman³⁰⁵ asserts that Paul says God graciously called him in the same way he had called the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah.³⁰⁶ By the grace of God, like Jeremiah, Paul was set apart and called from his mother’s womb. In view of the parallel with the wording of Jeremiah 1:15, it is probable that Paul was called to the prophetic office.³⁰⁷ Rengstorf says καὶ καλέσας διὰ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ refers to “Paul’s call to be an apostle, although the thought of his conversion is naturally included”.³⁰⁸

John Eadie³⁰⁹ claims that the statement καὶ καλέσας διὰ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ “and called me by His grace” brings out not only a designation, but also an essential link of vocation as a second step in Paul’s progress. The designation showed itself in the κλη̄σις and the participles are closely connected. The διὰ is instrumental—by means of His grace (1Cor 15:10); and the call came to him near Damascus. This is the plain historical sense and allusion. Paul referred

³⁰⁴ Luke Timothy Johnson. 1992. *The Acts of the Apostles*. Sacra Pagina series vol. 5. Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, p. 390.

³⁰⁵ Michael J. Gorman. 2004. *Apostle of the crucified Lord: a theological introduction to Paul and his letters*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, pp. 57-58.

³⁰⁶ Paul never claims the title ‘prophet’, though he clearly sees himself in continuity with the biblical prophets and appears to exercise the gift of prophecy (inspired speech). This is likely because he sees the title ‘prophet’ in the church as a reference to someone who speaks inspired oracles but, unlike an ‘apostle’, has not seen (or been commissioned by) the resurrected Lord as Paul, Peter, and James have (compare 1Cor 12:28 with 9:1-2 and 15:3-10). Acts, on the other hand, expresses Paul’s continuity with the biblical prophets by repeatedly showing the similarity of his function and fate to theirs.

³⁰⁷ R. A. Cole. 1989. *The letter of Paul to the Galatians: an introduction and commentary*. Leicester: InterVarsity Press, p. 89.

³⁰⁸ K. H. Rengstorf. *Theological dictionary of the New Testament* 1:438, observes that “so far as the sources go, Paul seems to be the first to trace back the apostolate to God Himself”, 1Pet 1:2 being in his opinion “dependent on Pauline trains of thought”.

³⁰⁹ John Eadie. 1979. *A commentary on the Greek text of the epistle of Paul to the Galatians*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, p. 43.

to the period of his conversion, and to its medium, as not of merit but of grace. He proceeded to show that his call to the apostolate was connected with qualification for it.

Like the call of the prophets, Paul's call carried with it a commission. Paul's specific commission was to proclaim Jesus Christ among the Gentiles.³¹⁰ Paul's encounter with the resurrected Christ signalled for him that the last days had been inaugurated. And Paul knew that the prophetic hope was that the Gentiles would come to Israel's God in the last days. This hope, not coincidentally, was powerfully expressed in one of the very texts which Paul alluded to in Galatians 1:15.³¹¹ Paul interpreted his vocation not merely to allow, but also to urge the Gentiles to turn to the true God by acknowledging his Messiah, the Lord, Jesus. Although Paul's awareness and understanding of his commission may have developed over time, he seems to have seen it in retrospect as an essential dimension of his initial encounter with the risen Jesus.

It is apparent that the idea of God consecrating Paul³¹² before his birth and subsequently calling him is reminiscent of Isaiah 49:1-13, where the Servant of Yahweh (addressed as Israel) is called to be a light to the Gentiles, and of Jeremiah 1:4-19, where Jeremiah appears as one consecrated before his birth and appointed a prophet to the nations³¹³. Paul's application of these biblical expressions to himself has the effect of aligning himself with those Old Testament figures in the history of salvation. God's call to Paul was essentially the same as his call to them, a renewal of his will for the salvation of the Gentiles.³¹⁴ More specifically, whereas the analogy with Jeremiah reflects Paul's "apostolic self-consciousness"³¹⁵, the allusion to Isaiah³¹⁶ reveals Paul as "the apostle specially selected to continue the work of the servant of Yahweh"³¹⁷. While grammatically "calling" is closely connected with "setting apart"³¹⁸ in time, it is more closely associated with "revealing". In other words, the divine call came to Paul by way of God revealing his Son to him.

It is difficult also to resist the conclusion that Paul's later suffering for Christ, which was such an integral part of his apostolic identity and mission, also grew directly out of the

³¹⁰ Gal 1:16; also the accounts in Acts.

³¹¹ I will give you as a light to the nations that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth (Isaiah 49:6). The call of Jeremiah also contains a mission to the nations/Gentiles, though for Jeremiah it principally meant a call to prophesy against the nations (Jeremiah 46-51).

³¹² G. Dulon. *New international dictionary of New Testament Theology* 1:473ff. According to Dulon to "set apart" here means to "appoint".

³¹³ For example, the Gentiles.

³¹⁴ K. H. Rengstorf, *Theological dictionary of the New Testament* 1:437-441.

³¹⁵ K. H. Rengstorf, *Theological dictionary of the New Testament* 1:439.

³¹⁶ Together with other similar references: compare Rom 15:21 with Isa 52:15; Acts 13:47 with Isa 49:6; Acts 18:9ff. with Isa 43:5.

³¹⁷ D. M. Stanley. 1953. Paul's conversion in Acts: why the three accounts? *CBQ*: 315-338 (especially p. 336).

³¹⁸ Both being part of the substantive "who had set ... apart ... and called.

experience of being divinely called while being a violent persecutor (1Cor 15:9).³¹⁹ The experience also impressed on Paul God's faithfulness and grace³²⁰, which would become central to his mission and message.

Absolutely, there is no evidence that prior to his call Paul felt any guilt for his persecuting zeal. He had no self-doubt about his mission. There is also no concrete evidence that he had previously engaged in missionary activity towards the Gentiles, urging them to convert and be circumcised. No, the letters testify that Paul was "surprised by grace".

John Howard Schütz³²¹ argues that being called into grace is being called into the εὐαγγέλιον; that is the presupposition of Gal 1:6. Thus far, then, the autobiographical references are a paradigm not only of the apostle³²², but also of the Christian.

In conclusion, the primary aim of Paul's call is to stress that he was called by God, not only by the church, to preach the Gospel. Before God's gracious call stopped Paul in his tracks, he was engaged in a campaign to destroy the church of God because of his zealous devotion to the traditions of Judaism. God's call was not an afterthought. Like the prophets of old, Paul had been set aside from his mother's womb. Paul heard the call when God revealed his Son to him in his Damascus road experience so that he would preach Christ to the Gentiles.³²³ Therefore, the experience of Paul's revelation of Jesus as a divine call in the context of Galatians means that: (a) the words σκεῦος ἐκλογῆς reveal several important aspects of Paul's calling, (b) Paul was the recipient of unexpected and unmerited grace, (c) Paul had a mission to proclaim Jesus as God's Son among the Gentiles, and (d) Paul would, more than likely, suffer in the execution of his call and commission, even as he had previously inflicted suffering.

5.3 Paul's personal description of his call in some of his letters

5.3.1 Paul's rights for effective pastoral ministry

It is apparent that Paul established his own apostolic status and proceeded to catalogue his own rights. However, he renounced these rights for the sake of the Gospel as well as for effective pastoral ministry in Corinth.

³¹⁹ This is certainly part of what the story of Acts 9 seeks to convey when it narrates Paul's encounter with Jesus as including the question, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" (Acts 9:4; 22:7; and 26:14).

³²⁰ The experience mentioned in both 1Cor 15:9-6 and Gal 1:15.

³²¹ John Howard Schütz. 1975. *Paul and the anatomy of apostolic authority*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 134.

³²² A. M. Denis. 1957. L'investiture de la fonction apostolique par apocalypse. *Revue biblique* 64: 335-515 (specifically p. 339).

³²³ G. W. Hansen. 1993. Galatians, letter to. In Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin. Eds. *Dictionary of Paul and his letters*. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, p. 330.

On Paul's rights as an apostle, Ayodeji Adewuya says:

(a) He had the right to support from the Corinthians. The Corinthians did not question Paul's right to eat, but Paul means that he has the right to eat and drink at the expense of the churches that he serves. Paul has the right to be given food and drink for his labour.

(b) He had the right to take a wife with him. Paul suggests that the other apostles had taken their wives with them on journeys. Therefore, he would have been free to travel around with his wife, and be supported by the church if he had one. This verse is especially interesting concerning Peter (Cephas), who was obviously married.

(c) Paul had the right to be free from manual labour. Barnabas and Paul had the right to expect the churches to relieve them of the necessity to labour with their hands by accepting responsibility for their material support. If this was their right, then it was also their right to forgo that support. We might think this would give Paul and Barnabas greater respect in the sight of the Corinthian Christians. But, curiously it gave them less respect. It was almost as if the Corinthian Christians were saying, 'if Paul and Barnabas were real apostles, we would support them, but since they are not supported, we suppose they are not real apostles.'³²⁴

Apparently, the natural children of Mary and Joseph and, significantly, Cephas were married.³²⁵ 1Corinthians 1:12 and 3:22 suggest that some of the Corinthian Christians held Simon Peter in considerable esteem.

Although Paul did not claim necessary expenses as 1Corinthians 9:12 shows, in theory he held himself ready to exercise this right whenever he thought fit. He did not also allow the churches to forget their obligation to him. Three different real-life situations or

³²⁴ J. Ayodeji Adewuya. 2009. *A commentary on 1 & 2 Corinthians*. London: SPCK, p. 63.

³²⁵ Matt 8:14; 12:46-47; 13:55-56; John 2:2; 7:3; Acts 1:14; Gal 1:17-19; 2:9-14.

human activities, those of the soldier, the landowner and the hired shepherd, are introduced to reinforce the principle. On this, S. O. Abogunrin contends that “If a soldier on active service expects to be maintained, why not an apostle, a soldier of Christ? If a farmer expects to feed from the harvest of the farm on which he bestows his labour, why not an apostle, a labourer in God’s vineyard? If a herdsman drinks from the milk of the flock he tenders, why not the apostle, a shepherd under the great Shepherd of the sheep?”³²⁶ For that reason, Paul and any other Christian worker who serves the spiritual interest of their members should not be denied material support or compensation.³²⁷

However, the vision that Paul had on the road to Damascus enabled him not to stand proudly on his rights but to gladly give up his rights in order to see people being saved. In Paul’s use of θέατρον “spectacle”, μωροὶ “fools”, ἀσθενεῖς “weak”, and ἄτιμοι “dishonourable/disrepute”, he alludes to his experience of apostolic ministry which stands in the sharpest contrast to the Corinthians’ perception of the Christian life.

Besides, Paul had a unique right to address the Corinthian Christians as his own dear children. This is because Paul would not allow division, receiving a sinful brother, taking brethren to court, fornication, idolatry, abuse of the Lord’s Supper and spiritual gifts, and error concerning the resurrection since these could generate differences in doctrine, disunity of the Church, sin in the church, distraction during worship services and obstacles to acceptance of the Gospel of Christ. On this, Abogunrin says:

Paul’s Christian ministry is purposeful. He practises self-discipline not out of fear that he might lose his salvation but that he might lose his crown through failure to satisfy his master. By his example Paul calls on the Corinthians to make self-sacrifice not only out of considerations for others, but for effective Christians ministry and spiritual progress.³²⁸

In sum, as regards effective pastoral rights, Paul teaches that when it comes to our rights, liberties, and judgments, we must be willing to forgo them for the benefit of the church and the souls of men. But when it comes to sin and the doctrine of Christ, we must stand fast and be ready and willing to draw lines when necessary.

5.3.2 Paul’s understanding of the ministry of reconciliation

³²⁶ Samuel Oyinloye Abogunrin. 1991. *The first letter of Paul to the Corinthians*. Ibadan: Daystar Press, p. 98.

³²⁷ This command from the Lord (Matt 10:10 and Lk 10:8) means that those who preach the gospel have the right to be supported by those to whom they preach.

³²⁸ Samuel Oyinloye Abogunrin. 1991. *The first letter of Paul to the Corinthians*. Ibadan: Daystar Press, p. 103.

Paul was the primary New Testament author to use the καταλλάσσω word group which is commonly associated with the concept of reconciliation.³²⁹ The three key words are ἀποκαταλλάσσω (Eph 2:16; Col 1:20, 22), καταλλαγή (Rom 5:11; 11:15; 2Cor 5:19), and καταλλάσσω (Rom 5:10; 2Cor 5:18, 19, 20).³³⁰ Of course, the concept of reconciliation is broader than what any word group could capture. Louw and Nida state that “meanings involving reconciliation have a pre-suppositional component of opposition and hostility, and it is the process of reconciliation which reverses this pre-suppositional factor.”³³¹ Thus, any New Testament teaching which deals with God’s gracious redemption as overcoming the hostility of sinners and establishing peace is implicitly dealing with reconciliation.³³²

In 2Cor 5:20, contemplation of the glorious truth of God’s programme to reconcile the world to himself through the gospel of Christ brings Paul to a conclusion οὖν “therefore”. In 2Cor 5:20-21, Paul takes the general truths which he has been explaining and applies them directly and specifically to the situation in Corinth. As Christ’s ambassador³³³, and as the very mouthpiece of God, Paul pleads with the Corinthians on Christ’s behalf to be reconciled to God. Although some people take this to be a sample of Paul’s missionary preaching directed to no one in particular³³⁴, it is preferable to understand it as Paul’s appeal to the Corinthians to renew their peaceful relationship to God and his messenger.³³⁵

Adewuya notes that 2Cor 5:19 is the heart of the gospel. Adewuya³³⁶ and Barrett³³⁷ state that the initiative to reconciliation was with God who bridged the gulf of separation created by our sin and rebellion. Reconciliation centres on the death of Christ at Calvary through which Christ stood in the breach for us. As a result of Christ’s death, God opens the

³²⁹The simple verb ἀλλάσσω, which means “to change” or “exchange,” occurs in non-redemptive contexts in Acts 6:14; Rom 1:23; 1Cor 15:51, 52; Gal 4:20; and Heb 1:12. The other occurrences of this word group outside of Paul involve reconciliation between human adversaries. See ἀλλάσσομαι in Luke 12:58, διαλλάσσομαι in Matt 5:24, and συναλλάσσω in Acts 7:26.

³³⁰καταλλάσσω also occurs in 1Cor 7:11 describing marital reconciliation.

³³¹J. P. Louw and E. A. Nida. 1988. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on Semantic Domains*. 2 vols. Eds. New York: United Bible Societies, 1.502. Louw and Nida also include the words εἰρηνοποιέω (Col 1:20), εἰρηνοποιός (Matt 5:9), μεσίτης (1Tim 2:5), and ἄσπονδος (2Tim 3:3) under the semantic domain of reconciliation.

³³²David L. Turner. 1989. Paul and the ministry of reconciliation in 2Cor 5:11-6:2. *CTR*. 4.1:83.

³³³The verb πρεσβεύομεν (Eph 6:10) pictures Paul’s ministry as the representative or legate of a king carrying out diplomatic or governmental business. That verb was used to describe such activities for the Roman emperor in New Testament times (1Macc 14:22; 2Macc 11:34).

³³⁴F. W. Hughes. 1991. The rhetoric of the reconciliation: 2 Corinthians 1:1-2:13 and 7:5-8:24. *Persuasive artistry: studies in New Testament rhetoric in honor of George Kennedy*. D. F. Watson. Ed. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991, pp. 210-211.

³³⁵Victor Paul Furnish. 1984. *II Corinthians*. New York: Doubleday, p. 350; and especially Ralph P. Martin. 1986. 2 Corinthians. Word biblical commentary 40. Waco: Word Books, pp. 155-56.

³³⁶J. Ayodeji Adewuya. 2009. *A commentary on 1 & 2 Corinthians*. London: SPCK, p. 157.

³³⁷C. K. Barrett. 1973. *A commentary on the second epistle to the Corinthians*. London: Adam & Charles Black, p. 175.

way to reconciliation and commits the message of reconciliation to believers. Kim avers that, besides the “us” phrases of 2Cor 5:18-19, the three aorist participles, namely καταλλάξασαντος, δόντος and θέμενος, in these verses clearly allude to Paul’s Damascus Road experience. This is because Paul’s sense of forgiveness/reconciliation, his call to apostleship/ministry, and his being entrusted with the gospel message of reconciliation occurred on the road to Damascus.³³⁸ Also, Hofius says:

Paul’s “entrustment with the gospel message” of 2Cor 5:19c corresponds to Paul’s testimony in Gal 1:12, 15-16a about his reception of God’s revelation of the gospel, and that Paul’s “ministry of reconciliation” of 2Cor 5:18c corresponds to Paul’s words in Gal 1:16b about his apostolic commission to preach to the Gentiles.³³⁹

Furthermore, Kim suggests that there is correspondence between “God’s reconciling action” mentioned in 2Cor 5:18 and what is implicit in Gal 1:13-14 about God’s grace to Paul, despite his previous persecution of the church. These close correspondences between Gal 1:12-16 and 2Cor 5:18-19, therefore, put in sharp relief the interpretation that the participial clauses in the latter allude to Paul’s Damascus road experience, which is explicitly referred to in Gal 1:12-16. 2Cor 5:16, which refers to “knowing Christ from now on” in a new way, is almost universally recognised as alluding to Paul’s conversion. The phrase “from now on” signals a fundamental turning point in Paul’s life, which took place as a consequence of the proper recognition of the eschatological saving event of Christ’s death and resurrection (2Cor 5:14-15). No doubt, Paul is here speaking about his Damascus road experience when he abandoned his prior “fleshly” estimate of Christ in the face of the divine revelation of Christ as the one who had died for humankind and been raised from the dead. Also 2Cor 5:17 speaks of the “new creation” that is obtained “in Christ”, which alludes to Paul’s Damascus road experience. In addition, the words κρίναντας τοῦτο “having judged this” in 2Cor 5:14 alludes to Paul’s Damascus road experience. The Greek aorist participle κρίναντας along with the demonstrative pronoun τοῦτο suggests the sense of “having once reached the conclusion. This is true of Paul who came to a new and correct “judgment” about Christ’s death as a vicarious death “for all” at his conversion on the Damascus road, for it was there that he realised the magnitude of Christ’s love for humankind. Still in 2Cor 5:14, Paul uses the word συνέχει “compels”, which is a strong term that brings to mind similar

³³⁸ Seyoon Kim. 1997. God reconciled his enemy to himself: the origin of Paul’s concept of reconciliation. *The road from Damascus: the impact of Paul’s conversion on his life, thought, and ministry*. Richard N. Longenecker. Ed. Eugene: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., p. 110.

³³⁹ Otfried Hofius. 1989. *Erwägungen zur Gestalt und Herkunft des paulinischen Versöhnungsgedankens*. ZTK 77. Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, p. 29.

strong terms that he uses in connection with his apostolic ministry, such as κατελήμφθην “enlisted” by Christ³⁴⁰, καλέσας “called” by God’s grace³⁴¹, εὐαγγελίζομαι “to preach” Christ among the Gentiles³⁴², ὀφειλέτης “debtor” to the Gentiles³⁴³, and ἀνάγκη “fateful necessity” had been laid on him to preach the gospel.³⁴⁴ In 2Cor 5:13, the phrase εἴτε ... ἐξέστημεν “if we were out of our mind” or “if we were in ecstasy” also probably alludes to Paul’s Damascus Road experience. This is because Paul is referring here to some ecstatic experience that caused controversy among the Corinthians, to which Thrall³⁴⁵ proposes that Paul responds, in effect, that his ecstatic experiences (which he does not have) “are no concern of his readers but concern God only”.

Besides 2Corinthians 5, four other Pauline passages³⁴⁶ speak directly of reconciliation. The first is Romans 5:6-11 which speaks of reconciliation as God’s loving-act toward undeserving sinners in which Christ died for the helpless enemies of God. Once this reconciliation has been received, the believer may rejoice in his/her salvation from God’s eschatological wrath. Paul’s words here take the form of two arguments, the first “lesser to greater,” and the second “greater to lesser.” If dying for a righteous or good man is praiseworthy, how much more is Christ’s death for helpless sinners?³⁴⁷ This magnifies God’s mercy in providing reconciliation through Christ’s death. Second, if Christ went so far as to reconcile his enemies, will he not in the end save his friends?³⁴⁸ This provides an assurance that God will ultimately complete what he has begun in Christ.

It is interesting to note the close connection between justification and reconciliation in the protases of Romans 5:10 and 11 respectively. Eschatological salvation is the consummation of redemption already begun.³⁴⁹ The second is Romans 11:11-24, where Paul turns again to the language of reconciliation in his defence of the wisdom of God’s plan for the Jews and the Gentiles. If the present national unbelief of Israel has resulted in the reconciliation of the Gentiles, the marvellous outcome of Israel’s national repentance can only be described as life from the dead! In Romans 11:11-14, Paul speaks of his ministry to the Gentiles as a means of provoking Israel to jealousy. He goes on to illustrate the

³⁴⁰ Phil 3:12

³⁴¹ Gal 1:15

³⁴² Gal 1:16

³⁴³ Rom 5:6-8.

³⁴⁴ 1Cor 9:16

³⁴⁵ Margaret E. Thrall. 1994. *The second epistle to the Corinthians*. Vol.1. Edinburgh: Clark, p. 407.

³⁴⁶ The authenticity of Ephesians and Colossians as genuine epistles of Paul is assumed in this study.

³⁴⁷ Rom 5:6-8.

³⁴⁸ Rom 5:9-11.

³⁴⁹ David L. Turner. 1989. Paul and the ministry of reconciliation in 2Cor 5:11-6:2. *CTR*. 4.1:90.

redemptive historical process with the olive tree in Rom 11:16b-24. The phrase in Rom 11:15 is καταλλαγή κόσμου and κόσμου is clearly an objective genitive describing the worldwide opportunity for Gentiles to receive salvation through faith in the Messiah of Israel, while reconciliation in Rom 5: 11 is τὴν καταλλαγὴν ἐλάβομεν “something received individually”. It has more of a corporate reference to Gentiles having the opportunity to receive salvation. This opportunity results in “the fullness of the Gentiles” receiving salvation, which in turn spells the consummation of national Israel’s salvation in Rom 11:25-26.³⁵⁰ The third is Ephesians 2 which speaks of corporate reconciliation in which Paul stresses ἡ χάρις “the grace”³⁵¹, ἐλέει “mercy”³⁵², and κρηστότητι “kindness”³⁵³ of God ἀποκαταλλάξῃ “[that] he might reconcile”³⁵⁴ τέκνα φύσει ὀργῆς “those who deserve wrath”³⁵⁵. Here, Ephesians 2 probably alludes to corporate reconciliation to Paul’s Damascus road experience. It was at that scenario that God vertically and horizontally removed the ἐχθρὰ “enmity” or “hostility” between God and Paul through Christ’s redemption.³⁵⁶ The experience of reconciliation through Christ radically redefines vertical and horizontal human relationships as there is now peace between mankind and God, and peace between Jews and Gentiles.³⁵⁷ The fourth is Colossians 1, where Paul speaks of Christ as the all-sufficient Lord of the universe³⁵⁸ and as the head of the church.³⁵⁹ The Father was pleased for divine fullness to dwell in Christ and to reconcile the universe to himself through Christ.³⁶⁰ This is evidently due to the false teaching about the powers which has been troubling the Colossians.³⁶¹ They needed to know that not only did Christ originally create the powers, but also that subsequently his cross defeated them when they rebelled against their Creator. The term reconciliation describes both the defeat of the evil powers and the redemption of the Colossians, who are now exhorted to stand firm in their freedom from the defeated powers.³⁶² The doctrine of eternal punishment does not conflict with the reconciliation of the powers and even of those who reject Christ’s redemption. Rather, their defeat in the cross of Christ leads to the pacification of the universe.

³⁵⁰ This interplay between Israel’s present rejection and future reception is well grasped by John Murray. 1965. *The Epistle to the Romans*. New international commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., pp. 75-90.

³⁵¹ Eph 2:5, 7-8

³⁵² Eph 2:4

³⁵³ Eph 2:7

³⁵⁴ Eph 2:16

³⁵⁵ Eph 2:3

³⁵⁶ M. Barth. 1974. *Ephesians 1-3*. New York: Doubleday, p. 266.

³⁵⁷ Eph 2:14, 17.

³⁵⁸ Col 1:16-17; τὰ πάντα

³⁵⁹ Col 1:18

³⁶⁰ Col 1:19-20.

³⁶¹ Col 2:8, 10, 15, 18, and 20.

³⁶² Col 1:23; 2:8, 16, 18, and 20.

Their eternal punishment is the means by which eternal peace is achieved on the renewed earth for the people of God.³⁶³ It could be said that Colossians 1 alludes to Paul's Damascus road experience; it was at that event that the cross of Christ defeated Paul who was Christ's persecutor.³⁶⁴

In sum, 2Corinthians 5:11-21 and other Pauline passages, namely Romans 5:6-11, 11:11-24, Ephesians 2:3-17, and Colossians 1:16-23 are significant for what they say about Paul's conversion/call experience on the Damascus road, even though the words "conversion," "call," and "Damascus" are nowhere used. But what is more significant for our purposes is that Paul here seems to link his Damascus road experience with his experience of reconciliation. This leads us to believing that the basis for his understanding about the ministry of reconciliation was his vision of the risen Christ on the road to Damascus.

5.4 Paul the missionary

Donaldson³⁶⁵ contends that Paul who was a persecutor of Christians experienced a conversion on the road to Damascus and became an apostle to the Gentiles. His role as the early Christianity's most visible missionary in the Gentile world somehow resulted from the combination of his personal formation and pattern of life within Judaism and his Damascus Road experience, where, as he perceived and expressed it, Christ "appeared also to me".³⁶⁶ Likewise, Dunn says that "the primary purpose of the risen Christ's appearance was to send Paul to the Gentiles."³⁶⁷ This purpose is an integral part of Paul's Damascus road experience, which is told three times in Acts. To Ananias the Lord says, "He is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles" (Acts 9:15). Ananias informs Paul: "You will be a witness to all men of what you have seen and heard" (Acts 22:15). Most striking of all, in the third account, it is the Lord himself in the Damascus road encounter who told Paul that he is sending him to the Gentiles" (Acts 26:17-18).³⁶⁸ Paul expresses this same conviction in his own letters: that his calling to become apostle to the Gentiles was not merely rooted in the Damascus road epiphany but constituted its chief content and its most immediate as well as

³⁶³ Rev 21:7-8, 27; 22:14-15.

³⁶⁴ Acts 9:5; Gal 1:13

³⁶⁵ Terence L. Donaldson. 1997. Israelite, convert, apostle to the Gentiles: the origin of Paul's Gentile mission. *The road from Damascus: the impact of Paul's conversion on his life, thought, and ministry*. Richard N. Longenecker, Ed. Eugene: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., p. 62.

³⁶⁶ 1Cor 15:8; Gal 1:13-16.

³⁶⁷ James D. G. Dunn. 1987. A light to the Gentiles: the significance of the Damascus Road Christophany for Paul. *The glory of Christ in the NTS in Christology*. In memory of George Bradford Caird. L. D. Hurst and N. T. Wright. Eds. Eugene: Oxford University Press, p. 251.

³⁶⁸ George Bradford Caird. 1955. *The apostolic age*. London: Duckworth, p. 123. Caird avers that the third account agrees more closely than the other two with Paul's own description, and it is best to follow this version and to assume that the Gentile mission was an integral part of Paul's original call to apostleship.

most lasting impact.³⁶⁹ Most scholars who take this view perceive Paul abandoned the belief that the Torah is the way to salvation. Since one of the roles of Torah was to differentiate Jews from Gentiles, the abandonment of Torah brought with it the eradication of the distinction between Jews and Gentiles, which led to the Gentile mission.³⁷⁰ Also, the link is found in Christology in particular, Paul's perception of Christ as having been raised to an elevated cosmic status. As Phil 2:9-11 demonstrates, the early confession "Jesus is Lord" can easily be taken to imply "Jesus is Lord of all", which leads naturally to the inclusion of the Gentiles. This is true of Seyoon Kim's reconstruction that "Paul's Damascus Christophany led him to equate Christ with the exalted figure found in Jewish visions of the heavenly throne room, such as in Ezekiel 1 and Daniel 7. Consequently, Paul perceived Christ to be invested with universal significance, which led—via the intermediate, but not fully necessary, step of Adam Christology—to the Gentile mission."³⁷¹

Watson argues that Paul began his missionary activity by preaching to Jews. Only when this was a failure was he forced to reconsider things, resulting in a turn to the Gentiles.³⁷² Paul is understood to have converted into a Christian community that was already involved in a mission to the Gentiles, a mission in which Paul himself became engaged.³⁷³ He is the archetypal missionary and the supreme exemplar to every man and woman aspiring to undertake the most precious proclamation of the Gospel available to human activity.³⁷⁴

In addition to his religious studies, Paul was taught the practical trade of tent making. From this description of him it is obvious that Paul was well equipped to evangelise Jews.³⁷⁵ Paul embarked on his missionary labours without a definite strategy. Missionary work cannot be done in a haphazard manner. Paul's outreach was initially "to the Jew first". He declares that: "For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen by race" (Rom 9:3). All the greater, then, was his grief at their refusal to recognise God's chosen Messiah. One can appreciate Paul's exasperation, but also sense his sorrow when he told the Jews of Corinth after they had opposed him and blasphemed:

³⁶⁹ The different accounts in Acts and Galatians of Paul's activities following his conversion at least agree to the extent that they show him active in evangelism (Acts 26:17-18; Gal 1:23).

³⁷⁰ Terence L. Donaldson. 1997. *Israelite, convert, apostle to the Gentiles: the origin of Paul's Gentile mission. The road from Damascus: the impact of Paul's conversion on his life, thought, and ministry.* Richard N. Longenecker. Ed. Eugene: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., p. 66.

³⁷¹ Seyoon Kim. 1982. *The origin of Paul's gospel.* Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., p. 286.

³⁷² Francis P. Watson. 1986. *Paul, Judaism and the Gentiles.* Cambridge: University Press, p. 32.

³⁷³ Heikki Räisänen. 1986. *Paul and the law.* Philadelphia: Fortress, pp. 251-263.

³⁷⁴ Andreas Tillyrides. *Apostle Paul and the missionary task.* Retrieved August 1, 2011 from www.orthodoxresearchinstitute.org/articles/.

³⁷⁵ Acts 1:39; 18:3; 22:3; 22:25; 22:28; Gal 1:13,14; Gal 2:1; Phil 3:5-6: Paul's upbringing was Jewish in every respect

“Your blood be upon your heads! I am innocent. From now on I will go to the Gentiles” (Acts 18:6). Paul also twice described himself as “a teacher of the Gentiles”.³⁷⁶

Abogunrin avers that Paul’s call and successful missionary work are due to God’s rich grace and the power of the resurrection. His Damascus Road experience resulted to his salvation and conviction of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul who was said to have worked harder than the other apostles called before him, bore witness that “Christ is risen”: the message that revolutionised his life and what he and other apostles preached everywhere.³⁷⁷ For Barrett, the statement “I laboured more abundantly than all of them” suggests Paul’s greater troubles and sufferings recorded in 2Cor 11:23-27. But these self-sacrificing missionary activities mean to Paul his greater achievements, probably in terms of the fact that, whereas his colleagues might be content to work in churches that others had founded, he made it his aim always to break new ground and to take the gospel to those who had not heard it.³⁷⁸

Furthermore, Tillyrides³⁷⁹ says that a natural aspect of Paul’s strategy was to go where people were most receptive. He found them among the “God-fearers.” These were men and women, Greeks of pagan background, who had attached themselves to the synagogue. Disillusioned with pagan idolatry, they were attracted by the ethical monotheism of the Jews and the other positive elements of the Hebrew religion. However, the “God-fearers” demurred at circumcision and full conversion to Judaism. A penumbra of “God-fearers” was found around every synagogue in the world of the first century, and to this people Paul went. From among them, he drew the human material for his first Gentile congregations. From this example of Paul’s we draw the conclusion that it is enlightened common sense for the missionary to go where he is more welcome and where his message will be more readily received.

In conclusion, Paul’s missionary activities resulted from his Damascus road experience. He began his missionary activities with the Jews and then later to the Gentile world. Like other apostles called before him, at Corinth, and everywhere he went he bore witness to the fact that “Christ is risen”. His selfless labours for the proclamation of the resurrection of Jesus Christ despite troubles and sufferings encountered were credited to him

³⁷⁶ 1Tim 2:7; 2Tim 1:11

³⁷⁷ Samuel Oyinloye Abogunrin. 1991. *The first letter of Paul to the Corinthians*. Ibadan: Daystar Press, p. 167.

³⁷⁸ C. K. Barrett. 1971. *A commentary on the first epistle to the Corinthians*. 2nd Ed. London: Adam & Charles Black, p. 345.

³⁷⁹ Andreas Tillyrides. Apostle Paul and the missionary task. Retrieved August 1, 2011 from www.orthodoxresearchinstitute.org/articles/.

as to have laboured abundantly than the other apostles. Thus, the former chief persecutor of Christ became the foremost persecutor for Christ.

5.5 Paul the pastor

Beasley-Murray avers that Paul does not use the term ποιμήν “pastor” for himself. It is in the *Corpus Paulinum* that the term ποιμήν “pastor” occurs only once in Ephesians 4:11, where the office of pastor is described as one of the gifts of the risen Christ to his church. Besides, Paul’s letters are a product of his pastoral care, for through them he exercised a pastoral role in regard to the churches which he or his converts had founded. However, Paul was intent not only on winning people for Jesus Christ, but also to remain in relationship with the churches he planted.³⁸⁰

Best contends that Paul’s aim as a pastor was to see his converts grow (1Thess 3:2, 10; 5:11)³⁸¹ and that a careful analysis of 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, and Philippians shows that Paul wants to be their example but with limitations. Although he never asks them to become full-time vocational missionaries, or to follow him as Jesus asked, or expects them to have the same ‘visionary’ life that he has, or call the married to be celibate as himself, he emphasises his character, work, gospel message, and dedication to Christ.³⁸² Inasmuch as Paul’s letters are a clear testimony to his pastoral heart, it is probable that 1Thessalonians alludes to Paul’s Damascus road experience. It is in 1Thessalonians that Paul’s pastoral ministry, which includes his under-listed methods, is discussed.

In 1Thessalonians 2:8, Paul uses the term μεταδίδωμι to express his mentoring/impartation method of growth to help his converts mature in the gospel of God. Paul uses μεταδίδωμι in Romans 1:11 to think of strengthening the converts in Rome so that they will be more effective in their own preaching of the gospel and their Christian faith. Jewett³⁸³ refers to the collaborative nature of this communication, referring to the parallel in the use of μεταδίδωμι in 1Thess 2:8. The translation “impart to you” implies a one-way form of authoritative communication that Paul avoids here. Jewett³⁸⁴, Liddell-Scott-Jones-McKenzie lexicon³⁸⁵, Abbott-Smith³⁸⁶ and the *Analytical Greek lexicon*³⁸⁷ say the basic

³⁸⁰ P. Beasley-Murray.1993. Pastor, Paul as. *Dictionary of Paul and his letters*. Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin. Eds. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, p.654.

³⁸¹ E. Best. 1988. *Paul and his converts*. Edinburgh: T. &T. Clark, pp. 7-8.

³⁸² E. Best. 1988. *Paul and his converts*. Edinburgh: T. &T. Clark, p. 68.

³⁸³ Robert Jewett. 2007. *Romans*. Hermeneia. n. 80. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, p. 124.

³⁸⁴ Robert Jewett. 2007. *Romans*. Hermeneia. n. 80. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, p. 124.

³⁸⁵ Liddell-Scott-Jones-McKenzie. 1968. *Greek-English Lexicon*. Oxford: Clarendon, p. 1111.

meaning of μεταδίδωμι is “to give a part, to share, to impart.” However, Hoehner writes that μεταδίδωμι means “to give part of, to give a share,” as Greek cities shared in the use of a temple or shared in the benefits of the constitution. It can also mean “to communicate,” which is the sharing of information. The word μεταδίδωμι is used seven times in the LXX but twice in the canonical books to denote “to impart” (Job 31:17; Prov 11:26; Wis 7:13; 2 Macc 1:35; Bar 6:27) or “to communicate” (Tob 7:10; 2 Macc 8:12). Μεταδίδωμι appears five times in the New Testament and is used to mean sharing spiritual things, as when Paul shared a spiritual gift to strengthen the Romans (Rom 1:11) or to mean sharing the gospel (1Thess 2:8).³⁸⁸

In all the uses, μεταδίδωμι has an aspect of giving or sharing something with someone else. On its usage in 1Thessalonians 2:8, Rigaux states that the sharing is to give, preserving a share for oneself.³⁸⁹ In Luke 3:11 μεταδίδωμι is used for sharing material possessions. In Romans 12:8, it is used with someone who has the gift of giving.³⁹⁰ In Ephesians 4:28, it conveys sharing material possessions.

Therefore, the most dominant foundational meaning of μεταδίδωμι in the New Testament is either for one entity to share something with another and/or for one entity to impart to another with the goal that the receiving entity be benefit from or be blessed by the other. Paul uses μεταδίδωμι in Romans 1:11 and 1Thessalonians 2:8 for the purpose of developing his converts, helping them grow. Thus, the Damascus road experience shaped Paul’s concept of μεταδίδωμι which reflected in the success of his pastoral ministry.

In 1Thessalonians 2:7-12, the personal pronoun ὑμεῖς “you” occurs eleven times. This would show that Paul was not just an individual in his work of pastoral care but he realised that the impartation process was more effective in working along with others. The apostle Paul often ministered with others and was seldom alone. Acts reports numerous occasions when Paul served with others. In the undisputed letters, only Galatians and Romans

³⁸⁶ Abbott-Smith G. 1986. *A manual Greek lexicon of the New Testament*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark Ltd., p. 286.

³⁸⁷ *The Analytical Greek lexicon: consisting of an alphabetical arrangement of every occurring inflexion of every word contained in the Greek New Testament Scriptures, with a grammatical analysis of each word, and lexicographical illustration of the meanings: a complete series of paradigms, with grammatical remarks and explanations*. London: Samuel Bagster & Sons Ltd., 1967, p. 265.

³⁸⁸ H. W. Hoehner. 2002. *Ephesians*. Grand Rapids: Baker, pp. 626-627.

³⁸⁹ B. Rigaux. 1956. *Saint Paul: les Épîtres aux Thessaloniens*. Paris: Lecoffre, p. 422.

³⁹⁰ M. Reasoner. 1999. *The Strong and the Weak*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 206-207. Reasoner comments that on whether or not this, and Romans 12:13, is evidence that there existed different class levels within the church.

do not list another associate in the opening greeting.³⁹¹ The endings of Paul's letters also are filled with those with whom he associated. In Romans 16,³⁹² Paul associates himself with Phoebe who is a deacon and a great help to him, while Priscilla and Aquila are referred to as "co-workers" in the ministry of Christ Jesus. Mary is credited with working hard for the benefit of the Roman believers. Urbanus is also referred to as a co-worker in Christ. Romans 16 goes on to describe many more who work and labour in the Lord. This illustrates the principle that impartation is more effective when shared with others rather than in isolation.

It is clear from the passage and other parts of the Pauline corpus that Paul was not an individualist; but he valued others working with him in the missionary effort. He also realised that the process of discipleship involved more than just one person forming another, but that others also had a significant place in the formation process. Paul did pastoral ministry with others and had others share in the spiritual care of protégés. Perhaps, 1Thessalonians 2:7-12, which discusses Paul's multiple mentors' method of pastoral ministry, resulted from his experience on the road to Damascus.

In 1Thessalonians 2:1-12, Paul describes his pastoral ministry experiences and gives them a teaching method to follow; 1Thess 3:3-4 talks about continual suffering for their faith.³⁹³ 1Thess 4:1-12 focuses on living to please God through sexual purity, love of fellow believers and hard work; 1Thess 4:13-5:11 reinforces eschatological issues and answers their questions. In 1Thess 5:12-19, Paul continues his discussion on ethics and the Christian life. Throughout his letters, Paul teaches his disciples (1Thess 4:2).³⁹⁴ Also, Beasley-Murray says the fact that one definite article is used for both "pastor" and "teacher" in Eph 4:11 indicates that the pastoral office is here closely linked with teaching or "feeding" the flock. In Luke's record of Paul's speech at Miletus, the Ephesian elders are charged to "watch over the flock, of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God" (Acts 20:28).³⁹⁵ One could argue that the central motivation of Paul's letter writing would be to teach content to those to whom he wrote. However, all of his letters deal with aspects of the Christian faith and Christian behaviour that are meant for the formation of his disciples, a

³⁹¹ But in greeting the Galatians, Paul attributes part of the greeting to those who were with him at the writing of the letter (Gal 1:2). Also, Tertius in Romans 16:22 is acknowledged as writing the letter for Paul. Though Tertius is not necessarily a pastor/missionary, Paul still is working with others.

³⁹² Paul has never been to Rome so these people would be different from someone like Timothy, who is Paul's co-worker. Paul's coming would be to help build up the Romans before he travels to places that have not heard the gospel.

³⁹³ T. Still. 1999. *A Pauline church and its neighbour*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, p. 17.

³⁹⁴ J. D. G. Dunn. 2003. Introduction. *The Cambridge companion to Paul*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 1.

³⁹⁵ P. Beasley-Murray. 1993. Pastor, Paul as. *Dictionary of Paul and his letters*. Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin. Eds. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, p.654.

teaching method of Paul's pastoral ministry which resulted from his Damascus Road experience.

In 1Thessalonians 2:8, Paul's use of ψυχή expresses his sharing life method of pastoral ministry. Abbott-Smith³⁹⁶ and the Analytical Greek Lexicon³⁹⁷ refer to ψυχή as "breath, breath of life, the life, the soul, and the inner life". Marshall avers that many people understand ψυχή to mean the inner life of the missionaries.³⁹⁸ The context communicates a sense that, alongside preaching, there was an open-handed outpouring of their deepest self, their inner life. This giving of their souls symbolises the peak of their giving. It is probable that the deep affection expressed in the periscope of 1Thessalonians 2:7-12 and the familial metaphors used to describe the relationship with the Thessalonians point to a deep commitment where the missionaries give of themselves in a loving union to their converts much like parents give to their children. Indeed, Paul's attitude here shows his awareness that people learn more profoundly from the example of others than from verbal teaching alone.³⁹⁹ Therefore, the missionaries created a milieu for the disciples to observe the missionaries' lives. Moreover, 1Thessalonians gives us an idea of the nature of the life that was shared with Paul's disciples which was in consequence of Paul's Damascus road experience.

In 1Thessalonians 2:14, Paul employs the word μιμητής to describe his imitation method of pastoral ministry. The noun μιμητής is from the verb μιμέομαι, meaning "to imitate, follow as an example, strive to resemble."⁴⁰⁰ Imitation is a theme found in a number of Paul's letters.⁴⁰¹ Although μιμητής and its cognates only appear eleven times in the New Testament, the concept of imitation or example is not uncommon in the New Testament.⁴⁰² Paul encourages his Corinthian converts, in 1Corinthians 11:1, to pattern their lives after him as he patterns it after Christ. However, Paul is not as specific in 1Thessalonians. It is clear that Paul was among his disciples so that they could witness his life. They could see his

³⁹⁶ Abbott-Smith G. 1986. *A manual Greek lexicon of the New Testament*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark Ltd., p. 488.

³⁹⁷ *The Analytical Greek lexicon: consisting of an alphabetical arrangement of every occurring inflexion of every word contained in the Greek New Testament Scriptures, with a grammatical analysis of each word, and lexicographical illustration of the meanings: a complete series of paradigms, with grammatical remarks and explanations*. London: Samuel Bagster & Sons Ltd., 1967, p. 443.

³⁹⁸ I. H. Marshall. 1983. 1 & 2 Thessalonians. *New century Bible commentary*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, p. 71.

³⁹⁹ 1Thess 2:1-6, 9 and 3:6. These instances clearly point to an involvement outside just teaching. See, E. Best. 1986. *The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians*. Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, pp. 73-74.

⁴⁰⁰ *The Analytical Greek lexicon: consisting of an alphabetical arrangement of every occurring inflexion of every word contained in the Greek New Testament Scriptures, with a grammatical analysis of each word, and lexicographical illustration of the meanings: a complete series of paradigms, with grammatical remarks and explanations*. London: Samuel Bagster & Sons Ltd., 1967, p. 270.

⁴⁰¹ 1Thess 1:6; Phil 3:17, 4:9; 1Cor 4:16, 11:1; Gal 4:12.

⁴⁰² 1Cor 4:16, 11:1; Eph 5:1; Phil 3:17; 1Thess 1:6, 2:14; 2Thess 3:7; Heb 6:12, 13:7; 3Jn 1:11.

actions and method them. It was not for them to follow Paul's every action and become his clone but to observe the noteworthy aspects of his life and to live in that way. On this, Fowl says:

New converts cannot be expected to have mastered the demands of their new faith and the practices needed to live in accord with these demands in their day-to-day lives. Such converts will need both instructions in their new faith and concrete examples of how to embody their faith in the various contexts in which they find themselves. We can understand this if we think in terms of the ways in which it is essential for an apprentice to imitate a master of a particular craft. . . No amount of abstract verbal instruction can bring about mastery of a craft without the concrete example of a master to imitate.⁴⁰³

In modern psychology, the idea of imitation is present. Oman and Thoresen contends that "throughout history, religious traditions have emphasised the importance of keeping company with good or holy persons, arguing that people tend to become more like persons with whom they associate. Religious devotees are especially urged to be with wise and holy persons, with saints and sages in the hope of absorbing in some small measure the exemplary characteristics of such persons."⁴⁰⁴ The company one keeps influences one's life. Sharing life involves being deeply involved with the disciples' life, like that of a parent giving his/her life for a child, and having an involvement that allows one to observe one's life and model it.

Therefore, 1Thessalonians 1:6, 2:14 imply that μιμητής has aspects of a continued faith in the midst of suffering, receiving the word of God with the joy of the Holy Spirit, a lifestyle that is worthy of God characterised by displaying the traits of faith, hope and love: a unique product of Paul's Damascus road experience.

In 1Thessalonians 2:12, Paul's use of περιπατέω "to walk" expresses his superiority/inferiority in the loving-relationship method of pastoral ministry. The ultimate goal of the missionaries was for their converts "to lead a life worthy of God," literally "to walk worthily of God." Περιπατέω is a widespread metaphor to maintain a certain walk of life

⁴⁰³ S. E. Fowl.1993. Imitation of Paul/of Christ. *Dictionary of Paul and his letters*. Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin. Eds. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, p. 430.

⁴⁰⁴ D. Oman and C. E. Thoresen. 2003. Spiritual modeling: a key to spiritual and religious growth? *IJPR* 13: 150.

and conduct⁴⁰⁵; it is used about thirty-two times in the Pauline corpus. It entails that the Christian life involves direction, development, and objectives. Here, the measure is worthy of God, that is, a life that mirrors his Christ-like pattern of life. Paul's fatherly love and care was to aid the converts to walk in a manner pleasing to God. This sets a good example for the believers, in that Paul and his companions wanted to be methods of humility and not seek privileged treatment. They would rather care for their converts as a mother and father would for their children.

Besides, Paul uses τροφός “a nurse,” ἀδελφοί “brothers,” πατήρ “father” as metaphors to articulate his superiority/inferiority in loving relationships method of pastoral ministry.⁴⁰⁶ 1Thessalonians 2:7-11 establishes that there is an aspect of superiority/inferiority in how Paul saw his status among the community.⁴⁰⁷ He was a parent and at the same time a brother. Paul as mentor must not always try to be the superior figure, but create a peer aspect in the relationship as well. Commenting on τροφός, Keener says in Roman society there was the custom of having a wet nurse to help raise children, with the most important characteristic being that the nurse was gentle. But wet nurses were expensive and were reserved for the wealthier. Plutarch encouraged mothers to raise their children rather than use a wet nurse.⁴⁰⁸ With this in mind, a nursing mother would be the better choice. However, in 1Thessalonians 5:14, Paul uses gentle and firm speech. To those who needed encouragement and a more gentle approach, he was gentle and to those who were more obstinate, he was more firm. Like a parent, Paul sought to know his disciples and deal with them at their level of maturity. Paul's speech was adapted to the situation. At times, he was paternal and other times critical; sometimes, he was gentle and other times more harsh. But the motivation behind all his speech was his care and desire for them to grow.

In 1Thessalonians 3:10-13, Paul's use of προσεύχη “prayer” implies his love and caring method of pastoral ministry. Prayer was another practical expression of Paul's love and care for his disciples. He expressed his desire to see them grow. The thanksgiving section opens with Paul referring to the fact that his converts are in his prayers. The thanksgiving has a source and, in this case, it is the converts that have demonstrated Christian maturity. The

⁴⁰⁵ *The Analytical Greek lexicon: consisting of an alphabetical arrangement of every occurring inflexion of every word contained in the Greek New Testament Scriptures, with a grammatical analysis of each word, and lexicographical illustration of the meanings: a complete series of paradigms, with grammatical remarks and explanations.* London: Samuel Bagster & Sons Ltd., 1967, p. 320.

⁴⁰⁶ 1Thess 2: 7, 9, 11.

⁴⁰⁷ E. Best. 1988. *Paul and his converts.* Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, p. 29.

⁴⁰⁸ C. S. Keener. 1993. *The IVP Bible background commentary.* Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, p. 587. Keener says of the wet nurses: “They often endeared themselves to young children, who when they grew older frequently freed those nurses who had been slaves.”

thankfulness is felt and expressed to God, not mentioning the converts' imperfections, but highlighting their demonstration of faith, hope and love. The adverbs *always* and *constantly* express that Paul's prayers are not sparse, but ones that are continual and regularly interceding on the converts' behalf.⁴⁰⁹ Besides, Paul also sent Timothy to check up on them. The disciples were on Paul's mind. So in 1Thessalonians 2:17- 3:10, Paul's concern for the faith of the converts led him to send Timothy to gauge the status of their faith and care for them. Paul expresses his desire to see the converts in 1Thessalonians 2:17-20. After trying to see them himself without success, Timothy was dispatched. Commenting on Timothy's mission, Malherbe writes:

Paul's recounting of Timothy's mission and subsequent report reflects Paul's awareness of the Thessalonians' condition as well as his pastoral method. He was conscious of their sense of desolation, which had been aggravated by his absence, was uncertain whether their faith could withstand the emotional stress caused by knowledge of his own experiences, and knew that their faith needed to be supplemented. He sent Timothy as his emissary to establish them further in their faith and exhort them.⁴¹⁰

The act of Timothy being dispatched is another example of how Paul cared for the disciples. Although not in their presence, Paul still has the converts on his mind.

In sum, the brief survey of 1Thessalonians shows that Paul used various methods to build up younger believers to maturity. It is probable that the methods which Paul employed in his pastoral ministry resulted from his Damascus road experience. These methods included mentoring/impartation, multiple mentors, teaching, sharing life, imitation/example, superiority/inferiority in loving relationships, and love and caring.

5.6 Paul's view of an effective pastoral ministry

Paul's Damascus road experience resulted in the pastoral ministry of untiring work and the capability of enduring not only infinite sufferings but also death, which are outstanding in Paul.⁴¹¹

Paul uses δῆκονοι "ministers" to explain the place of ministers in relation to the effective pastoral ministry of the Church in 1Corinthians 3:5. According to Godet⁴¹², ministers are not heads of schools, founders of religious societies, as having a work of their

⁴⁰⁹ G. P. Wiles. 1974. *Paul's intercessory prayers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 3.

⁴¹⁰ A. J. Malherbe. 1987. *Paul and the Thessalonians*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, p. 68.

⁴¹¹ George Kaitholil. 2008. *Encounter with St. Paul*. Nagasandra: St Pauls, p. 77.

⁴¹² Frederic Louis Godet. 1977. *Commentary on first Corinthians*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, pp. 171-174.

own, but simple *employés* labouring on the work of another. They must not labour on another's account for anything at their own hand; their functions are also put in relation to Christ, as Lord of the Church, and their efficacy in relation to God, as the last source of all power.

In 1Corinthians 3:6 and 7, Paul employs ἐφύττω “planted” and ἐπότισεν “watered” to state two functions for effective pastoral ministry. In the two functions of *planting* and *watering*, true success comes exclusively from the concurrence of God. Edwards avers that “God is the source of life in the physical as in the moral world. Man can indeed put the seed in contact with the soil; but life alone makes it spring and grow; and this life is not only beyond the power but even beyond the knowledge of man.” However, the estimate of the fidelity of each minister will not rest on the comparison of it with another's, but on the labour of each compared with his own task and his own gift.

Paul states in 1Corinthians 3:9, that the minister's responsibility is to enhance effective pastoral ministry. The minister's responsibility in the service of Christ is presented from the standpoint of the minister's own position: συνεργοὶ Θεοῦ “labourers together with God, we are at work with God Himself.”⁴¹³

He uses the statement τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν δοθεῖσάν μοι “the grace of God given to me” in 1Corinthians 3:10 to describe the inevitability of the grace of God for effective pastoral ministry. For Paul, the grace given him was that of founding the Church among the Gentiles, particularly at Corinth, with the totality of gifts which he had received for this mission, and the use of them which he had been enabled to make. Paul warns ministers not to borrow from human eloquence and speculation but to deliberately confine themselves to bearing testimony to the fact of salvation, leaving the Holy Spirit to act, and refraining from entering before the time into the domain of Christian speculation.

θεμέλιον “a foundation” to describe another medium of effective pastoral ministry is used by Paul in 1Corinthians 3:11. He says that he has had nothing else to do other than to take the foundation laid by God Himself in the person of the living Christ, dead and risen again, and lay it in the heart by preaching, as the foundation of Christian faith and salvation. Therefore, he warns ministers who would lay another foundation that it would be the beginning of a new religion and a new Church but not the continuation of the Christian work. Hence, they should take good care as to the way in which they do it.

⁴¹³ Frederic Louis Godet. 1977. *Commentary on first Corinthians*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, p. 177.

In 1Corinthians 3:12 and 13, Paul's use of χρυσόν "gold," ἄργύριον "silver," λίθους τιμίους "precious stones," ξύλα "wood," χόρτον "hay," and καλάμην "stubble" indicates the nature of minister's work which would be revealed by fire. The fire would try every minister's work of what sort it is. Instead of talking about the details of the building itself, Paul turns his attention to the kind of materials ministers are using: the materials of preaching the cross for salvation, building up believers and living a Christian life that reflects their preaching. Godet, quoting Origen, Chrysostom, Augustine and Osinader says:

The apostle means to speak of the religious and moral fruits produced in the Church by preaching. The spiritual life of the members of the flock is, in a certain measure, the teaching itself received, assimilated, and realised in practice. Either the pastor, by his preaching, his conversation, his example, the daily acts of his ministry, succeeds in developing among his flock a healthy religious life, drawn from communion with Christ, abounding in the fruits of sanctification and love; and it is this strong and normal life which St. Paul describes under the figure of precious materials; or the pastor, by his pathetic discourses, his ingenious explanations, succeeds indeed in attracting a great concourse of hearers, in producing enthusiastic admiration and lively emotions; but all this stir is only external and superficial; with it all there is no real consecration to the Saviour. This faith without energy, this love without the spirit of sacrifice, this hope without joy or elasticity, this Christianity saturated with egoism and vanity: such are the wood, hay, and stubble.⁴¹⁴

The apostle himself sets us on the way of this explanation when in 1Corinthians 13 he calls faith hope, and love "the three things which remains;" these then are the materials which will survive intact the trial by fire.

Paul uses μισθός "reward" and ζημία "loss" in 1Corinthians 3:14 and 15 to describe the possible results of pastoral ministry. Paul uses μισθός in terms of minister's work which would be recognised as of good quality by the Lord at his parousia. This reward cannot be salvation, for the faithful workman was already in possession of this supreme blessing when he was labouring. But it is the joy of being the object of God's satisfaction; the happiness of seeing invested with glory the souls whom a faithful ministry has contributed to sanctify; and the possession of a glorious position in the new state of things established by the Lord at His parousia.⁴¹⁵ In contrast to μισθός, Paul uses ζημία in terms of minister's work which would be

⁴¹⁴ Frederic Louis Godet. 1977. *Commentary on first Corinthians*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, pp. 183-184.

⁴¹⁵ Luke 19:17.

proved as of consumable by the fire at the Lord's parousia. This loss consists, above all, in the proved uselessness of the minister's labour and in its destruction, which would negate his brilliant or profound pastoral ministry passing away in smoke. Therefore, such a minister would see himself refused the reward of the faithful servant, the honourable position, in Christ's kingdom, to which he imagined himself entitled.⁴¹⁶

Similarly, in 1Corinthians 3:16 and 17 Paul uses ναός "temple" as a vital tool for effective pastoral ministry. Ναός is one of the metaphors which Paul employs to elucidate the concept of the Church. Paul shows that Christ is related to the Church in terms of his being its main cornerstone. Every other Christian is like a stone being built into the building.⁴¹⁷ God dwells in Christ, and Christ, by the Holy Spirit, dwells in the believer.⁴¹⁸ This means that the stability, durability and the indestructibility of the Church are attributable to the Church fundamental relationship with Christ, whose abiding presence in the Church is till the end of time.⁴¹⁹ The imagery of ναός beacons the Church to think about how the presence of God is experienced when its members gather together and to reflect seriously on what it means to be a holy community in an unholy world. Also, Paul uses ναός to show the danger that awaits people who destroy the Church.

He employs σοφία "wisdom" and μωρόν "foolishness" in 1Corinthians 3:18-23 to describe another crystal vehicle for effective pastoral ministry. Paul uses σοφία and μωρόν to mean a minister, while preaching the gospel assumes the part of the wise man and the reputation of a profound thinker. Such a minister should assure himself that he would not attain to true wisdom till he has renounced this imaginary wisdom in order to own his ignorance in what concerns the grace of salvation, and, after taking hold of Christ crucified, who is μωρόν to the wise of this world, to draw from Him the Divine wisdom which He has revealed to the world.⁴²⁰

In 1Corinthians 4:1-25, Paul uses ὑπηρέτης "servant" and οἰκονόμος "steward" to establish their responsibilities towards enhancing effective pastoral ministry. The term ὑπηρέτης strictly denotes a man who acts as rower under the orders of someone; he is a man labouring freely in the service of others. The term οἰκονόμος denotes, among the ancients, a

⁴¹⁶ Matthew 25:30.

⁴¹⁷ John Kevin Hanlon. 2011. Paul pastor of communities for today. *Association of Catholic Priests*: 63-64. Retrieved August 19, 2011 from <http://www.associationofcatholicpriests>.

⁴¹⁸ John 14:23.

⁴¹⁹ Uchenna A. Ezeh. 2010. The Pauline church-identity. *CATHAN*. Cyril Obanure and Mary Sylvia Nwachukwu. Eds. Makurdi: Aboki Publishers, p. 198.

⁴²⁰ Frederic Louis Godet. 1977. *Commentary on first Corinthians*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, pp. 195-196.

confidential slave to whom the master instructs the direction of his house, and in particular the care of distributing to all the servants their tasks and provisions.⁴²¹ This means ministers are administrators of a truth which is not theirs, but their master's. It relates to the inward and spiritual side of the work of the ministry. So, as labouring in the active service of Christ, the Head of the Church, and charged with distributing to it the truths of God, they have to give account before these supreme authorities and not before the members of the Church. They go where Christ sends them, and deliver what God has given them. They are not to be judged in this respect. The only thing that can be asked of them is to be faithful in the way in which they fulfil the missions confided to them, and in which they conform their teaching to the measure of light which they have received.⁴²² Therefore, if a minister can focus on the judgment seat of Christ, where he/she is confident of giving account of his/her ministry before an all-knowing Lord, he/she can discount the tainted and biased criticisms of others. This is true of Abogunrin's marks of God's true ministers⁴²³ which are the absurdity of party-spirit, the correct estimate of the pastoral office, the apostolic suffering, and a personal appeal for reconciliation.

In conclusion, the brief survey of 1Corinthians 3: 3-4:5 shows that Paul had an effective pastoral ministry which resulted from his Damascus road experience. In this analysis of Paul's view of effective pastoral ministry, we deduce that what ministers are, what they are not, and their place in relation to the church in Paul's view are the hallmark of effective pastoral ministry.

5.7. Conclusion

Paul emphasises that the ministry to which he had been called was the result of divine grace. In addition, the gospel message that he had been called to preach was of divine origin and, as such, its contents were too vital to be altered by human pressure groups. Furthermore, for the ministry to be really effective, it must have the recognition and support of the church and its leadership. His desire was for the establishment of church unity which leads to both vertical and horizontal reconciliation: peace between God and man, and peace with all men. On this, Gehring contends that Paul proclaimed the gospel not only in the local synagogues,

⁴²¹ Luke 12:42.

⁴²² Frederic Louis Godet. 1977. *Commentary on first Corinthians*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, pp. 204-205.

⁴²³ Samuel Oyinloye Abogunrin. 1991. *The first letter of Paul to the Corinthians*. Ibadan: Daystar Press, pp. 58-68.

but also in private houses.⁴²⁴ Brocke asserts that Paul preached the gospel in public places.⁴²⁵ In Epictetus⁴²⁶, Paul proclaimed the gospel in prison. He rented halls open to the public and also made use of his craftsman's occupation as a context for his missionary work. His own labour assured his financial independence and freedom of thought, so that he was independent as the cynic preachers. Finally, his close contact with his co-workers served the cause of the gospel, for Paul trained them to carry on their own missionary work. The initial preaching of the Christian message led to the founding of new congregations.

The methods by which the gospel was communicated were appropriate to the content of the gospel itself. The promotion of the gospel and zeal for Christian message must correspond to the proclamation of the crucified Christ. The conduct of the apostle had nothing to do with secrecy, cunning, or profit motive. On the contrary, he cared for his churches as a mother cares for her children. The restless life of the apostle was moved by anxious care "for all the churches". He dealt with his churches and their individual members with pastoral care; the apostle's words of encouragement and comfort, and his corresponding deeds, belong to the inner core of his missionary work from the very beginning. He responded to his congregations with candour and love and fought for them when they were in danger of being led away from the truth of the gospel. Although Paul was driven by the fear that he might have worked in vain for his churches, his mission was not merely oriented toward "success". He did not depend on human approval; his sole obligation was to carry out his call as apostle to the Gentiles. Paul had confidence in the truth's own power of persuasion, and this was exactly why he worked tirelessly for the truth. This dimension of depth gave stability to his restless life.

Paul reminded the churches of the initial preaching of the Christian message and, on that, he derived his own authority from it. He found access to the people's hearts because it was the gospel of Jesus Christ that itself persuaded his hearers. It was the Spirit that makes the apostle's preaching effective. Proclamation of the word and demonstration of power were clearly a single event. Paul too worked miracles in his churches, and they confirmed his apostolic authority.

The divine grace that characterised Paul's call to the ministry, the nature and results of his preaching, and the recognition and support that he had received from the church and its

⁴²⁴ Roger W. Gehring. 2004. *House church and mission: the importance of household structures in early Christianity*. Peabody: Hendrickson, pp. 179-190.

⁴²⁵ Christoph vom Brocke. 2001. Thessaloniki, Stadt des Kassander und Gemeinde des Paulus: Eine frühe christliche Gemeinde in ihrer heidnischen Umwelt. *WUNT* 2/15. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, p. 151.

⁴²⁶ Epictetus. 1928. *The discourses, as reported by Arrian*. 2 vols. Loeb Classical Library. W. A. Oldfather. Trans. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, pp. 3-30.

leadership enabled Paul to have an effective pastoral ministry. Above all, the Damascus road experience remained a catalyst to the glorious call and effective pastoral ministry of Paul.

CHAPTER SIX

THE RELEVANCE OF PAUL'S DAMASCUS ROAD EXPERIENCE TO PASTORAL MINISTRY IN METHODIST CHURCH NIGERIA

6.0 Introduction

It has already been shown in the previous chapter that Paul's Damascus road experience impacted positively on the success of his pastoral ministry. In this chapter, attention is devoted to pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria. Thereafter, the work examines the data collected from our various respondents as it relates to the causes and results of ineffectiveness in the Church.

6.1 John Wesley's Aldersgate experience and its effects on his pastoral ministry

Henry Rack says of John Wesley that on 24 May, 1738, he was certainly in a highly wrought frame of mind, and a letter to a friend that day (probably Gambold) shows in a mixture of scriptural and personal epithets, how conscious he was of sin, of the need for personal fruits of faith and his lack of them. Also, John Wesley recorded a series of encouraging, providential words, from an anthem in St. Paul's.⁴²⁷ And finally, the much-quoted climax occurred:

In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my

⁴²⁷ Henry D. Rack. 2002. *Reasonable enthusiast: John Wesley and the rise of Methodism*. 3rd Ed. London: Epworth Press, p. 144.

heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.

John Wesley then began to pray with all his might for those who had in a more special manner treated him spitefully and persecuted him. He then testified openly to all there what he now first felt in his heart. But it was not long before the enemy suggested, “this cannot be faith; for where is thy joy?” Then he taught that peace and victory over sin are essential to faith in the Captain of our salvation; but that, as to the transports of joy that usually attend the beginning of it, especially in those who have mourned deeply, God sometimes gives, sometimes withholds them according to the counsels of His own will.⁴²⁸

What were the effects of this event on the pastoral ministry of John Wesley? The issue has been much debated, more importantly in terms of its effects for his subsequent pastoral ministry. On the conversion experience of John Wesley, Vivian Green⁴²⁹ and George Every⁴³⁰ say:

The 1738 experience, they think, gave Wesley a feeling of reassurance about his faith and so an inner dynamic which had previously been lacking. He emerged in some sense a changed man; though in many respects his personality was much the same in its characteristics. The experience added to, rather than subtracted from, the personal faith that he had acquired earlier. It did not so much change his character as confirm the truth of the message he delivered. It was less the beginning of a new phase than a stage in the long development since Epworth days....If there was one moment which crystallised Wesley's spiritual development, then it occurred in May 1738.

Green argues that John Wesley's conversion provided him a confidence in the truth of what he was preaching. That event gave him the strength and dynamic confidence for his pastoral ministry. Also, J. W. Fowler contends that the conversion of 1738 brought a measure of release through the idea of justification by faith, and the post-conversion anxieties were resolved when he became concerned with the salvation of others from 1739 onwards.⁴³¹

⁴²⁸ N. Curnock. Ed. 1938. *The JJW*. Eight volumes. London: Epworth Press, pp. 472-476.

⁴²⁹ V. H. H. Green. 1961. *The young Mr Wesley*. London: Edward Arnold Ltd., p. 30.

⁴³⁰ George Every. 1956. *The High Church Party 1688-1718*. London: SPCK, pp. 173-177.

⁴³¹ J. W. Fowler. 1985. John Wesley's Development in Faith. *The Future of the Methodist Theological Traditions*. M. D. Meeks. Ed. Abingdon Press, pp. 172-192. John Wesley's adoption of Justification by faith experienced in conversion was a real change in his theology. Furthermore, the May 1738 experience must be seen as being wholly exceptional for John Wesley in its emotional quality. It is apparent that it contains elements of Justification by faith, new birth, assurance and even perfection, all in the same instant.

Besides, “the Evangelicals saw John Wesley’s 1738 conversion as one of a select number of historical models of conversion experience, part of an ‘evangelical succession’ including St. Paul, St. Augustine and Martin Luther. Whatever truth there is in this perspective, it ignores important differences between the problems which ‘conversion’ solved for these great men and the historical circumstances in which they were placed.”⁴³² Sunday Olatunji Makinde⁴³³ claimed that John Wesley saw his conversion as a catalyst to fulfilling his pastoral ministry. Without the 1738 experience, John Wesley would not have had effective and fulfilled pastoral ministry. John Wesley’s conversion was the landmark and watershed in his pastoral ministry⁴³⁴; the Aldersgate Street experience was the major equipment for his pastoral ministry.⁴³⁵

For Rack, many of John Wesley’s pre-1738 High Church practices and prejudices were gradually abandoned or modified.⁴³⁶ Similarly, Joseph Sunday Ajayi⁴³⁷ said that John Wesley was a pastor before his conversion. But he was not satisfied, because he saw his pastoral ministry as being more than a religious activity. University education was paramount at that time and people availed themselves of that, but it did not make them Christians. While others were using *tradition, scripture* and *reason* as the yardstick for their relationship with God, John Wesley was of the view that his pastoral ministry had to be transformational. Thus, the Aldersgate Street conversion experience of John Wesley led to the founding of the Methodist Church. Methodist Church Nigeria is that part of the World Methodism which in 1962 was constituted an autonomous Methodist Church whose governing body is the Nigeria Conference.⁴³⁸

6.2 The historical development of pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria

⁴³² St. Paul might be said to have been converted from Judaism to Christianity; St. Augustine from paganism to Christianity; Luther from a Catholic to a proto-Protestant type of salvation doctrine; Wesley from High Church Anglican to Moravian views of salvation, which later gave birth to Methodism.

⁴³³ Sunday Olatunji Makinde. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 68, Prelate of Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos, on October 19, 2011.

⁴³⁴ Sunday Olasoji Onadipe. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 47, Director of Administration, Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos, on December 02, 2011.

⁴³⁵ Amos Kayode Olu Ogunrinde. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 41, Deputy Director of Evangelism and Discipleship, Methodist Church Nigeria. Interviewed at Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos, on September 09, 2011.

⁴³⁶ Henry D. Rack. 2002. *Reasonable Enthusiast: John Wesley and the Rise of Methodism*. 3rd Ed. London: Epworth Press, p. 154. These High Church practices and prejudices include: apostolic succession; the invalidity of Dissenting ministries; and a wholesale breaking of High Church ideals of church order in John Wesley’s use of field preaching, lay preaching, infringing parish integrity and in the end ordination.

⁴³⁷ Joseph Sunday Ajayi. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 65, Archbishop of Lagos, Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Wesley Cathedral, Olowogbowo, Lagos, on December 03, 2011.

⁴³⁸ 2006 The Constitution of Methodist Church Nigeria, p.8.

The story of Protestant missionaries in Nigeria began with the arrival of Thomas Birch Freeman and Mr. And Mrs. William de Graft in Badagry on 23rd September, 1842. The call to come to Nigeria was as a result of the plea made by a member of Thomas Dove's congregation who had gone back to Badagry. Another letter dated 02 March, 1841 from another returnee, James Ferguson and endorsed by Warraru, the "Governor of Badagry" made a specific request for missionaries and teachers. From Abeokuta and Ouidah, Dove received the same urgent call. He passed these on to Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (WMMS), London. Consequently, Dr. John Beecham, the General Secretary for West Africa Mission, directed Freeman to visit Badagry from Gold Coast, and later to proceed to Abeokuta to see the situation himself. On the 23rd of September, 1842 the party of three landed in Badagry; and Warraru, the Governor, met a certain Captain Parsons, probably from Gold Coast and gave shelter to the de-Grafts. James Ferguson and others were present to receive the three pioneers. The first Sunday worship was held in Freeman's tent.

Leaving the de-Grafts in Badagry, Freeman went on to Abeokuta⁴³⁹. He was escorted into the city on 11th December, 1842 by the king's man. While Freeman was in Abeokuta, Henry Townsend, a layman of the Church Missionary Society, landed at Badagry, sent on the same mission to investigate the calls from Abeokuta. Back at Badagry, Freeman and Townsend worshipped in the Wesleyan Bamboo Church on Christmas Eve, 1842 before the latter went on to Abeokuta, four weeks after Freeman's visit.

It was John Martin who eventually visited the beleaguered Methodists of Abeokuta in September 1847 to station a catechist, Henry Morgue, an African, who had been working with Martin at Badagry. The first Methodist "pastor" in Abeokuta was, thus, an African. He was to hold the post until the return of Freeman in 1854. Morgue worked in Abeokuta for twelve years before Edward Bickersteth, African Assistant Minister, was sent to give the work a stronger direction⁴⁴⁰.

The Primitive Methodist came to Nigeria on 28th August, 1869⁴⁴¹ through the Island of Fernando Po (now Equatorial Guinea). The Rev. C. Finlay and The Rev. Ben Showell worked from 1893 in Archibong Town, Iking and Oron before the Church moved into Adadia in South eastern State in 1907. This mission came at the instance of the Primitive Methodist Missionary Society (PMMS), Britain. Notably, Christians of Fernando Po,

⁴³⁹ F. Deaville Walker. 1942. *A hundred years in Nigeria: the story of the Methodist Mission in Western Nigeria District 1842-1942*. London: The Cargate Press, p. 18.

⁴⁴⁰ Amba Mercy Oduyoye. 1992. *The Wesleyan presence in Nigeria 1842-1962—an exploration of power, control and partnership in Mission*. Ibadan: Sefer Books Ltd., pp. 5-7.

⁴⁴¹ S. K.Okpo. 1981. *A brief history of the Methodist Church in Eastern Nigeria*. Oron: Marson Publishing Company, p. 1.

impressed by a lay preacher, a carpenter on an English ship, wrote on 28th August, 1869 to the Primitive Methodist Missionary Society asking for missionaries, since the Baptists who had been on the island had been expelled by the Roman Catholic Mission. But in 1858 when the Spanish law allowed Protestant missions in Fernando Po, the people did not want the Baptists back. This led to Rev. R. W. Burnett and Henry Roe being sent to Fernando Po on 21st January, 1870. The Primitive Methodist Missionary Society and the Wesleyan Missionary Society met later east of the Niger⁴⁴². The advent of Methodism everywhere in Nigeria cannot be better described than the way Goddad puts it: “These people carried their faith with them across the world, formed Methodist Societies and invited the Church to send missionaries to shepherd them.”⁴⁴³

On 15th December, 1932, the Wesleyan Methodist Church, the Primitive Methodist Church and the United Methodist Church amalgamated and formed the Methodist Church Nigeria. But there were still two separate Districts of the Methodist Church, that is the Western and the Eastern Districts, under the care of the British Methodist Conference. All major Church decisions then had to be ratified by the British Conference⁴⁴⁴. Another aspect of the work at this time was the move from “Mission” to “Church” in the foreign fields of the Methodist Missionary Society. The British Methodist Conference of 1936 laid down a policy for devolution of responsibility. They had planned to develop the administration of the Overseas Missions in readiness for the intention to establish self-supporting and self-controlling circuits. It was in pursuance of this policy that Rev. Moses Odutola Dada, the former Superintendent of Olowogbowo became the First Nigerian Chairman of the Western Nigeria District Synod in 1946. He was inducted on 4th September, 1946 as Chairman of the Western Nigeria District of the Methodist Church⁴⁴⁵. Rev. W. G. Waterman, the outgoing chairman, maintained that “the progress of the Church did not consist in the extent of its expansion, but in the capacity of the people concerned to govern themselves.” In addition, he said that he had the greatest pleasure witnessing an African taking over the superintendence of a District which covered the whole of the Western Provinces, which extended to the far north. Mr. Waterman added that his office was equivalent to that of a bishop of an Anglican

⁴⁴² Amba Mercy Oduyoye. 1992. *The Wesleyan presence in Nigeria 1842-1962—an exploration of power, control and partnership in Mission*. Ibadan: Sefer Books Ltd., pp. 11-12.

⁴⁴³ Burton L. Goddad. Ed. 1967. *The encyclopedia of modern Christian missions: the Agencies*. London: Thomas Nelson, Sons, pp. 420-421.

⁴⁴⁴ Important Dates in the life of Methodist Church Nigeria. *The Methodist Diary 2006*. Lagos: Negro Ltd., 2006.

⁴⁴⁵ Amba Mercy Oduyoye. 1992. *The Wesleyan presence in Nigeria 1842-1962—an exploration of power, control and partnership in Mission*. Ibadan: Sefer Books Ltd., pp.72 & 93.

Diocese, and he was recognised as the head of the Methodist Church in Western Nigeria District⁴⁴⁶.

Surprisingly, when Dada became Chairman, F. W. Dodds of the former Primitive Methodist Missionary Society wrote, confessing that he had never met him, and that Nigerian Methodists in the East and in the West of the Niger had different understanding of Methodism but it was never acknowledged openly. However, the London office brought together the two Districts which had been nurtured under the two British Methodist traditions to become Methodist Church Nigeria. That history cannot be glossed over⁴⁴⁷. Dodds' view is best understood in Ayandele's words: "The two Churches ran their Church administration in different ways. The Wesleyan Methodists always had a minister (clergy) as their President while the Primitive Methodists had a layman as their President."⁴⁴⁸

Methodist Church Nigeria became autonomous on September 28, 1962⁴⁴⁹. The Deed of foundation of Conference was signed in the old building of the Methodist Church, Tinubu, Lagos.⁴⁵⁰

Rev. Dr. Joseph O. E. Soremekun, who was the first African Secretary to Synod, became the first elected President in 1962. When he completed his five-year tenure of office, Rev. N. O. Salako was elected second President in January, 1968. His tenure witnessed trials and turbulence owing to the civil war which made it impossible for him to preside over a large portion of his flock.

On 4th October, 1972, Rev. Prof. Emmanuel Bolaji Idowu was elected President, Methodist Church Nigeria when Rev. N. O. Salako died suddenly. The new Constitution of Methodist Church Nigeria was ratified by the signing of the Deed of Constitution and Reform Order, with the inauguration of the Patriarchate and Episcopal structure of the Ministry of the Methodist Church Nigeria. The first Patriarch was His Pre-eminence Bolaji Idowu, from January 20, 1976 to January 20, 1985. These changes led to crisis and division within the

⁴⁴⁶ *Times*, Vol. XXI 8203.

⁴⁴⁷ Amba Mercy Oduyoye. 1992. *The Wesleyan presence in Nigeria 1842-1962—an exploration of power, control and partnership in Mission*. Ibadan: Sefer Books Ltd., p. 130.

⁴⁴⁸ E. A. Ayandele. 1966. *The missionary impact on modern Nigeria 1842-1914*. London: Longmans & Co. Ltd., p. 177.

⁴⁴⁹ This is the Lord's Doing. *Souvenir for the commemoration of the Patriarchy of Methodist Church Nigeria*. Written by His Pre-eminence Bolaji, Patriarch of Methodist Church Nigeria. Lagos: Literature Department, Methodist Church Nigeria, p. 8.

⁴⁵⁰ This is the Lord's Doing. *Souvenir for the commemoration of the Patriarchy of Methodist Church Nigeria*. Written by His Pre-eminence Bolaji, Patriarch of Methodist Church Nigeria. Lagos: Literature Department, Methodist Church Nigeria, p. 8.

Church⁴⁵¹. He was the one who indigenised Methodist Church Nigeria. From 1841-1975, the Church held on tenaciously to her heritage from the British Methodism. The titles of the hierarchy of the Church up to the time were Minister, Superintendent, Chairman and President, the titles John Wesley fashioned out to avoid naming his Church officers after those of the Anglican Church in Britain. These were replaced with Deacons, Ministers or Priests, Presbyters, Bishops, Metropolitan Archbishops and Patriarch.

At the Conference of the Church which was held at Oturkpo in August 1984,⁴⁵² the ministerial session of the Conference voted in favour of the retirement of the Patriarch (118 votes for; 25 against; and none neutral).⁴⁵³ When the Patriarch saw the result of the votes he raised a doxology,⁴⁵⁴ meaning that the decision of the Ministerial Session was acceptable and so ratified by the Representative Session. At the end of that Conference, the Electoral Committee met and a new Patriarch, His Pre-eminence Sunday Coffie Mbang, was elected.⁴⁵⁵

On 4th March, 1990 a joint service of reconciliation was held at Hoare's Memorial Methodist Cathedral, Yaba, Lagos, marking the end of the crisis; and on 24 March, 1990, a service for the signing of the formal documents of reunification was held also at Hoare's Memorial Methodist Cathedral, Yaba, Lagos. The constitution states that the hierarchy of the Ordained Ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria shall be as follows: Deacon, Priest, Presbyter, Bishop, Archbishop, and Prelate who will now be addressed as His Eminence; while the Lay Ministry of the Church shall consist of the orders of: Deaconesses, Sub-pastors, Lay preachers and other Church workers not already specifically mentioned.⁴⁵⁶

The Electoral Committee of Conference which met on Thursday, 10th August, 2006 at Wesley Chapel, Uyo, elected the Most Rev. Dr. Sunday Olatunji Makinde as the Prelate upon the completion of the term of office of the then incumbent, Prelate Sunday Mbang, and this election received the unanimous approval of Conference at its Representative Session at the Emmanuel Hart Memorial Cathedral, Itiam Etoi in the Diocese of Uyo on the same Thursday 10th August, 2006⁴⁵⁷. On Sunday 12th November, 2006, Service for the Investiture of The Most Rev. Dr. S. Ola. Makinde as Prelate was held in Methodist Church of the Trinity

⁴⁵¹ Important Dates in the life of Methodist Church Nigeria. *The Methodist Diary 2006*. Lagos: Negro Ltd., 2006.

⁴⁵² *1983 Minutes of the Annual Conference of the Methodist Church Nigeria*, p. 163.

⁴⁵³ *1983 Minutes of the Annual Conference of the Methodist Church Nigeria*, p. 164.

⁴⁵⁴ *1983 Minutes of the Annual Conference of the Methodist Church Nigeria*, p. 164.

⁴⁵⁵ Honore M. Sewakpo. 2007. The relevance of the guidelines for church administration in Titus to the Diocese of Remo, Methodist Church, Nigeria. MA Project. Department of Religious Studies. University of Ibadan, pp. 62-68.

⁴⁵⁶ *Methodist Church Nigeria Constitution 1990*, pp. 10-11.

⁴⁵⁷ Programme of Service, *Methodist Church Nigeria service for the investiture of The Most Rev. Dr. S. Ola. Makinde as Prelate*, p. 7.

Tinubu, Lagos. The same Conference approved the recent Constitution—The Constitution of Methodist Church Nigeria, 2006. Unlike the 1990 Constitution which groups Deaconess under Lay Ministry of the Church, the 2006 Constitution includes Deaconess in the hierarchy of the Ordained Ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria⁴⁵⁸.

Methodist Church Nigeria recognises two types of ministries: the Ordained Ministry and the Lay Ministry. The Ordained Ministry consists of Full Time Ministry and Tent-Making Ministry. The Full-Time Ministry is made up of persons who are ordained to the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments, who give their full time to their calling and subject to the normal itinerant principle of Methodist ministry. But the Tent-Making Ministry is made up of persons who, in addition to the other vocations or appointment by which they earn their livelihood, are found worthy and are ordained into the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments. They serve in the locality where they are engaged in their normal appointments and are auxiliaries to the Full-Time Ministerial Staff of the Church in the Dioceses where they live. Also, any Tent-Making Priest may opt for the Full Time Ministry if he fulfils conditions as the Conference may deem fit to lay down from time to time. While the Ordained Ministry of the Church consists of Prelate, Archbishop, Bishop, Presbyter, Priest, Deacon, and Deaconess; the Lay Ministry of the Church consists of Evangelists, Lay Preachers, and other Church Workers not already specifically mentioned.⁴⁵⁹

The pastoral ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria, has been at the forefront of spiritual and social transformation, by spreading spiritual holiness and investing in medical-health services and social-economic welfare of the people. The church has established various institutions like the leprosy centre, three mentally ill-destitute centres, and an orphanage centre for children orphaned by HIV/AIDS. These centres reach out to the rejected and less privileged members of society. They also ensure reintegration of those previously treated as outcast and subjected to various societal abuses. In the area of health, Methodist Church Nigeria has established the Wesley Guild Hospital and several Methodist hospitals spread over the country, which provide good health-care services in their environments. In addition to all other services, Methodist Church Nigeria has, from the beginning, placed a very strong emphasis on the need for education. Throughout the country, the church has established numerous schools, from kindergartens to primary schools to senior secondary schools to theological institutions, which have produced men and women who have contributed and are still contributing very significantly to all spheres of human endeavour.

⁴⁵⁸ *The Constitution of Methodist Church Nigeria 2006*, p. 26.

⁴⁵⁹ *The Constitution of Methodist Church Nigeria 2006*, pp. 26-29.

Also, Methodist Church Nigeria has now established the Wesley University of Science and Technology (WUSTO) in Ondo, south-western Nigeria, through which the Church provides not only academic excellence but spiritual holiness in the country.⁴⁶⁰

In sum, in Methodist Church Nigeria, the levels of pastoral ministry from 1842-1975 were as follows: Society—Leaders Meetings—Circuit—District—General Purposes Committee—Conference (with the titles: Minister, Superintendent, Chairman and President), with 7 Dioceses and 100 Ordained Ministers. From 1976-1989 she had: Local Church—Circuit—Diocese—Archdiocese—General Purposes Committee—Conference (with the titles: Deaconess—Deacon—Priest—Presbyter—Bishop—Archbishop—Patriarch), with 15 Dioceses and over 300 Ordained Ministers. As from 1990-2006, her levels of pastoral ministry were: Local Church—Circuit—Diocese—Archdiocese—Conference Connexional Council—Conference (with the titles: Deaconess—Deacon—Priest—Presbyter—Bishop—Archbishop—Prelate), with 44 Dioceses, 47 Bishops, 2000 Ordained Ministers, 400 Circuits and 2,000,000 congregations. And from 2007-2011 her levels of pastoral ministry were as follows: 11 Archdioceses, 67 Dioceses, 70 Bishops, 492 Circuits, 54 Sections, Ordained Ministers and over 3,000,000 congregations. Besides, the Church owns 1 tertiary institution, 72 secondary schools, 95 nursery and primary schools, 9 hospitals, 1 bookshop and 1 tailoring factory.⁴⁶¹ Also, the ministers of the Church are trained in 4 theological institutions; among them the Church owns 3 and jointly runs 1 with Anglican Church of Nigeria. Furthermore, the pastoral ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria, provides international outreach mission to Gabon, Togo, and Baltimore, Maryland in the USA.

6.3 Conversion experience and call to pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria

Emphasis on conversion experience and call is one of the distinctive shapes of the theological heritage of Methodist Church Nigeria. John Wesley and the early Methodists were particularly concerned about inviting people to have personal encounter with Christ. Today, less attention is paid to conversion experience and call in the pastoral ministry due to lack of knowledge about salvation. Whereas, the Damascus road experience of Paul enables him to know that God's intention has been to save the Gentiles. His pastoral ministry is a significant plank in the completion of that divine plan of salvation. The following

⁴⁶⁰ Methodist Church Nigeria. *World Council of Churches*. Retrieved December 30, 2011, from <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/home.html>.

⁴⁶¹ Paul O. Olukunga. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 48, Education Secretary, Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos, on September 08, 2011.

distinguishing marks of Paul's pastoral ministry are delineated in the Lucan and Pauline records of his conversion and call.

6.3.1 The grace of God

Grace is central to the Methodists' understanding of Christian faith and life. John Wesley described God's grace as threefold: (i) *Prevenient grace*: It is God's active presence in our lives. This presence is not dependent on human actions or human response. It is a gift that is always available, but can be refused. (ii) *Justifying grace*: Through the work of God in Christ our sins are forgiven, and our relationship with God is restored. Justifying grace is that which brings us into relationship with God. (iii) *Sanctifying grace*: It is God's gracious presence that transforms mankind into whom God intends them to be. Through sanctifying grace, an individual grows and matures in his ability to live as Jesus lived.⁴⁶²

Also, Paul emphasises his total dependence on divine grace. The whole success of his pastoral ministry was due to the grace of God. It was the source and power of his pastoral ministry. Paul's Damascus road experience was the source of this divine grace which Christ Jesus bestowed on him.

Conversion experience and call to pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria should be understood in the perspective of *the grace of God*, a distinctive mark of Paul's pastoral ministry. Pastoral ministry is service unto God. People should not enter into the service of the God that they have not encountered. God must make a man that He will use, and such making must be through divine encounter. A man not prepared by God would not succeed.⁴⁶³ Through conversion experience, the pastoral ministry would not be a failure because the Holy Spirit takes the lead and Christ is glorified.⁴⁶⁴

⁴⁶² Kenneth L. Carder. Our Wesleyan Theological Heritage.

<http://www.umc.org/site/c.lwL4KnNlH/b.2310047/>. Retrieved 10 September 2012.

⁴⁶³ Olusola Olurotimi Oyebola. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 51, Priest, Tent-Making Minister, Interviewed at Opebi Methodist Church, Ikeja, Lagos, on September 08, 2011.

⁴⁶⁴ Chinedum M. Eziuku. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 50, Head, Estate Department & Executive Director of Methodist Church Nigeria Property and Investment Company Ltd., Interviewed at Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos, on September 15, 2011.

Table 2: It is necessary for a man/woman to have personal conversion experience before he/she goes for the Pastoral Ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria.

Question	Response	Frequency	Percentage
It is necessary for a man/woman to have conversion experience before he/she goes for the Pastoral Ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria.	Yes	424	93.4
	No	27	5.9
	Total	451	99.3
	No response	3	0.7
	Total	454	100
State the reasons for your answer.	It's necessary, but not compulsory	26	5.7
	Holy calling or personal conversion is a divine calling	179	39.4
	It's the foundation of faith	48	10.6
	Yes It's the bedrock for understanding the word of God & be effective in his service	52	11.5
	It's the solid foundation for effective service of God	33	7.3
	It's the fortification and enablement of an individual by God	27	5.9
	You cannot offer what you don't have	7	1.5
	Total	372	81.9
	No response	82	18.1
	Total	454	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

Table 2 indicates that the majority of the respondents (93.4%) agreed that it is necessary for a man/woman to have conversion experience before he/she goes for the Pastoral Ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria, while only an insignificant percentage (5.9%) claimed it is not necessary for a man/woman to have conversion experience before he/she goes for the Pastoral Ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria. This is heart-warming considering the importance of conversion experience for the pastoral ministry. Moreover, 39.4% of the

respondents saw pastoral ministry as divine calling, and 10.6% saw conversion as the foundation of faith. While 7.3% saw conversion as a means of effective service and 11.5% affirmed that it is the bedrock for understanding the Word of God, 5.9% claimed that conversion is the fortification and enablement of an individual by God.

In confirmation of the above result, a male member of the Ordained Ministry, who had personal conversion experience in the course of an in-depth oral interview said:

Everyone involved in Pastoral Ministry must have a personal relationship with His Maker. This point is particularly underscored by the personal experience of the founder of Methodism, John Wesley. Conversion experience is a transformation whereby we die to the flesh (the things of the world) and put on Christ through His Spirit so that our focus now becomes heavenward. We are no longer controlled by the flesh but by the Holy Spirit. For us to be very effective in the Pastoral Ministry, we must have a personal experience that would inform our sharing and God's story.⁴⁶⁵

Therefore, conversion experience gives one a new life if genuinely converted. It gives joy that is inexplicable. It gives peace.⁴⁶⁶ Giving credence to this view, the Legal Adviser of Methodist Church Nigeria, who participated in the in-depth interview, averred that there are self-called and God-called pastors in Methodist Church Nigeria.⁴⁶⁷ Also, a tent-making minister maintained that there were many pastors, but only a few had conversion experience.⁴⁶⁸ Another possible reason for having in the Church some ministers without personal encounter with God is the non-in-depth study of the Word of God. On this the Methodist Archbishop of Lagos said:

As far as we live, we are in the school of the Word of God and that we cannot exhaust the syllabus of the kingdom of God that Jesus Christ brought to the world for us to learn from. Not only the new converts should learn how to be a follower of Jesus Christ, but also all believers need to learn how to continuously be followers of Jesus Christ. It is continuous study of the Word

⁴⁶⁵ Adebowale Onabanjo. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 41, Priest, Tent-Making Minister, Interviewed at Opebi Methodist Church, Ikeja, Lagos, on September 08, 2011.

⁴⁶⁶ Maltida Iyabode G. S. Sobogun. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 58, Deaconess, Tent-Making Minister, Interviewed at Williams Memorial Methodist Cathedral, Ebute-Metta, Lagos, on September 16, 2011.

⁴⁶⁷ Francis F. Aremu. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 67, Legal Adviser of Methodist Church Nigeria, Methodist Church Nigeria Representative at the World Methodist Council & Senior Advocate of Nigeria, Interviewed at Methodist Cathedral Agedge, Tabon Tabon, Lagos, on September 18, 2011.

⁴⁶⁸ Ebenezer A. Oluwatoba. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 47, General Manager, Methodist Church, Nigeria Bookshops Ltd., Interviewed at Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos, on September 09, 2011.

of God that leads to total dependence on Him. But the approach of some ministers towards the study of the Word of God is poor.⁴⁶⁹

Most respondents agreed that there is poor biblical teaching in the Church. A tent-making minister opined that some ministers have very little knowledge of the Word of God and do not spend enough time studying the same.⁴⁷⁰ This results in poor spiritual development in the Church. An assistant choirmaster, who is also a journalist, claimed that there were little or no adequate programmes for spiritual growth in some local churches.⁴⁷¹ A Presbyter averred that there is poor discipleship from some pastors.⁴⁷² Also, one of the laity said many pastors had no regular programmes for spiritual development and as a result some of them could not help their members to know the mind of God concerning their lives. This has made many members to run from church to church in order to know God's plan for their lives.⁴⁷³ It is imperative that both the Ordained and the Laity should endeavour to have personal conversion experience. Therefore, *the grace of God* is crucial for effective pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria.

6.3.2 The content

The content of John Wesley's pastoral ministry is seen in his teaching of the Scripture. According to him the gospel offers freedom in Christ. Consequently, he taught that all children of God are given freedom not only from the guilt of sin through justification but also its power through regeneration and sanctification.⁴⁷⁴

Also, Paul employs a cluster of Old Testament priestly and cultic terms to describe the content of his pastoral ministry. It is the priestly duty to proclaiming the gospel of God. He acts on Christ's behalf by discharging his priestly responsibilities. Commenting on the content of Paul's Damascus road experience Pope Benedict avers that the "fundamental content of his conversion, the new direction his life took as a result of his encounter with the Risen Christ, was a totally new recognition of how one is saved. Before his conversion, as a

⁴⁶⁹ Joseph Sunday Ajayi. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 65, Archbishop of Lagos, Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Wesley Cathedral, Olowogbowo, Lagos, on December 03, 2011.

⁴⁷⁰ Oludayo Kufeji. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 48, Priest, Tent Making Minister & Administration/Facility Management, Interviewed at Trinity Church Council, Methodist Church of the Trinity, Tinubu, Lagos, on September 09, 2011.

⁴⁷¹ Soji Onafowokan. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 41, Assistant Choirmaster & Journalist, Interviewed at Patriarch Bolaji Methodist Cathedral, Ita-Elewa, Ikorodu on November 06, 2011.

⁴⁷² M. B. O. Arogundade. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 49, Presbyter, Interviewed at City Mission Methodist Church, Surulere, Lagos, on September 08, 2011.

⁴⁷³ B. O. Eleso. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 30, Youth Officer, Interviewed at Patriarch Bolaji Methodist Cathedral, Ita-Elewa, Ikorodu on November 06, 2011.

⁴⁷⁴ Andrew Dragos. *The Gospel according to John Wesley offers freedom in Christ*. Retrieved September 11, 2013, from <http://seedbed.com/feed/the-gospel-according-to-john-wesley-offers-freedom-in-christ/>

Pharisee, he believed that one was saved by doing good works according to the Mosaic Law. It was in defence of the Mosaic Law that Paul, with great zeal, persecuted the early Church. After the encounter with the Lord Jesus, however, he realised that holiness depends on the pure grace of God (Rom 3:24)".⁴⁷⁵ One of the most common inadequate notions of holiness is the one closest to St. Paul's formerly false understanding. When many who actually seek holiness think about advancing on the path to sanctity, they consider first their own works, their own fidelity to God and their own acts of love. These human acts are all, indisputably, part of the pursuit of holiness, but they are a secondary part. The main means to holiness is given to us by God.

The type of conversion that Paul's Damascus road experience is meant to provoke in the pastoral ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria is a transformation from whatever wrong notion of the Christian life the clergy and the laity have. Through a continual encounter with Christ, they become gradually united to him who is holiness incarnate. This is what happened with St. Paul, who was eventually able to say, humbly to the Galatians, "I have been crucified with Christ and it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal 2:20) and to the Philippians, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Phil 1:21). Holiness comes through union with Christ, in whom we can do all things and without whom we can do nothing (Phil 4:3; Jn 15:5). Conversion experience and call to pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria should be accentuated in the area of *the content* of its pastoral ministry. Everyone involved in pastoral ministry must see St. Paul beckons him or her, as he once implored the first Christians, "Imitate me as I imitate Christ" (1Cor 11:1). In other words, "Imitate me in conversion, so that you may imitate me in holiness, just as I imitated the Lord." The same Lord whom Paul met on the road to Damascus we will hear and meet. If we are yet to have personal encounter with Christ, it is possible to have it even in the course of our pastoral ministry.⁴⁷⁶ It was so for John Wesley who did not encounter Christ at the point of entry into his pastoral ministry, but later had it at the Aldersgate Street. The Church should emphasise on that encounter which is able to change our lives like it changed Paul's so that, converted to the truth path of holiness, we, like Paul, may be God's supple instruments through which he may change the world.

⁴⁷⁵ Roger Landry. 2009. The Fundamental Content of St. Paul's Conversion. *The Anchor*, January 23, 2009:2 <http://www.catholicpreaching.com/the-fundamental-content-of-st-pauls-conversion-the-anchor-january-23-2009-2/>. Retrieved 01June 2013.

⁴⁷⁶ Adebowale Onabanjo. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 41, Priest, Tent-Making Minister, Interviewed at Opebi Methodist Church, Ikeja, Lagos, on September 08, 2011. In fact, Paul's Damascus road experience was described as a divine revelation by MCN 2006 Constitution.

Table 3: There are cases of those who enter the Pastoral Ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria first and later had personal encounter with Christ.

Question	Response	Frequency	Percentage	
There are cases of those who enter the Pastoral Ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria first and later had personal experience.	Yes	335	73.8	
	No	47	10.4	
	Total	382	84.1	
	No response	72	15.9	
	Total	454	100	
State the results of not having personal encounter with Christ before entering the ministry.	Yes	Lack of knowledge about salvation	187	40.7
		Absence of the Holy Spirit	79	17.4
		Not able to fulfil aims of pastoral ministry	50	11
		No personal relationship with Christ	10	2.2
		Withdraw to other denomination or quit church entirely	4	0.9
		Confusion and destabilisation	6	1.3
		Novice about God's Ministry	2	0.4
	Total	338	73.9	
	No response	116	26.1	
	Total	454	100	

Source: Field Survey, 2011

Table 3 shows the percentages of cases of those who entered the Pastoral Ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria first and later had personal encounter with Christ and the implications. Of this, a total of 73.8 % of the respondents agreed that there are cases of those who entered the pastoral ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria first and later had personal experience of conversion; while 10.4% of the respondents were of the view there were no such cases in Methodist Church Nigeria. This attests to the following implications which absence of personal experience at the point of entry into pastoral ministry of the Church may have on the prospective ministers. Commenting on the results, 40.7% of the respondents claimed that one of them is lack of knowledge about salvation, 17.4% said it is absence of the Holy Spirit, and 11% affirmed that absence of personal experience at the point of entry into

pastoral ministry of the Church will result in not being able to fulfil aims of pastoral ministry. In addition, 2.2% of the respondents attested that the implication is to have no personal relationship with Christ, 1.3% saw it as confusion and destabilisation, 0.9% said it will lead them to withdraw to other denomination or quit church entirely, and 0.4% confirmed that the implication is that they will be novices about God's ministry.

Giving credence to this view, a male member of the ordained ministry observed that conversion experience should be an important part that would qualify people's admission into the Pastoral Ministry of the Church. He argues that "besides personal encounter with Christ, there is nothing else that can seriously validate a person's calling and gifts at the point of entry into pastoral ministry. Everybody is trained to be placed over a church, whereas we do not all have pastoral calling or gift."⁴⁷⁷

A tent-making minister further alluded that the reason for poor performance in pastoral ministry is due to the way by which Methodist Church Nigeria admits people into its pastoral ministry. According to him:

If Methodist Church Nigeria is to address the poor quality of candidates admitted into pastoral ministry, it needs to completely overhaul the requirements and qualifications for admission. While some attempts have been made to improve on the quality of candidates admitted into full-time ministry, a whole lot still needs to be done if the church wants to continue to remain a leading denomination. For the tent-making ministry, the concept has been bastardized with the lowering of the standards such that those that have no business in pastoral ministry have managed to wangle their way into the tent-making ministry. The yardstick for selection of pastoral candidates requires continuous review and improvement to ensure that the clergy can continue to have the respect of the congregation in terms of leadership qualities.⁴⁷⁸

In this way, the spiritual developments of the membership is promoted by preaching Christ-centred and biblically sound sermons, leading Bible studies and providing other spiritual and Christian leadership instructions for the congregants. Hence, *the content*, which is a unique mark of Paul's pastoral ministry, is a very important tool for effective pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria. It makes us to become more like St. Paul in total loving adhesion to, and dependence on, God, who wills us to be saved and come to intimate communion with Him (1 Tim 4:3).

⁴⁷⁷ J. Olu Akinola. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 50, Bishop, Interviewed at Methodist Cathedral Agedge, Tabon Tabon, Lagos, on December 04, 2011.

⁴⁷⁸ Adebowale Onabanjo. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 41, Priest, Tent-Making Minister, Interviewed at Opebi Methodist Church, Ikeja, Lagos, on September 08, 2011.

6.3.3 The goal

The goal of Paul’s pastoral ministry is the salvation of the entire world (Rom 1:15-19). Paul feels himself under an all-subduing obligation to carry the gospel to all classes of humankind (1Co 9:16). Stating the goal of his pastoral ministry, John Wesley declares:

I look upon all the world as my parish; thus far I mean, that, in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty to declare unto all that are willing to hear, the glad tidings of salvation. This is the work which I know God has called me to; and sure I am that His blessing attends it. Great encouragement have I, therefore, to be faithful in fulfilling the work He hath given me to do. His servant I am, and, as such, am employed according to the plain direction of His Word, ‘As I have opportunity, doing good unto all men’; and His providence clearly concurs with his Word; which has disengaged me from all things else, that I might singly attend on this very thing, ‘and go about doing good’.⁴⁷⁹

John Wesley pursued this goal which eventually led to the World Methodist Church. Therefore, it is imperative that every clergy seeks the specific goal of his or her pastoral ministry. However, this type of goal can only be known after having personal encounter with Christ.

Table 4: There is the need to know from God if the call is for Full-Time or Part-Time.

Question	Response	Frequency	Percentage	
There is the need to know from God if the call is for full-time or part-time.	Yes	331	72.9	
	No	103	22.7	
	Total	434	95.6	
	No response	20	4.4	
	Total	454	100	
State the reasons for your answer.	Yes	It is for the fulfilment of the ministry	78	17.2
		God does not need to tell you before working for Him	133	29.3
		It validates God’s directive on the ministry	87	19.2
		It is personal conviction	12	2.6
		It corrects parental and sponsor’s persuasions into the ministry	4	0.9
		God determines everything, whether you are called into full-time or part-time ministry	6	1.3
	Total	320	70.5	

⁴⁷⁹ John Wesley.1951.*The JJW*. Chicago: Moody Press, pp.42-43.

No response	134	29.5
Total	454	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

Table 4 assesses respondents' opinions on the need to know from God if the call is for full-time or part-time. The table indicates that most respondents (72.9%) agreed that there is a need to know from God if the call is to be full-time or part-time. The reasons are that for 17.2% of the respondents is the fulfilment of the ministry, 19.2% said the reason is God's directive on the ministry, and 0.9% claimed that it corrects parental and sponsor's persuasions into the ministry. Only 22.7% of the respondents argued that there is no need to know from God if the call is to be full-time or part-time. While, 29.3% affirmed that God does not need to tell you before working for Him, 2.6% argued that it is personal, and 1.3% opined that God determines everything, whether you are called into full-time or part-time ministry.

Conversion experience and call to pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria should be analysed from the point of view of *goal*. The goal of Methodist Church Nigeria is known in the *vision* and the *mission* of the Church. The *vision* is "to be one of the largest and spiritually vibrant churches in Nigeria", while the *mission* is "to consistently win more souls for Christ, develop spiritually fulfilled members and remain very active in serving humanity". As beautiful as the vision and the mission of the Church are, the way to achieve them has been a matter of concern to the Church. This view is corroborated by Edwards, who avers that the goal of conversion is spiritual transformation.⁴⁸⁰ Indeed, Paul looks not only for Gentiles' acceptance of the gospel, but also for their growth in Christian maturity and perfection as well. Since the Damascus road experience was responsible for Paul to achieve the goal of his pastoral ministry, conversion experience is a necessity for both the ordained and the laity; conversion is probably the only means to achieve that vision and mission of the Church.

6.3.4 The redemptive activity of God

The risen Christ used Paul to accomplish his purposes by the Spirit's enablement. He was God's special envoy to the nations. But the reference to "signs and wonders which he performed" shows that his missionary calling was part and parcel of *God's redemptive activity*.

⁴⁸⁰ Jonathan Edwards. 1959. *Religious affections*. John E. Smith. Ed. New Haven: Yale University Press, p. 233.

Conversion experience and call to pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria underscores *the redemptive activity of God*.

Table 5: If somebody comes out in response to an altar call, it is only the message of that day that wins him/her to Christ.

Question	Response	Frequency	Percentage	
If somebody comes out in response to an altar call, it is <u>only</u> the message of that day that won him/her to Christ.	Yes	134	29.5	
	No	267	58.8	
	Total	401	88.3	
	No response	53	11.7	
	Total	454	100	
State the reasons for your answer.	Yes	It is time for the plan of God to actualise in him/her	39	8.6
		Altar call after hearing a message	25	5.5
		People respond to altar call for the fun of it	12	2.6
	No	Constant hearing of the word of God	126	27.8
		It is God that wins the hearers of the Word to Himself.	83	18.3
		It depends on personal relationship with God	11	2.4
	Total	296	65.2	
	No response	158	34.8	
	Total	454	100	

Source: Field Survey, 2011

As evident in Table 5, somebody's acceptance of Jesus Christ may be as a response to an altar call. The result shows that 29.5% of the respondents agreed that if somebody answered an altar call, it is only the message of that day that wins him/her to Christ, while 58.8% of them disagreed. Advancing their reasons, 18.3% of the respondents claimed that it is God that wins the hearers of the Word to Himself, and 27.8% said it is constant hearing of the word of God that leads to somebody being won to Christ. However, 5.5% argued that it is the altar call which comes after hearing a message, 8.6% averred that for somebody to be won to Christ is time for God to actualise his plan in him/her. But 2.6% posited that people respond to altar call for the fun of it, and 2.4% observed that it depends on personal

relationship with God. Everything that a person needs comes from God, the material things, the inspiration and the ministry will be developing. He will be transforming the lives of people.⁴⁸¹ Therefore, like Paul, the ordained and the laity of the Church should ensure that their activities in the pastoral ministry among Nigerians stand within a salvation-historical framework, to which the purposes of God for the saving of both their members and non-members are closely bound. That work was itself one of those redemptive acts of God.

6.3.5 The results

The results of Paul's pastoral ministry were extraordinary. He affirms that Christ's dynamic activity through him led to the result "that from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, I have fulfilled the gospel of Christ" (Romans 15:19). His journeys were purposeful, not sporadic, random invasion of Gentile lands. His claim to have "fulfilled the gospel of Christ" is probably a reference to the scope of his missionary activity. This is represented in his primary evangelism, the nurture of Christians and the establishment of settled congregations. Paul is not suggesting that he had evangelised all the small towns and country districts of these eastern regions, much less that he had preached the gospel to every person there. These amazing results were possibly an outcome of his Damascus road experience.

Table 6: One needs to receive a specific call of God, like Paul, before entering into the Pastoral Ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria.

Question	Response	Frequency	Percentage	
One needs to receive a specific call, like Paul, before entering into the Pastoral Ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria.	Yes	346	76.2	
	No	84	18.5	
	Total	430	94.7	
	No response	24	5.3	
	Total	454	100	
State the reasons for your answer.	Yes	Its receipt enables the candidate to be filled with the Holy Spirit	101	22.2
		There are different ways of calling of Christians, pastors, etc	79	17.4
		It helps to have a sense of commitment to effective pastoral ministry	57	12.6
		Divine call is for special, specific or various duties	45	9.9
		It is necessary to seek for more guidance from God	13	2.9
		It guides against being influenced by action or vision	1	0.2
	No	Not necessary	57	12.6

⁴⁸¹ Senami Olanrewaju. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 43, Teacher, Sunday Department, Interviewed at Ajara Methodist Church, Badagry, Lagos, on September 14, 2011.

Total	353	77.8
No response	101	22.2
Total	454	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

As observed from Table 6, different reasons were given by respondents as to whether one needs to receive the specific call of God, like Paul, before entering into the pastoral ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria. The table reveals that 18.5% of the respondents believed that one does not need to receive the specific call of God like Paul and 12.6% said it is not necessary. But 76.2% of them agreed that one needs to receive a specific call of God, like Paul, before entering into the pastoral ministry. Furthermore, 17.4% posited that there are different ways of calling of Christians, pastors, etc. Also, 22.2% affirmed that its reception enables the candidate into the ministry to be filled with the Holy Spirit, 12.6% said it helps to have sense of commitment to effective pastoral ministry, and 9.9% claimed that it enables the candidate to have divine call to special, specific or various duties. In addition, 2.9% opined that it aids to seek for more guidance from God, and 0.2% averred that it guides against being influenced by action and vision. These are the reasons given to strengthen their arguments.

Conversion experience and call to pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria should be viewed from the angle of *the results*. Paul's conversion encourages any person who is an evangelist to be a dogged minister with aggressive evangelism.⁴⁸² In 2012, Methodist Church Nigeria was 170 years old in Nigeria. Its membership is over 3.5 million, with international outreach missions to Togo, Gabon, and Maryland, in the US. These results are not so fascinating. If both the ordained and the laity have conversion experience, the results will be as extraordinary as Paul's.

6.3.6 The passion

Paul was consistent with his all-consuming passion of proclaiming the gospel where Christ had not been acknowledged or worshipped. This was Paul's ambition which guided the overall direction of his life. He did not wish to build on another's foundation, for primary evangelism was an integral part of his missionary work. As we have seen, his pastoral ministry was not concluded until he had instructed the Christians and left a mature settled congregation. Paul's deep-seated compassion for the lost was at one with the Lord's kindness shown to needy Gentiles. It was at Damascus road that Christ gave Paul His gracious redemption plan for the Gentiles and the world.

⁴⁸² Moses Zannu Ogunbiyi. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 70, Circuit Steward, Interviewed at Ajara Methodist Church, Badagry, Lagos, on September 14, 2011.

Table 7: Anyone who receives a call into the Pastoral Ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria must abandon his secular work.

Question	Response	Frequency	Percentage	
Anyone who receives a call into the Pastoral Ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria must abandon his secular work.	Yes	166	36.6	
	No	259	57	
	Total	425	93.6	
	No response	29	6.4	
	Total	454	100	
State the reasons for your answer.	Yes	Full-time means commitment, dedication and concentration	106	23.3
		It requires using everything: your wealth, money and knowledge to serve God	12	2.6
	No	Not necessary	86	18.9
		Ministers are treated like beggars	28	6.2
		Some may be called for part-time purposes	29	6.4
		It should be based on God's directive	81	17.8
		It depends on individuals	15	3.3
	Total	357	78.6	
	No response	97	21.4	
	Total	454	100	

Source: Field Survey, 2011

Table 7 presents the feedback of respondents as regards whether the receipt of a call into the pastoral ministry should involve leaving one's secular work. The result indicates that 36.6 % of the respondents claimed that anyone who receives a call must abandon his secular work, while 57% of them said that anyone who receives a call must not abandon his secular work. They advanced different reasons to support the arguments. While 18.9% said it is not necessary, 17.8% claimed it should be based on God's directive, and 6.2% opined that because ministers are treated like beggars, they should not leave their secular job. Moreover, 23.3% observed that full-time means total commitment, dedication and concentration, and 6.4% averred that some may be called for part-time purposes. However, 6% stated it requires

using everything (wealth, money and knowledge) to serve God, and 3.3% remarked that it depends on individuals.

Conversion experience and call to pastoral ministry should be understood from the perspective of *passion*. John Wesley was an ordained minister in the Church of England but he sought for conversion experience and got it. Conversion is what qualifies anybody to be a minister of God. When we are converted to Christ, then we live our lives for Him and tell people about Him. But if we are not converted, the *passion* to win souls for Christ will not be there.⁴⁸³ Anyone who claims that he/she is called of God to join the pastoral ministry of the Church must be able to lay aside all encumbrances that may affect his/her ministry and transfer his/her zeal in the former religion or service to the pastoral ministry and Christianity. He/she should put aside the old nature and let everything be new for him/her to be able to satisfy the One who has called him.⁴⁸⁴ Therefore, *passion to win souls*, a distinctive mark of Paul's pastoral ministry, is a necessity for both the Ordained and the Laity in order to achieve the *vision* and the *mission* of the Church.

We may summarise the foregoing conversion experience and call to pastoral ministry in the context of Paul's conversion and call as follows: First, Paul's conversion, call and mission to be an apostle to the Gentiles were rooted in his Damascus road Christophany. Second, Paul's personal messianic encounter and commission on the Damascus road were responsible for the distinguishing marks (*the grace of God, the content, the goal, God's redemptive activity, the results and the passion*) of his effective pastoral ministry. Third, Conversion experience and call are an act of God, not of man, and must be the hallmark of pastoral ministry. Concerted efforts must be made at every opportunity to encourage both the ordained and the laity to have personal messianic encounter. "Moreover, the pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria must allow the Holy Spirit to have his way in admission process, training of pastors, stationing, ministerial work, etc."⁴⁸⁵ This will assist the Church, in no small measure, to achieve her vision and mission in no distant time. Fourth, the study shows lack of conversion experience by some members of the clergy as the problem in the pastoral ministry.

6.4 Causes of ineffectiveness in pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria

⁴⁸³ Joseph Sunday Ajayi. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 65, Archbishop of Lagos, Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Wesley Cathedral, Olowogbowo, Lagos, on December 03, 2011.

⁴⁸⁴ Amos K. Olu Ogunrinde. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 41, Deputy Director, Evangelism & Discipleship, Interviewed at Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos, on September 15, 2011.

⁴⁸⁵ Olusegun Sofunke. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 59, Lay President, Diocese of Lagos, Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Wesley Cathedral, Olowogbowo, Lagos, on September 08, 2011.

Pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria according to some respondents⁴⁸⁶ is dynamic and progressive but it has some shortcomings. Based on the quantitative and qualitative data collected from our various respondents, the following are possible shortcomings to its effectiveness:

Table 8: The ineffectiveness in the Pastoral Ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria is caused by receiving a Pastoral call in the Ministry through other influences rather than the Spirit of God.

Question	Response	Frequency	Percentage	
The ineffectiveness in the Pastoral Ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria is caused by receiving a Pastoral call in the Ministry through other influences rather than the Spirit of God.	Yes	299	65.9	
	No	61	13.4	
	Total	360	79.3	
	No response	94	20.7	
	Total	454	100	
State the reasons for your answer.	Yes	Its receipt through other influences leads to confusion	92	20.3
		There would be no revelation	76	16.7
		Money enticement & selfish desires	29	6.4
		Godfatherism and earthly fathers (parents) influence instead of God's Spirit	71	15.7
		There is difference between being gifted and being called of God	12	2.6
		If a pastoral call is received by flesh instead of by the Spirit of God	6	1.3
	Total	286	63.1	
	No response	168	36.9	
	Total	454	100	

Source: Field Survey, 2011

Table 8 above captures the respondents' views on receipt of a pastoral call in the ministry through other influences rather than the Spirit of God as a major cause of ineffectiveness in the pastoral ministry. Among them, 13.4% disagreed, in contrast with 65.9% who claimed that the ineffectiveness in the pastoral ministry is caused by receiving a

⁴⁸⁶ Jacob Kehinde Adeyemi. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 45, Bishop, Diocese of Lagos Central, Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Williams Memorial Cathedral, Ebute-Metta, Lagos, on September 16, 2011. Kenneth Egbochue. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 42, Deputy Director, Evangelism and Discipleship, Interviewed at Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos, on September 15, 2011. Gbemisola Elizabeth Solana. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 40, Relief Fund Steward, Diocese of Lagos West, Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Methodist Church Odi-Olowo, Lagos, on September 18, 2011. Gbemisola Omojola. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 36, Lay Preacher and Sunday School Superintendent, Diocese of Ikorodu, Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Patriarch Bolaji Idowu Methodist Cathedral, Ita-Elewa, Ikorodu, on November 06, 2011. Taiwo Somoye. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 30, Member, Diocesan Youth Executive Officers, Diocese of Lagos, Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Methodist Church Cathedral Agege, Tabon Tabon, Lagos, on September 18, 2011. Peter Metonu Akande. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 46, Tent Making Minister, Diocese of Ikorodu, Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Igbogbo Methodist Church, Igbogbo, Ikorodu, on November 06, 2011.

pastoral call in the Ministry through other influences rather than the Spirit of God, while 20.7% were indifferent. Stating the reasons for ineffectiveness in the pastoral ministry, 20.3% of the respondents claimed that the receipt of the pastoral call in the ministry through other influences rather than the Spirit of God leads to confusion, and 16.7% observed that there would be no revelation on the part of such ministers that joined pastoral ministry of the Church through other influences apart from the Spirit of God.

On this, a tent-making minister observed that many ministers fail to discover the areas of their calling. That is, every minister wants to be evangelist, teacher, administrator, pastor, and so on. This is affecting effectiveness in pastoral ministry.⁴⁸⁷ The Bishop of Lagos Mainland added that the admission procedure into the ordained ministry needs to be looked into in order to have effective pastoral ministry. He noted that the issue of age restriction, which has excluded those above 50 years from joining the ordained ministry (especially tent-making ministry) of the Church, despite the fact that these people have genuine conversion and pastoral call, is a major cause of ineffectiveness in pastoral ministry. He added that most of the people who are adding value to the Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion at the moment are the tent-making ministers.⁴⁸⁸

The table also shows that 15.7% of the respondents opined that godfatherism and earthly fathers (parents) influence the call into the ministry. Buttressing this point, the President of Progressive Band of Hope mentioned the issue of godfatherism which influences the posting and promoting of some ministers at the expense of others.⁴⁸⁹ Regrettably, unhealthy rivalry exists among the full-time ministers and the tent-making ministers and between the ordained and the laity, as expressed by a senior lay preacher.⁴⁹⁰

Furthermore, the table reveals that 1.3% of respondents stated that people receive a pastoral call through the flesh rather than through the Spirit of God, and 2.6% opined that there is difference between being a gifted preacher and being called. This view was shared by a member of the clergy from the headquarters of Methodist Church Nigeria. He claimed that the posting of many ministers who are already in the field is sometimes not done according to

⁴⁸⁷ Olusola Olurotimi Oyebola. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 51, Priest, Tent-Making Minister, Interviewed at Opebi Methodist Church, Ikeja, Lagos, on September 08, 2011.

⁴⁸⁸ Oladapo O. Babalola. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 47, Bishop, Interviewed at Hoare's Memorial Methodist Cathedral, Yaba, Lagos, on December 02, 2011.

⁴⁸⁹ Rosary Okoro. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 65, President, Progressive Band of Hope Society, Interviewed at Cathedral of Blessing, Palm Avenue, Mushin, Lagos, on September 18, 2011.

⁴⁹⁰ C. O. Sowumi. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 71, Lay Preacher, Interviewed at Methodist Cathedral Agedge, Tabon Tabon, Lagos, on September 18, 2011.

the ministers' talents and gifts. Thus, there is little or no result.⁴⁹¹ According to a member of the laity, individual interest now surpasses the corporate interest; some pastors love themselves more than the Church.⁴⁹² Besides, a tent-making minister⁴⁹³ said that in those days, the emphasis on admitting people into pastoral ministry was on genuine conversion and call but, nowadays, academic qualification is the priority. However, a Presbyterian averred that the measurement of ministers' performance should not only be on payment of church assessment. The payment of assessment is important in the running of the church, but it should not be more important than soul winning.⁴⁹⁴

On other causes of ineffectiveness in the pastoral ministry 6.4% of respondents mentioned money and selfish desires among others. This view was shared by the Bishop of Lagos Central. He observed that the corruption in the society has crept into the Church and some people will like to do anything for money.⁴⁹⁵ Similarly, a Presbyterian said the economy of the country is bad and the number of people telling lies in order to seek financial assistance from the Church is quite alarming.⁴⁹⁶ Thus, corruption and unfaithfulness are responsible for ineffectiveness in the pastoral ministry.

Table 9: The ineffectiveness in the Pastoral Ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria is caused by disregarding the fact that one's spouse matters much in one's success in the Ministry.

Question	Response	Frequency	Percentage
The ineffectiveness in the Pastoral Ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria is caused by disregarding the fact that one's spouse matters much in one's success in the Ministry.	Yes	301	66.3
	No	71	15.6
	Total	372	81.9
	No response	82	18.1
	Total	454	100
State the reasons for your answer.	Yes	The society and the church have not helped one's spouse to contribute positively to pastoral ministry	46 10.1

⁴⁹¹ Sunday Olasoji Onadipe. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 47, Director of Administration, Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos, on December 02, 2011.

⁴⁹² Francis F. Aremu. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 67, Legal Adviser of Methodist Church Nigeria, Methodist Church Nigeria Representative at the World Methodist Council & Senior Advocate of Nigeria, Interviewed at Methodist Cathedral Agedge, Tabon Tabon, Lagos, on September 18, 2011.

⁴⁹³ Olufisayo Temitayo Aribaba. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 47, Priest, Tent-Making Minister & Ophthalmic Surgeon, Interviewed at Williams Memorial Methodist Cathedral, Ebute-Metta, Lagos, on September 26, 2011.

⁴⁹⁴ M. B. O. Arogundade. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 49, Presbyterian, Interviewed at City Mission Methodist Church, Surulere, Lagos, on September 08, 2011.

⁴⁹⁵ Jacob Kehinde Adeyemi. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 45, Bishop, Interviewed at Williams Memorial Methodist Cathedral, Ebute-Metta, Lagos, on September 16, 2011.

⁴⁹⁶ Isaac Olajire. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 42, Presbyterian, Interviewed at Araromi Wesley Circuit, Lagos, on September 15, 2011.

	A divided home is not good for God's work	65	14.3
	Spouses, as partners in the ministry, must agree	104	24
	One's success in the ministry depends on God	3	0.7
	Total	223	49.1
	No response	231	50.9
	Total	454	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

Table 9 is on the fact that the ineffectiveness in the pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria is caused by disregarding the fact that one's spouse matters much in one's success in the ministry. The majority of the respondents (66.3%) of the respondents answered in the affirmative, while only 15.6% disagreed. A total of 10.1% respondents claimed that the society and the church have not helped one's spouse to contribute positively to pastoral ministry; 24% averred that spouses, as partners in the pastoral ministry must agree; while 14.3% observed that a divided home is not good for God's work. On this, a Relief Fund Steward noted that the connexional system of the Church has been poorly executed. She remarked that the posting of some of the ministers do not take into consideration the welfare of their families. As a result, many spouses are living apart. The education of their children is negatively affected, and many of their wives become jobless.⁴⁹⁷ The posting of newly commissioned ministers is not done with due consultation with the heads of theological institutions which trained them. It is probable that the confidential reports of the newly commissioned ministers were not comprehensive enough or some heads of theological institutions do not send them at all. This poor execution of the connexional system of the Church is expressed by a clergyman⁴⁹⁸. One of the laity added that the environmental difficulties had already affected what should be and there is now the problem of coping with the gap created by what should be.⁴⁹⁹ A Presbyterian stated that the cultural diversity of some

⁴⁹⁷ Elisabeth Gbemisola Solana. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 40, Relief Fund Steward, Interviewed at Methodist Church Odi Olowo, Lagos, on September 18, 2011.

⁴⁹⁸ Amos K. Olu Ogunrinde. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 41, Deputy Director, Evangelism & Discipleship, Interviewed at Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos, on September 15, 2011.

⁴⁹⁹ Francis F. Aremu. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 67, Legal Adviser of Methodist Church Nigeria, Methodist Church Nigeria Representative at the World Methodist Council & Senior Advocate of Nigeria, Interviewed at Methodist Cathedral Agedge, Tabon Tabon, Lagos, on September 18, 2011.

ministers and that of some of the laity has a lot of adverse influence on the pastoral ministry in the Church. But 0.7% of the respondents posited that one's success in the ministry depends on God. This view is true of Proverbs 21:31, "The horse is made ready for the day of battle, but the victory belongs to the Lord."

Table 10: The ineffectiveness in the Pastoral Ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria is caused by lack of commitment to service and loss of self-esteem.

Question	Response	Frequency	Percentage
The ineffectiveness in the Pastoral Ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria is caused by lack of commitment to service and loss of self-esteem.	Yes	296	65.2
	No	52	11.5
	Total	348	76.7
	No response	106	23.3
	Total	454	100
State the reasons for your answer.	Yes		
	Full-commitment results in effective pastoral ministry	117	25.8
	Poor study of the scriptures is caused by lack of commitment to service and loss of self-esteem	135	29.6
	Self-esteem, you have to be yourself	36	7.9
	Lack of missionary vision of ministers in the Church	59	13
	There is lack of commitment because calling is seen as a means of livelihood	18	4
	Frustration and lack of faith lead to digression and failure in ministry	9	2
	Total	374	82.3
	No response	80	17.7
Total	454	100	

Source: Field Survey, 2011

Table 10 focuses on lack of commitment to the service and loss of self-esteem as bases for the ineffectiveness in the pastoral ministry. Most of the respondents (65.2%) answered in the affirmative, while only an 11.5% of them disagreed. Stating reasons to this

proposition, 25.8% emphasised full commitment results in effective pastoral ministry, and 7.9% claimed that self-esteem is a possible cause of ineffectiveness in the pastoral ministry. Almost everyone interviewed agreed that lack of commitment and dedication are causes of ineffectiveness. Of importance is the view of Educational Secretary, Methodist Church Nigeria. He frowned at the lackadaisical attitude of some ministers in the discharge of their sacerdotal functions in the Church, which, he averred, is an important cause of ineffectiveness in pastoral ministry.⁵⁰⁰ However, the Lay President of Diocese of Lagos Central noted that the Church should do something about ministers' welfare and remuneration; especially those who appear to be more committed and dedicated to duty but are facing some material challenges.⁵⁰¹ Another member of the laity identified poor motivation of those ministers who are hard working and dedicated to the cause of the gospel, but are not being given any incentive. Some tent-making ministers who are really committed to their sacerdotal functions are not being encouraged. Those members who cannot afford to donate generously towards the work of God are being discouraged. The headquarters at all levels of the Church sometimes do not assist the younger preaching stations and local churches in terms of finance and infrastructures, but they are always assessed.⁵⁰² A full-time minister stated that the poor remuneration of lecturers in the theological institutions of the Church is affecting the quality of teaching, and this results in poor training of ministers.⁵⁰³ A tent-making minister remarked that many ministers who are into full-time ministry of the Church are owed their salaries for months. It is probable that these ministers could not work effectively in such unpleasant conditions, since "a hungry man is an angry man."⁵⁰⁴

Also, the data reveals that 29.6% of the respondents averred that poor study of the scriptures is caused by lack of commitment to service and loss of self-esteem in the pastoral ministry. A Methodist Archbishop of Lagos stated that as far as we live, we are in the school of the Word of God and that we cannot exhaust the syllabus of the kingdom of God that Jesus Christ brought to the world for us. For him, not only the new converts should learn how to be a follower of Jesus Christ, but also all believers need to learn how to continuously be

⁵⁰⁰ Paul O. Olukunga. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 48, Education Secretary, Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos, on September 08, 2011.

⁵⁰¹ E. A. Akintan. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 75, Diocesan Lay President, Interviewed at Williams Memorial Methodist Cathedral, Ebute-Metta, Lagos, on September 16, 2011.

⁵⁰² M. Akintola. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 66, Member, Women's Fellowship, Interviewed at Cathedral of Blessing, Palm Avenue, Mushin, Lagos, on September 18, 2011.

⁵⁰³ A. O. Aromavo. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 46, Priest, Interviewed at Iwaya/Pedro Methodist Church, Yaba, Lagos, on September 08, 2011.

⁵⁰⁴ O. Oniyide. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 49, Priest, Tent Making Minister, Diocesan Minister of Evangelism, Lay Coordinator of Men's Fellowship & Artist, Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Wesley Cathedral, Olowogbowo, Lagos, on September 08, 2011.

followers of Jesus Christ. It is in continuous study of the scriptures that we have total dependence on Him.⁵⁰⁵ But the approach of some ministers towards the study of the scriptures is poor. For a full-time member of the clergy, there is poor biblical teaching in the Church in the area of cheerful giving to the Lord.⁵⁰⁶ Also, a female Tent-Making minister opined that some ministers have very little knowledge of the scriptures and do not spend enough time studying the same.⁵⁰⁷ This poor study of the Scripture arising from Methodists in Nigeria contrasts with the philosophy of John Wesley. He saw the Methodist movement as a return to the original life, faith and experience of Christianity. He wanted to return to the faith of the apostles and the early church — to find that same dynamic quality of faith and life that the early Christians had. So, Scripture had a place of central importance in Wesley's teaching and preaching. In Wesley's view, devotion to the teachings of the Scripture is absolutely essential for the task of keeping and renewing the Christian faith. In sum he says, "My ground is the Bible. Yea, I am a Bible-bigot. I follow it in all things, both great and small."⁵⁰⁸

The table shows that 4% of the respondents stated that calling is seen as a means of livelihood, and 2% posited that frustration and lack of faith lead to digression and failure in the ministry. This view was supported by all respondents serving in the Lay Ministry of the Church. According to one male respondent from the Diocese of Lagos Mainland, "Many ministers are now looking for the worldly things (eager to have the latest jeep, infrastructures and landed property in the most expensive areas in Nigeria) to the neglect of the sheep."⁵⁰⁹ A tent-making minister added that some ministers nowadays are oblivious of the needs of their members.⁵¹⁰ Besides, a tent-making minister noted that poor perception by the members contributes to pastoral ineffectiveness. He averred that there is poor perception of the sincerity, dedication and spiritual prowess of their ministers by some members. It makes these members to seek for salvation and spiritual blessings from other churches. What they

⁵⁰⁵ Joseph Sunday Ajayi. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 65, Archbishop of Lagos, Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Wesley Cathedral, Olowogbowo, Lagos, on December 03, 2011.

⁵⁰⁶ Nathanael O. Ogundayo. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 44, Priest, Interviewed at Hoare's Memorial Methodist Cathedral, Yaba, Lagos, on September 07, 2011.

⁵⁰⁷ Oludayo Kufeji. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 48, Priest, Tent Making Minister & Administration/Facility Management, Interviewed at Trinity Church Council, Methodist Church of the Trinity, Tinubu, Lagos, on September 09, 2011.

⁵⁰⁸ John Wesley. *The JJW*. Chicago: Moody Press, June 5, 1766.

⁵⁰⁹ Anthony Oladipo Adegbite. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 87, Knight of John Wesley & National President, Men's Fellowship, Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at City Mission Methodist Church, Surulere, Lagos, on September 16, 2011.

⁵¹⁰ Oludayo Kufeji. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 48, Priest, Tent Making Minister & Administration/Facility Management, Interviewed at Trinity Church Council, Methodist Church of the Trinity, Tinubu, Lagos, on September 09, 2011.

are looking for is already with them but they could not get it because of their unbelief.⁵¹¹ Furthermore, poor sacrificial service is seen as the basis for pastoral ineffectiveness in the Church. On this, a member of the laity said that in those days ministers shouldered to the best of their abilities the challenges of their members, but it is not so at the moment. “A friend in need is a friend indeed;” the member who received such sacrificial love from his/her minister will never go astray.⁵¹² However, it is not always true.

As 13% of respondents stated that lack of missionary vision of ministers in the Church are responsible for ineffectiveness in pastoral ministry. A Presbyterian claimed that many ministers are shallow in their mission view and do not have the skills to really address the kind of pastoral ministry that is expected.⁵¹³ This view was also supported by a Property Steward who posited that there is power-play in pastoral ministry in the Church, which is observed mostly when some senior ministers marginalise, victimise and engineer the transfer of some junior ministers that seem to be performing better than they. He submitted that this power-play is another malady preventing effectiveness in pastoral ministry.⁵¹⁴

The Bishop of Lagos West observed that lack of team ministry is another cause of ineffectiveness in the pastoral ministry. The ministers cannot do the pastoral ministry all alone. There must be delegation of duties; both the ordained and the laity must be involved in the ministry of the Church.⁵¹⁵

Noncompliance with the resolutions of the church is another cause of ineffectiveness. A Methodist Archbishop said that, at every meeting with the leaders of the Church, the Prelate of Methodist Church Nigeria often talked about some ministers who are not complying with the Church’s decisions and policies, and this is militating against effective pastoral ministry.⁵¹⁶ A member of the clergy added that some members do not want to accept their ministers as their leaders and when the followers become leaders there are always problems.⁵¹⁷ Most respondents are of the view that poor adaptation to change is another cause

⁵¹¹ Adebowale Onabanjo. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 41, Priest, Tent-Making Minister, Interviewed at Opebi Methodist Church, Ikeja, Lagos, on September 08, 2011.

⁵¹² Bartholomew Hungbeme. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 45, President, Circuit Men’s Fellowship, Interviewed at Salem Methodist Church, Makoko, Lagos, on September 17, 2011.

⁵¹³ Sunday Olasoji Onadipe. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 47, Director of Administration, Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos, on December 02, 2011.

⁵¹⁴ Adefemi Abiola Fasanya. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 41, Property Steward, Interviewed at Cathedral of Blessing, Palm Avenue, Mushin, Lagos, on September 18, 2011.

⁵¹⁵ Isaac Ayobami Olawuyi. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 52, Bishop, Diocese of Lagos West, Interviewed at Cathedral of Blessing, Palm Avenue, Mushin, Lagos, on January 22, 2012.

⁵¹⁶ Joseph Sunday Ajayi. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 65, Archbishop of Lagos, Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Wesley Cathedral, Olowogbowo, Lagos, on December 03, 2011.

⁵¹⁷ Amos K. Olu Ogunrinde. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 41, Deputy Director, Evangelism & Discipleship, Interviewed at Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos, on September 15, 2011.

of ineffectiveness. According to the Bishop of Lagos Mainland, change is the only thing that is constant in the world. However, the reaction of some members (both the ordained and the laity) of the Church is not encouraging. People prefer using archaic methods to address challenges of the present age which, in the end, produce little or no result.⁵¹⁸ The Prelate added that the world is changing, and to have effective pastoral ministry there is urgent need to be creative and proactive in our approach to pastoral ministry.⁵¹⁹

The Secretary of Conference, Methodist Church Nigeria, remarked that poor pastoral visitation is one of the greatest challenges in pastoral ministry today. Pastoral visitation is dying out probably because of the use of mobile phones which makes it possible to be in touch with their members without visiting members' residences. God first visited man—Adam in the Garden of Eden. Pastoral visitation is of God.⁵²⁰ Also, commenting on the poor pastoral visitation in the Church, a senior member of the laity claimed that many of the ministers have no time for their sheep any more. He added that, at a time, pastoral visitation was a regular feature in the Church, but it is no longer so at the present time.⁵²¹

Another cause of ineffectiveness in pastoral ministry in the Church, which some respondents highlighted, is poor youth empowerment and that sponsoring the youth in their further studies is missing in the agenda of the Church. Eventually, when they get sponsorship from sister denominations, they end up being their members for life. Insufficient landed property is another cause. They observed that many church buildings do not have enough space to expand as the membership continues to increase. Moreover, the Church seems not to have interest in investing on land. Closely related to this is the long distance of church location to some worshippers' residences. This, coupled with heavy traffic in megacities, affects punctuality in church services and attendance at night prayers.

As indicated above, the causes of ineffectiveness include: (i) misplaced priorities, (ii) poor study of the Word of God, (iii) poor spiritual development, (iv) unhealthy rivalry, (v) poor welfare and remuneration, (vi) insufficient funds, (vii) noncompliance with the resolutions of the church, (viii) poor education, (ix) poor adaptation to change, (x) poor curriculum and training, (xi) poor missionary skills, and (xii) poor pastoral visitation. Others

⁵¹⁸ Oladapo O. Babalola. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 47, Bishop, Interviewed at Hoare's Memorial Methodist Cathedral, Yaba, Lagos, on December 02, 2011.

⁵¹⁹ Sunday Olatunji Makinde. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 68, Prelate of Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos, on October 19, 2011.

⁵²⁰ Raphael C. Opoko. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 51, Secretary of Conference, Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos, on January 22, 2012.

⁵²¹ Anthony Oladipo Adegbite. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 87, Knight of John Wesley & National President, Men's Fellowship, Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at City Mission Methodist Church, Surulere, Lagos, on September 16, 2011.

are (xiii) poorly equipped theological institutions, (xiv) poor execution of the connexional system of the Church, (xv) godfatherism, (xvi) environmental difficulties, (xvii) irregular payment of salaries, (xviii) corruption/unfaithfulness, (xix) lack of sacrificial service, (xx) poor admission procedure into the ordained ministry and (xxi) power-play. Also included are (xxii) poor youth empowerment, (xxiii) insufficient landed property, (xxiv) secular perception of the ministry, (xxv) poor motivation, (xxvi) ignorance about one's calling, (xxvii) spiritual inflexibility, (xxviii) lack of commitment and dedication, (xxix) poor perception by the members, (xxx) distant location of the church buildings to some worshippers' residences, (xxxi) money and selfish desires, and (xxxii) spouse's lack of understanding of God's call and its implication.

6.5 Results of ineffectiveness in pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria

Based on the quantitative and qualitative data collected from our various respondents, the underlisted are the results of ineffectiveness in the pastoral ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria:

Table 11: The ineffectiveness in the Pastoral Ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria may lead to loss of spiritual vitality and lack of commitment to service of the Laity.

Question	Response	Frequency	Percentage
The ineffectiveness in the Pastoral Ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria may lead to loss of spiritual vitality and lack of commitment to service of the Laity.	Yes	366	80.6
	No	14	3.1
	Total	380	83.7
	No response	74	16.3
	Total	454	100
State the reasons for your answer.	There would be no satisfaction and commitment to the service of the Laity	109	24.1
	Lack of spiritual activities and performance of miracles are responsible for it	78	17.2
	It is pastoral incompetence and confused mind	8	1.8
	Placing oneself above others is responsible for it	4	0.9
	Total	199	43.8
	No response	255	56.2
	Total	454	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

As observed from Table 11, the ineffectiveness in the pastoral ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria may lead to loss of spiritual vitality and lack of commitment to service of the

Laity. The table reveals that 80.6% of the respondents answered in the affirmative, while 3.1% of them disagreed. The data reveals that 17.2% of the respondents affirmed that lack of spiritual activities and performance of miracles lead to loss of spiritual vitality and lack of commitment to service of the laity, 1.8% saw it as pastoral incompetence and confused mind, and 0.9% averred that placing oneself above others is responsible for it. In view of this, 24.1% of the respondents posited that there would be no satisfaction and commitment to the service of the laity. This view was shared by a member of the laity, who claimed that loss of spiritual vitality and lack of commitment to service by the laity may result in secular leadership and growth. He averred that the ministers who have no conversion experience and pastoral call will have no message of salvation for their members.⁵²² According to another member of the laity, ministrations of these ministers will only be based on logic and flesh, and so limit the spiritual growth of the Church.⁵²³ These ministers may not have the Holy Spirit in them.⁵²⁴ A member of the clergy added that inasmuch as some ministers in the Church are not converted, there will be tale-sharers instead of burden-bearers, gossips and entertainers at the pulpit instead of gossellers in the Church.⁵²⁵ In the end, the pastoral ministry will not impact any life and this is dangerous to the body of Christ, especially when these unconverted ministers are in position of authority.⁵²⁶ As long as some ministers do not have conversion experience and pastoral call, the Church will continue to have unconverted members.⁵²⁷

Table 12: The ineffectiveness in the Pastoral Ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria may lead to ineffective witnessing Church.

Question	Response	Frequency	Percentage
The ineffectiveness in the Pastoral Ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria may lead to ineffective witnessing Church.	Yes	344	75.8
	No	25	5.5
	Total	369	81.3
	No response	85	18.7

⁵²² ⁵²² M. Olusola Omawumi. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 28, Chorister, Interviewed at Methodist Cathedral Agedge, Tabon Tabon, Lagos, on September 18, 2011.

⁵²³ Adewale Madariola. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 31, Member, National Youth Executive Officers, Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Trinity Church Council, Methodist Church of the Trinity, Tinubu, Lagos, on November 13, 2011.

⁵²⁴ Titus Kayode Fatunla. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 56, Principal, Interviewed at Methodist Boys High School, Victoria Island, Lagos, on September 08, 2011.

⁵²⁵ Adesola O. Kuyebi. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 43, Presbyter, Interviewed at Williams Memorial Methodist Cathedral, Ebute-Metta, Lagos, on September 16, 2011.

⁵²⁶ Olusegun Sofunke. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 59, Lay President, Diocese of Lagos, Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Wesley Cathedral, Olowogbowo, Lagos, on September 08, 2011.

⁵²⁷ Peter A. Adegbayi. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 58, Presbyter, Interviewed at Freeman Memorial Cathedral, Badagry, Lagos, on September 14, 2011.

		Total	454	100
State the reasons for your answer.	Yes	Yes of course	91	20
		No recovery of lost sheep	38	8.4
		Enforcement of doctrine	15	2.9
		Inadequate training and ministerial support (financing)	25	5.9
		Faulty religious foundation and zeal	10	2.2
		If the pastor fails the church fails, because leaders influence members	3	0.7
		Disregard for God	1	0.2
	Total	183	40.3	
	No response	271	59.7	
	Total	454	100	

Source: Field Survey, 2011

As evident seen in Table 12, ineffectiveness in the pastoral ministry produces ineffective witnessing. Most of the respondents (75.8%) agreed with this view, while 5.5% disagreed. Also, 0.7% of them observed that if the pastor fails the Church also fails because leaders influence members; while 2.2% of them posited that faulty religious foundations and zeal are responsible for ineffective witnessing Church. Buttressing their views, 4.6% of the respondents stated that lack of spiritual guide, guard and motivation are possible result of ineffective witnessing, 0.2% saw it as disregard for God, while 8.4% believed that it results in no recovery of lost sheep. Similarly, self-interest ministry is a possible outcome of ineffectiveness in pastoral ministry. It is possible that some people may be in the pastoral ministry in the Church for many years without having conversion experience. They are, therefore, hirelings instead of shepherds.⁵²⁸ They will keep on campaigning for money for their own self-interest.⁵²⁹ They will only be doing their will and the dictates of men rather than those of God.⁵³⁰ These ministers go about begging and lobbying for promotion and where they would serve.⁵³¹ They may not be directed by the Holy Spirit,⁵³² and they will be working against Jesus Christ like Paul did initially before his Damascus road experience.⁵³³

⁵²⁸ Sunday Olatunji Makinde. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 68, Prelate of Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos, on October 19, 2011.

⁵²⁹ M. B. O. Arogundade. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 49, Presbyter, Interviewed at City Mission Methodist Church, Surulere, Lagos, on September 08, 2011.

⁵³⁰ Sunday Olasoji Onadipe. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 47, Director of Administration, Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos, on December 02, 2011.

⁵³¹ Amos K. Olu Ogunrinde. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 41, Deputy Director, Evangelism & Discipleship, Interviewed at Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos, on September 15, 2011.

⁵³² Beatrice O. Phillips. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 51, Secretary, Young Women Society, Interviewed at Methodist Cathedral Agedge, Tabon Tabon, Lagos, on September 18, 2011.

⁵³³ Isaac Olajire. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 42, Presbyter, Interviewed at Araromi Wesley Circuit, Lagos, on September 15, 2011.

The table also shows that 2.9% of the respondents stated that enforcement of doctrine leads to ineffective witnessing Church. Viewing spiritual rigidity of the Church as possible cause of ineffectiveness in pastoral ministry of the Church, a member of National Youth Executive said that pastoral ministry in the Church is over-structured, in the sense that the Church is being led by sight and not by faith. There is lack of spiritual emphasis in every sphere of pastoral ministry in the Church.⁵³⁴

Also, 5.9% of the respondents stated that inadequate training and poor ministerial support, in terms of finance, leads to ineffective witnessing Church. This view was shared by another clergyman from the headquarters of Methodist Church Nigeria who dealt with matters relating to theological institutions of the Church. He frowned at the use of old curriculum in the theological institutions of the Church and opined that the training curriculum of the prospective ministers of the Church should be revised so as to meet the need of the time.⁵³⁵ A youth who participated in the in-depth interview noted that the theological institutions of the Church are poorly equipped in terms of infrastructures and Information Communication Technology (ICT) facilities. This is another factor preventing pastoral ministry in the Church from meeting the need of the time.⁵³⁶ The poor training which the potential ministers of the Church receive tells much about their quality as expressed by a tent-making minister and Administration/Facility Manager.⁵³⁷ The Bishop of the Trinity Church Council, Methodist Church Nigeria claimed that the kind of orientation which prospective ministers receive in the theological institutions cannot meet up with the challenges of the time.⁵³⁸ Commenting on insufficient funds as a major cause of ineffectiveness in pastoral ministry of the Church, the Prelate of Methodist Church Nigeria remarked that evangelism is an integral part of pastoral ministry, which includes pastoral visitation and caring for the sick and the less privileged; assisting the unemployed, young

⁵³⁴ Adewale Madariola. Interview Respondent. Aged 31, Member, National Youth Executive Officers, Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Trinity Church Council, Methodist Church of the Trinity, Tinubu, Lagos, on November 13, 2011.

⁵³⁵ Sunday Olasoji Onadipe. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 47, Director of Administration, Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos, on December 02, 2011.

⁵³⁶ Taiwo Somoye. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 30, Member, Diocesan Youth Executive Officers, Interviewed at Methodist Cathedral Agedge, Tabon Tabon, Lagos, on September 18, 2011.

⁵³⁷ Oludayo Kufeji. Interview Respondent. Aged 48, Priest, Tent Making Minister & Administration/Facility Management, Interviewed at Trinity Church Council, Methodist Church of the Trinity, Tinubu, Lagos, on September 09, 2011.

⁵³⁸ Sunday Oluyemisi Ogunlere. Interview Respondent. Aged 50, Bishop, Trinity Church Council, Interviewed at Trinity Church Council, Methodist Church of the Trinity, Tinubu, Lagos, on January 22, 2012.

orphans, motherless babies, and the widows; and supporting agriculture development. He concluded that nobody can be effective in pastoral ministry without sufficient funds.⁵³⁹

Table 13: The ineffectiveness in the Pastoral Ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria affects its spiritual, numerical and financial growth.

Question	Response	Frequency	Percentage
The ineffectiveness in the Pastoral Ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria affects its spiritual, numerical and financial growth.	Yes	359	79.1
	No	22	4.8
	Total	381	83.9
	No response	73	16.1
	Total	454	100
State the reasons for your answer.	Yes of course	49	10.8
	Yes A soul winning ministry will attract many people	129	28.3
	Spiritual activities organised by the minister determine other positive growth in the church	35	7.7
	Total	213	46.9
	No response	241	53.1
	Total	454	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

Table 13 above assessed the results of ineffectiveness in the pastoral ministry. Altogether, 79.1% of the respondents claimed that ineffectiveness in pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria affects its spiritual, numerical and financial growth, while 4.8% disagreed. Corroborating this view, the Prelate of Methodist Church Nigeria said that as long as there are ministers who do not have conversion experience and pastoral call, there will

⁵³⁹ Sunday Olatunji Makinde. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 68, Prelate of Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos, on October 19, 2011.

neither be progress nor growth in the Church.⁵⁴⁰ A Presbyterian added that those ministers without conversion experience and pastoral call may be working very hard but may not really achieve much.⁵⁴¹ Those ministers without conversion experience and pastoral call may lead the members astray.⁵⁴² These ministers are complacent and lethargic with their sacerdotal functions.⁵⁴³ However, a tent-making minister said one of the expectations in the ministry is fruit-bearing and it is only the Holy Spirit that can help one to become effective and fruitful. The absence of these two important ingredients will produce a lack-lustre ministry that will be basically a sham.⁵⁴⁴ When the flock are not properly looked after, they may defect to other denominations.⁵⁴⁵ Besides, its effects on spiritual, numerical and financial growth of the Church, unproductive and dullness, and membership dwindling are also possible results of ineffectiveness in the pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria.

Reacting to this view, 10.8% of respondents answered in the affirmative. The data shows that 28.3% of the respondents posited that a soul winning ministry that attract many people affects spiritual, numerical, and financial growth of the church, and 7.7% claimed that emphasis on spiritual activities organised by the minister determine other positive growth in the Church.

Based on the quantitative and qualitative data collected from our various respondents, the underlisted are the results of ineffectiveness in pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria: (i) unconverted membership, (ii) lack of spiritual leadership and lack of spiritual growth, (iii) lack of knowledge about salvation, (iv) self-interest ministry, (v) unproductive and dullness, (vi) membership dwindling, and (vii) church disintegration.

6.6. Conclusion

Paul's Damascus road experience is similar to John Wesley's Aldersgate Street conversion that led to the founding of the Methodist Church. In both cases conversion was seen as central to the success of pastoral ministry. For the clergy, societal factors accounted

⁵⁴⁰ Sunday Olatunji Makinde. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 68, Prelate of Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos, on October 19, 2011.

⁵⁴¹ Chinedum M. Eziuku. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 50, Head, Estate Department & Executive Director of Methodist Church Nigeria Property and Investment Company Ltd., Interviewed at Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos, on September 15, 2011.

⁵⁴² K. M. Semako. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 32, Secretary of Church Council, Interviewed at Freeman Memorial Cathedral, Badagry, Lagos, on September 14, 2011.

⁵⁴³ Raphael C. Opoko. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 51, Secretary of Conference, Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos, on January 22, 2012.

⁵⁴⁴ Olufisayo Temitayo Aribaba. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 47, Priest, Tent-Making Minister & Ophthalmic Surgeon, Interviewed at Williams Memorial Methodist Cathedral, Ebute-Metta, Lagos, on September 26, 2011.

⁵⁴⁵ Anthony Oladipo Adegbite. *Interview Respondent*. Aged 87, Knight of John Wesley & National President, Men's Fellowship, Methodist Church Nigeria, Interviewed at City Mission Methodist Church, Surulere, Lagos, on September 16, 2011.

for the dearth of personal conversion experience among ministers. The laity, attributed ineffectiveness in the pastoral ministry to lack of conversion experience, and blamed unconverted ministers for the spiritual, numerical and financial stagnation of the Church. Thus, Methodist Church Nigeria betrays visible negative effects arising from lack of conversion experience, distorted theology and poor teaching of the scriptures, of some ministers, contrary to what obtains in Paul's churches.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.0 Introduction

This chapter summarises and states the conclusion of this study. It also gives recommendation for further study.

7.1 Summary

This study investigated the conversion and call of Paul in the context of call to pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria. The objectives include the examination of: (i) a number of texts in the Acts of the Apostles and in some of the Pauline Letters in order to understand the impact of that experience on Paul's life and ministry; (ii) the question of taking his experience as a paradigm for conversion today; and (iii) the ineffectiveness identified in the pastoral ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria, and their causes.

The study employed the exegetical apparatus in the study of Acts 9:1-19, 22:4-16, 26:12-18 and Galatians 1:1-17, and descriptive method for other qualitative data. Also, percentage scores were used to analyse quantitative data collected from our respondents. These result in the specific findings of this research which are summarised below:

(i) The main options highlighted by recent scholarship in understanding Paul's Damascus road experience are: (a) a "conversion," (b) a "transformation," (c) an "alternation," or (d) a "call." Approaches to interpret Paul's conversion are multifaceted, in that it is viewed from

the perspectives of soteriology, Christology, missiology, and doxology. This study upholds the view that Paul's Damascus road experience is best understood as a conversion.

(ii) Paul's conversion is never portrayed as being paradigmatic in the specific details of that event, as those details are narrated in Luke's Acts. But it is presented in Paul's letters as a paradigm for all Christians in terms of a radical reorientation of thought about Jesus and of life now lived "in Christ."

Certain features among the three accounts in Acts are clearly contradictory in a formal sense, but the agreements are much more important than the disagreements. The agreements are due in part to the appearance in all three accounts of common features of theophanies: the light, the prostration of the recipient of the vision, the supernatural voice, the authoritative commands and the commissioning. The differences among the three accounts derive from the demands of diverse contexts. Also, the narratives are composed so as to supplement, complement and correct one another. Essentially, the three Acts narratives agree with the evidence of some Pauline Letters.

The event validated his call to ministry, which reflected in the nature and results of his preaching, and in the recognition and support he received from the church and its leadership. Furthermore, the event shaped Paul's theology in terms of his understanding of Christ as both the Messiah and the end of the law; the Holy Spirit as life-giving Spirit of God; and the divine intention to incorporate the Gentiles into the people of God by faith. Also, the Damascus road experience informed Paul's teachings on Christian freedom; innovation in the Jewish idea of reconciliation; justification by faith; and self-sacrificing pastoral activities. However, we found that the Church in the days of Paul was not without its problem. Paul warned the early Church against enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.⁵⁴⁶ This suggests that not all teachers of the Word (Ministers) in the early Church had conversion experience and call, a similar situation discovered in the pastoral ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria. Causes of lack of conversion experience among Ministers in the early Church were envy, strife and divisions in the Church.⁵⁴⁷ In Methodist Church Nigeria today there are misplaced priorities, unhealthy rivalry, noncompliance with the resolutions of the church, and so on. As envy and grudge led to strife, evil speaking, divisions and fixed parties

⁵⁴⁶ Phil 3:17ff.

⁵⁴⁷ 1Co 1:11; 3:3-9; 6:1-8; 11:18; 2Co 12:20; Gal 5:15, 19-21; Eph 2:2; 4:22-24; Tit 3:3. Paul employs the words *zh/loj kai. e;rij kai. dicostasi,ai* to explain the nature of the problems in the early church. They had inward grudging and disaffection towards each other. They were continually disputing and contending whose party was the best (Paul, Apollos), each endeavouring to prove that he and his party were alone in the right. As they could not agree, they contended till they separated from each other.

in the early Church; the problems highlighted in Methodist Church Nigeria led to unconverted membership, self-interest ministry, membership dwindling, and so forth. Thus, some of the problems in Methodist Church Nigeria are a replica of what obtained in the early Church. But, in spite of these problems in the early Church, Paul had a successful ministry owing to his Damascus road experience and call.

(iii) The study discovers that lack of conversion experience by some members of the clergy is responsible to ineffectiveness in pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria. Conversion and clarity of call are the two hallmarks of a pastor. This point is particularly underscored by the personal experience of the founder of Methodism, John Wesley. The pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria may not be able to have effective witnessing in Nigeria and abroad or achieve the vision and the mission of the church without the aid of personal conversion experience on the part of each member of the laity and the ordained, in particular.

The study further reveals that the causes of ineffectiveness in pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria are (i) misplaced priorities, (ii) poor study of the Word of God, (iii) poor spiritual development, (iv) unhealthy rivalry, (v) poor welfare and remuneration, (vi) insufficient funds, (vii) noncompliance with the resolutions of the church, (viii) poor education, (ix) poor adaptation to change, (x) poor curriculum and training, (xi) poor missionary skills, and (xii) poor pastoral visitation. Others are (xiii) poorly equipped theological institutions, (xiv) poor execution of the connexional system of the Church, (xv) godfatherism, (xvi) environmental difficulties, (xvii) irregular payment of salaries, (xviii) corruption/unfaithfulness, (xix) lack of sacrificial service, (xx) poor admission procedure into the ordained ministry and (xxi) power-play. Also included are (xxii) poor youth empowerment, (xxiii) insufficient landed property, (xxiv) secular perception of the ministry, (xxv) poor motivation, (xxvi) ignorance of one's calling, (xxvii) spiritual inflexibility, (xxviii) lack of commitment and dedication, (xxix) poor perception by the members, (xxx) distant location of the church buildings to some worshippers' residences, (xxxii) money and selfish desires, and (xxxii) spouse's lack of understanding of God's call and its implication.

The study also shows (i) unconverted membership, (ii) lack of spiritual leadership and lack of spiritual growth, (iii) lack of knowledge about salvation, (iv) self-interest ministry, (v) unproductive and dullness, (vi) membership dwindling, and (vii) church disintegration to be the possible results of ineffectiveness in pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria. A total of 79.1% respondents averred that the ineffectiveness in the pastoral ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria affects its spiritual, numerical and financial growth. Among the

respondents, 72.2% agreed that some members are defecting to other churches, while others are breaking away because the Church has lost its original message.

7.2 Conclusion

In line with the findings of the study, it is evident that the Lucan and Pauline records agree that, with sovereign authority, the exalted Lord made Paul, the persecutor his witness. The Damascus road experience was a catalyst to the glorious call and effective pastoral ministry of Paul. Consequently, regeneration and transformation is crucial in the success of pastoral ministry.

Both the laity and the ordained (in particular) of Methodist Church Nigeria are also driven by the desire to have effective pastoral ministry in Nigeria and abroad. This is premised on the fact that achieving the vision and the mission of the Church will be determined by both the laity and particularly the ordained, who must have personal conversion experience.

7.3 Recommendations

Based on the foregoing conclusions, the study makes the following recommendations:

The accounts of Luke and Paul recorded the success of Paul's ministry owing to his Damascus road experience. Methodist Church Nigeria should focus on the dynamic pattern of pastoral ministry, which includes a personal encounter with Jesus Christ via a witness to the gospel, a response of surrender in penitence and faith, and the reception of salvation, blessings and incorporation into the church.

An apt attention should be given to the distinguishing marks of Paul's pastoral ministry delineated in the Lucan and Pauline records of his conversion and call, which Methodist Church Nigeria has to learn from. These include: (i) *the grace of God*; (ii) *the content*, which is proclamation of the gospel of God; and (iii) *the goal*, which is that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Others are: (iv) *the redemptive activity of God*, (v) *the results*, which is, having fulfilled the gospel of Christ in terms of primary evangelism, the nurture of Christians and the establishment of settled congregations; and (vi) *the passion*, that is proclaiming the gospel where Christ had not been acknowledged or worshipped.

It is established in this work that the Damascus road experience eventually led Paul to proclaim Jesus Christ to the Jewish and non-Jewish world of his day. Likewise, John Wesley after his Aldersgate Street experience declared that "I look at the whole world as my parish."

Christians who have personal encounter with Christ should know that Christian salvation is not 'getting one's soul saved'! Rather Christ comes into our lives so that we can become an instrument of witness for Him to change the lives of other people as He has ours.

From our survey, it is apparent that members of Methodist Church Nigeria are yearning for personal conversion experience. The Church, therefore, has a responsibility to heed the aspiration of both the laity and the ordained, specifically in ensuring Christian growth after conversion. For this desire to be met and realised, the Church needs to review its doctrinal operation to guarantee genuine conversion and call into the pastoral ministry. This is imperative for a productive Christian ministry needed in the contemporary Nigerian religious terrain.

Assurance of salvation is an essential complement to justification. John Wesley preached and taught that the experience was a necessary proof of the reality of justification. This essential teaching of John Wesley on the assurance of salvation is mostly needed at the moment to salvage lack of knowledge about salvation among Christians. Therefore, Methodist Church Nigeria must embrace its inheritance of preaching and teaching that 'The Witness of the Spirit' is a necessary proof of the reality of justification for both the laity and the ordained to foster effective pastoral ministry and effective witnessing Church in Nigeria and abroad.

The occurrence of distorted theology, arising from poor study of the scriptures, was established in this work. It is expedient for Methodist Church Nigeria to review its doctrinal operation to guarantee its original teaching ministry for all categories of people. This will eradicate poor study of the scriptures, poor spiritual development, unhealthy rivalry, which exists in some local churches between the ordained and the laity and between the full-time ministers and the tent-making ministers. Furthermore, it will promote spiritual growth and effective witnessing.

There is an urgent need to update and adequately execute the connexional system of the Church to address age restriction of male and female who desire to join the tent-making and full-time ministries of the Church. Who knows whether giving them opportunity to come in could add value to the pastoral ministry of the Church as Paul of Tarsus did since God could call his own people at any age to serve Him? The connexional system of the Church should consider the family members of its ministers before stationing them. This would eradicate the situation in which ministers' wives are jobless and their children incessantly change schools. It should address poorly equipped theological institutions, poor training curriculum and poor training of its ministers, insufficient landed property, distant location of

the church buildings to some worshippers' residences, environmental difficulties—the threat of militant Islamic group, *Boko-Haram*, irregular payment of salaries of some of its ministers, poor welfare and remuneration. The connexional system of the Church should organise professional training for its ministers to increase their knowledge of relevant millennial missionary skills, youth empowerment, and knowledge in reaching the adult, youth and children through aggressive millennial evangelism. It is believed that connexional system of the Church, if updated and executed adequately, will foster effective pastoral ministry of the Church.

Compliance with the resolutions of the church should be upheld and discipline should be measured for any defaulter among the laity and the ordained. No person should be above the law. Bending the rules is bending the administration. Therefore, the Church must keep her rules so as to foster effective pastoral ministry.

Above all, *the fulfilment of the Great Commission* mandate given to the Church requires converted Christians to come to fruition. The Church cannot but depend on men and women that have personal conversion experience as well as are faithful, available and spirit-filled. Paul has set a good example of Christian conversion in Acts of the Apostles and in some of his letters. The Church will do well to follow it as underscored in this study.

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A. Primary Sources

i. List of Interviewees

S/N	NAMES	STATUS	AGE	ADDRESS	DATE
1.	Abiona, B. (Mr)	Diocesan Public Relation Officer, & Member of Conference Communications Board, Methodist Church Nigeria	41	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos West, Cathedral of Blessing, Palm Avenue, Mushin, Lagos.	18/09/2011
2.	Adedayo, K. (Miss)	Acting Treasurer, Diocesan Youth Fellowship	27	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos North, Methodist Cathedral Agege, Tabon Tabon, Lagos.	18/09/2011
3.	Adedeji, O. (Miss)	Chorister	33	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos North, Methodist Cathedral Agege, Tabon Tabon, Lagos.	18/09/2011
4.	Adegbayi, P. A. (Very Rev.)	Presbyter	58	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Badagry, Freeman Memorial Cathedral, Badagry, Lagos.	14/09/2011
5.	Adegbite, A. O. (Sir)	Knight of John Wesley & President, Men's Fellowship, Methodist Church Nigeria	87	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos Mainland, City Mission Methodist Church, Surulere, Lagos.	16/09/2011
6.	Adetola, D.O. (Mrs)	Circuit Steward	53	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Ikorodu, Igbogbo Methodist Church, Ikorodu.	08/09/2011
7.	Adeyemi, J. K. (The Rt. Rev.)	Bishop	45	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos Central, Williams Memorial Methodist Cathedral, Ebute-Metta, Lagos.	16/09/2011
8.	Adeyemo, A. (Mr)	Local Church Steward	87	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos North, Methodist Cathedral Agege, Tabon Tabon, Lagos.	18/09/2011
9.	Aduroja, J. A. (Mr)	Income Monitoring Coordinator, Methodist Church Nigeria	60	Methodist Church Nigeria Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos.	09/09/2011
10.	Agosu, M. A. (The Very Rev.)	Presbyter	48	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Ikorodu, Igbogbo Methodist Church, Ikorodu.	06/11/2011
11.	Ahisu, E. S. (The Rt. Rev.)	Bishop	60	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Badagry, Freeman Memorial Cathedral, Badagry, Lagos.	14/09/2011
12.	Ajayi, J. O. (Mr)	Lay Preacher & President, Circuit Men's Fellowship	73	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos West, Methodist Church Odi Olowo, Lagos.	18/09/2011
13.	Ajayi, J. S. (The Most Rev. Dr)	Archbishop	65	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos, Wesley Cathedral, Olowogbowo, Lagos.	03/12/2011

14.	Ajayi, K. D. (Mr)	Circuit Steward	39	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos West, Methodist Church Odi Olowo, Lagos.	18/09/2011
15.	Ajayi, K. (Rev. Barr)	Deacon, Tent Making Minister & Senior Advocate of Nigeria	52	Methodist Church Nigeria, Trinity Church Council, Methodist Church of the Trinity, Tinubu, Lagos.	20/12/2011
16.	Ajayi, S. O. (The Rev.)	Priest, Tent Making Minister	42	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos Central, Williams Memorial Methodist Cathedral, Ebute-Metta, Lagos.	16/09/2011
17.	Akande, P. M. (Rev.)	Ordinand, Tent Making Minister	46	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Ikorodu, Igbogbo Methodist Church, Ikorodu.	06/11/2011
18.	Akinola, J. O. (The Rt. Rev.)	Bishop	50	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos North, Methodist Cathedral Agege, Tabon Tabon, Lagos.	04/12/2011
19.	Akintan, E. A. (Mr)	Lay President	75	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos Central, Williams Memorial Methodist Cathedral, Ebute-Metta, Lagos.	16/09/2011
20.	Akintola, M. (Mrs)	Member, Women's Fellowship & Retiree	66	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos North, Methodist Cathedral Agege, Tabon Tabon, Lagos.	18/09/2011
21.	Akintola, O. J. (Sir)	Lay President, Knight of John Wesley & Consultant, Methodist Church Nigeria Tailoring Factory Nigeria Ltd.	50	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos North, Methodist Cathedral Agege, Tabon Tabon, Lagos.	03/09/2011
22.	Akoteyon, M. S. (Mr)	Lay Preacher	40	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Ikorodu, Igbogbo Methodist Church, Ikorodu.	08/09/2011
23.	Ala, O. A. (Very Rev.)	Presbyter	44	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos Mainland, Hoare's Memorial Methodist Cathedral, Yaba, Lagos.	02/09/2011
24.	Aremu, F. F. (Barr)	Legal Adviser of Methodist Church Nigeria, Methodist Church Nigeria Representative at the World Methodist Council & Senior Advocate of Nigeria	67	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos North, Methodist Cathedral Agege, Tabon Tabon, Lagos.	18/09/2011
25.	Aribaba, O. T. (The Rev. Dr)	Priest, Tent Making Minister & Ophthalmic Surgeon	47	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos Central, Williams Memorial Methodist Cathedral, Ebute-Metta, Lagos.	26/09/2011
26.	Ariyo, E. I. (The Very Rev.)	Presbyter	46	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos North, Methodist Cathedral Agege, Tabon Tabon, Lagos.	03/09/2011

27.	Arogundade, M. B. O. (The Very Rev.)	Presbyter	49	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos Mainland, City Mission Methodist Church, Surulere, Lagos.	08/09/2011
28.	Aromavo, A. O. (The Rev.)	Priest	46	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos Mainland, Iwaya/Pedro Methodist Church, Yaba, Lagos.	08/09/2011
29.	Avose, S. F. (Miss)	President, Circuit Youth Fellowship	31	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Badagry, Freeman Memorial Cathedral, Badagry, Lagos.	14/09/2011
30.	Avose, T. (Mr)	Lay Preacher & Coordinator, Ushering Department	34	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Badagry, Ajara Methodist Church, Badagry, Lagos.	14/09/2011
31.	Ayodele, A. (Mr)	President, Diocesan Youth Fellowship	26	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Ikorodu, Patriarch Bolaji Methodist Cathedral, Ita-Elewa, Ikorodu.	06/11/2011
32.	Babalola, O. O. (The Rt. Rev.)	Bishop	47	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos Mainland, Hoare's Memorial Methodist Cathedral, Yaba, Lagos.	02/12/2011
33.	Babalola, R. O. (The Very Rev.)	Proto Presbyter	45	Methodist Church Nigeria, Trinity Church Council, Methodist Church of the Trinity, Tinubu, Lagos.	15/09/2011
34.	Bolanle, A. (Mrs)	Local Church Steward	58	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Badagry, Ajara Methodist Church, Badagry, Lagos.	14/09/2011
35.	Boyo, M. T. (The Rev.)	Priest, Tent-Making Minister	61	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos West, Opebi Methodist Church, Ikeja, Lagos.	08/09/2011
36.	Chukwuemeka, S. M. I. (The Rev.)	Priest	36	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos Mainland, Folami Methodist Church, Oshodi, Lagos.	15/09/2011
37.	Dairo, J. A. (Mrs)	Local Church Steward	45	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos West, Methodist Church Odi Olowo, Lagos.	18/09/2011
38.	Daramola, O. E. (The Rev.)	Priest & Council Coordinator, Lay Preachers	36	Methodist Church Nigeria, Trinity Church Council, Methodist Church of the Trinity, Tinubu, Lagos.	08/09/2011
39.	Dosu, P. S. (The Very Rev.)	Presbyter	49	Methodist Church Nigeria, Trinity Church Council, Salem Methodist Church, Makoko, Lagos.	08/09/2011
40.	Edo, A.	Senior Circuit Steward	51	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos West, Methodist Church Odi Olowo, Lagos.	18/09/2011

41.	Effiong, A. A. (Deaconess)	Coordinator, Diocesan Women's Work	32	Methodist Church Nigeria, Trinity Church Council, Methodist Church of the Trinity, Tinubu, Lagos.	15/09/2011
42.	Egbochue, K. (The Very Rev.)	Assistant Director, Administration Methodist Church Nigeria	42	Methodist Church Nigeria Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos.	15/09/2011
43.	Ekwere, S. U. (The Very Rev.)	Presbyter	48	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos Mainland, Methodist Church Igbobi, Oshodi, Lagos.	08/09/2011
44.	Eleso, B. O. (Mr)	Youth Officer	30	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Ikorodu, Patriarch Bolaji Methodist Cathedral, Ita-Elewa, Ikorodu.	06/11/2011
45.	Eleso, O. A. (Hon. Sir Otunba)	Knight of John Wesley & Balogun, Patriarch Bolaji Methodist Cathedral, Ita-Elewa, Ikorodu	60	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Ikorodu, Patriarch Bolaji Methodist Cathedral, Ita-Elewa, Ikorodu.	06/11/2011
46.	Etim, U. E. (Rev.)	Bishop's Chaplain	34	Methodist Church Nigeria, Trinity Church Council, Methodist Church of the Trinity, Tinubu, Lagos.	15/09/2011
47.	Ewuola, O. (The Very Rev.)	Strategic Planning Officer, Methodist Church Nigeria	50	Methodist Church Nigeria Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos.	09/09/2011
48.	Eziuku, C. M. (The Very Rev.)	Head, Estate Department & Executive Director of Methodist Church Nigeria Property and Investment Company Ltd.	50	Methodist Church Nigeria Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos.	15/09/2011
49.	Fabusuyi, J. O. (Mr)	Senior Circuit Steward	73	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos Mainland, City Mission Methodist Church, Surulere, Lagos.	16/09/2011
50.	Fasanya, A. A. (Mr)	Property Steward	41	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos West, Cathedral of Blessing, Palm Avenue, Mushin, Lagos.	18/09/2011
51.	Fatunla, T. K. (The Very Rev.)	Principal	56	Methodist Boys High School, Victoria Island, Lagos.	08/09/2011
52.	Folorunso, V. B. (Deaconess)	Diocesan Women's Work Coordinator	34	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos Mainland, Hoare's Memorial Methodist Cathedral, Yaba, Lagos.	07/09/2011
53.	Godonu, M. A. (The Rev.)	Cathedral Priest	33	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Badagry, Freeman Memorial Cathedral, Badagry, Lagos.	14/09/2011
54.	Hungbeme, B. (Mr)	President, Circuit Men's Fellowship	45	Methodist Church Nigeria, Trinity Church Council, Salem Methodist Church, Makoko, Lagos.	17/09/2011

55.	Hunge, J. O. (Mrs)	Vice President, Diocesan Women Fellowship	70	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Badagry, Freeman Memorial Cathedral, Badagry, Lagos.	14/09/2011
56.	Idowu, T. (Mrs)	Lay Preacher Local Church Steward & Nurse	58	Methodist Church Nigeria, Trinity Church Council, Methodist Church of the Trinity, Tinubu, Lagos.	08/09/2011
57.	Joyi, E. M. (Rev.)	Deacon	34	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Badagry, Seme Border-Oglogbo Methodist Church, Badagry, Lagos.	08/09/2011
58.	Kolade, A. O. (Rev.)	Deacon	31	Methodist Church Nigeria, Trinity Church Council, Methodist Church of the Trinity, Tinubu, Lagos.	09/09/2011
59.	Kufeji, O. (The Rev.)	Priest, Tent Making Minister & Administration/Facility Management	48	Methodist Church Nigeria, Trinity Church Council, Methodist Church of the Trinity, Tinubu, Lagos.	09/09/2011
60.	Kuyebi, A. O. (The Very Rev.)	Presbyter	43	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos Central, Williams Memorial Methodist Cathedral, Ebute-Metta, Lagos.	08/09/2011
61.	Madariola, A. (Mr)	Member, National Youth Executive Officers Methodist Church Nigeria	31	Methodist Church Nigeria, Trinity Church Council, Methodist Church of the Trinity, Tinubu, Lagos.	13/11/2011
62.	Makinde, S. Ola (His Eminence Dr)	Prelate, Methodist Church Nigeria	68	Methodist Church Nigeria Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos.	19/10/2011
63.	Moradeyo, D. A. (The Very Rev.)	Coordinator, National Men's Work Methodist Church Nigeria	53	Methodist Church Nigeria Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos.	13/11/2011
64.	Nosiru, J. Y. (Rev.)	Deacon	37	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Badagry, Oke-Ore Methodist Church, Badagry, Lagos.	08/09/2011
65.	Odu, K. S. (The Very Rev.)	Presbyter	49	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos West, Cathedral of Blessing, Palm Avenue, Mushin, Lagos.	16/09/2011
66.	Ogunbiyi, M. Z. (Mr)	Circuit Steward	70	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Badagry, Ajara Methodist Church, Badagry, Lagos.	14/09/2011
67.	Ogundayo, N. O. (The Rev.)	Priest	44	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos Mainland, Hoare's Memorial Methodist Cathedral, Yaba, Lagos.	07/09/2011
68.	Ogunfile, T. O. (The Rev.)	Head, Communications Department Methodist Church Nigeria	40	Methodist Church Nigeria Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos.	22/12/2011
69.	Ogunlere, S. O.	Bishop	50	Methodist Church Nigeria, Trinity Church Council, Methodist Church of the Trinity, Tinubu, Lagos.	22/01/2012

70.	Ogunniran, O. (Mr)	Lay Preacher	37	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Badagry, Ajara Methodist Church, Badagry, Lagos.	14/09/2011
71.	Ogunrinde, A. K. O. (The Very Rev.)	Deputy Director, Evangelism & Discipleship	41	Methodist Church Nigeria Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos.	15/09/2011
72.	Oke, T. B. (Mr)	Coordinator, Interpreters Department	31	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Badagry, Ajara Methodist Church, Badagry, Lagos.	14/09/2011
73.	Okeudo, J. U. (Rev.)	Deacon, In charge of Igbo Section	47	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Ikorodu, Patriarch Bolaji Methodist Cathedral, Ita-Elewa, Ikorodu.	06/11/2011
74.	Okoro, R. (Mrs)	President, Progressive Band of Hope Society	65	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos West, Cathedral of Blessing, Palm Avenue, Mushin, Lagos.	18/09/2011
75.	Okunoren, P. B. (The Rev. Captain)	Priest	61	Methodist Church Nigeria, Trinity Church Council, Methodist Church of the Trinity, Tinubu, Lagos.	15/09/2011
76.	Olajire, I. (The Very Rev.)	Presbyter	42	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos, Araromi Circuit, Obalende, Lagos.	15/09/2011
77.	Olanrewaju, S. D. (Mrs)	Teacher, Sunday School Department	43	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Badagry, Ajara Methodist Church, Badagry, Lagos.	14/09/2011
78.	Olatunji, G. L. (Mr)	Teacher, Sunday School Department	35	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos North, Methodist Cathedral Agege, Tabon Tabon, Lagos.	18/09/2011
79.	Olawuyi, I. O.	Bishop	52	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos West, Cathedral of Blessing, Palm Avenue, Mushin, Lagos.	22/01/2012
80.	Olufemi, D. K. (The Very Rev.)	Legal Officer, Methodist Church Nigeria	48	Methodist Church Nigeria Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos.	08/09/2011
81.	Olukunga, P. O. (The Very Rev.)	Education Secretary, Methodist Church Nigeria	48	Methodist Church Nigeria Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos.	08/09/2011
82.	Oluwatoba, E. A. (The Rev.)	General Manager, Methodist Church Nigeria Bookshops Ltd.	47	Methodist Church Nigeria Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos.	09/09/2011
83.	Omawumi, M. O. (Miss)	Chorister	28	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos North, Methodist Cathedral Agege, Tabon Tabon, Lagos.	18/09/2011
84.	Omojola, G. (Mrs)	Lay Preacher Superintendent, Sunday School Department	36	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Ikorodu, Patriarch Bolaji Methodist Cathedral, Ita-Elewa, Ikorodu.	06/11/2011

85.	Omoniyi, T. I. (The Very Rev.)	Presbyter	51	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos, Wesley Cathedral, Olowogbowo, Lagos.	08/09/2011
86.	Onabanjo, A. (The Rev.)	Priest, Tent Making Minister & Facility Management & Logistics Operations	41	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos West, Opebi Methodist Church, Ikeja, Lagos.	08/09/2011
87.	Onadipe, S. O. (The Very Rev. Dr)	Director of Administration Methodist Church Nigeria	47	Methodist Church Nigeria Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos.	02/12/2011
88.	Onafowokan, S. (Mr)	Assistant Choirmaster & Journalist	41	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Ikorodu, Patriarch Bolaji Methodist Cathedral, Ita-Elewa, Ikorodu.	06/11/2011
89.	Onaselu, F. A. (Mr)	Director of Finance Methodist Church Nigeria	61	Methodist Church Nigeria Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos.	09/09/2011
90.	Oniyide, O. O. (The Rev.)	Priest, Tent Making Minister Diocesan Minister of Evangelism, Lay Coordinator of Men's Fellowship & Artist	49	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos, Wesley Cathedral, Olowogbowo, Lagos.	08/09/2011
91.	Onuoha, S. N. (The Rt. Rev. Dr)	Bishop, Connexional Secretary for Evangelism & Discipleship Methodist Church Nigeria	47	Methodist Church Nigeria Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos.	15/09/2011
92.	Opoe, A. (Mr)	Property Steward	45	Methodist Church Nigeria, Trinity Church Council, Salem Methodist Church, Makoko, Lagos.	17/09/2011
93.	Opoko, R. C. (The Rt. Rev. Dr)	Secretary of Conference, Methodist Church Nigeria	51	Methodist Church Nigeria Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos.	22/01/2012
94.	Oredipe, C. O. (Mrs)	Local Church Steward	50	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Ikorodu, Igbogbo Methodist Church, Ikorodu.	06/11/2011
95.	Owolabi, J. (Mr)	Senior Local Church Steward	39	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Ikorodu, Igbogbo Methodist Church, Ikorodu.	06/11/2011
96.	Oyebola, O. O. (The Rev. Dr)	Priest, Tent Making Minister & Civil Servant	51	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos West, Opebi Methodist Church, Ikeja, Lagos.	08/09/2011
97.	Oyelami, J. O. (The Rev.)	Priest	35	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos Mainland, Satellite Methodist Church, Lagos.	16/09/2011
98.	Oyeledun, O. M. (The Rev.)	Priest, Tent Making Minister Journalist & Dramatist	56	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos, Alex Williams Memorial Church, Lagos.	08/09/2011
99.	Panugo, J. M. (The Rev.)	Priest	42	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Badagry, Ajara Methodist Church, Badagry, Lagos.	08/09/2011

100.	Phillips, B. O. (Mrs)	Secretary, Young Women Society	51	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos North, Methodist Cathedral Agege, Tabon Tabon, Lagos.	18/09/2011
101.	Semako, K. M. (Mr)	Secretary, Church Council	32	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Badagry, Freeman Memorial Cathedral, Badagry, Lagos.	14/09/2011
102.	Sobogun, M. I. S. (Deaconess)	Deaconess, Tent Making Ministry & Civil Servant	58	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos Central, Williams Memorial Methodist Cathedral, Ebute-Metta, Lagos.	16/09/2011
103.	Sofunke, A. O. (Barr)	Lay President	59	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos, Wesley Cathedral, Olowogbowo, Lagos.	08/09/2011
104.	Solana, G. E. (Mrs)	Relief Funds Steward	40	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos West, Methodist Church Odi Olowo, Lagos.	18/09/2011
105.	Somoye, T. (Mr)	Member, Diocesan Youth Executive Officers	30	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos North, Methodist Cathedral Agege, Tabon Tabon, Lagos.	18/09/2011
106.	Sotomiwa, D. O. (Mr)	Lay Preacher	58	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Ikorodu, Igbogbo Methodist Church, Ikorodu.	06/11/2011
107.	Sowumi, C. O. (Mrs)	Lay Preacher	71	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos North, Methodist Cathedral Agege, Tabon Tabon, Lagos.	18/09/2011
108.	Thompson, O. (The Rev.)	Administrative Officer, Methodist Church Nigeria	55	Methodist Church Nigeria Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos.	15/09/2011
109.	Tokunbo, M. (Mr)	Circuit Steward	58	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Lagos West, Cathedral of Blessing, Palm Avenue, Mushin, Lagos.	18/09/2011
110.	Tosu, A. S. (The Rev.)	Priest, Co-ordinator, Diocesan Youth Work	50	Methodist Church Nigeria, Diocese of Badagry, Ereketi Methodist Church, Badagry, Lagos.	08/09/2011
111.	Udofia, A. N. (Deaconess)	Co-ordinator, National Women's Work, Methodist Church Nigeria	36	Methodist Church Nigeria Wesley House, 21/22 Marina, Lagos.	22/01/2012
112.	Zannu, J. (Mrs)	Relief Funds Steward	40	Methodist Church Nigeria, Trinity Church Council, Salem Methodist Church, Makoko, Lagos.	17/09/2011

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ii. Sample of Structured Interview Guide

1. Name
2. Age
3. Level of Education
4. Occupation
5. For how long have you been in Methodist Church Nigeria?
6. What is your assessment of Methodist Church Nigeria Pastoral Ministry?
7. How did John Wesley see his conversion and call in relation to his Pastoral Ministry?
8. In your own opinion, has Pastoral Ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria been effective enough?
9. If not what are the factors militating against effective Pastoral Ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria?
10. If a Pastor does not have conversion experience and Pastoral call, what are the effects on his ministry?
11. What is your opinion about the way in which Methodist Church Nigeria admits people into its Pastoral Ministry?
12. What are your feelings about Tent-Making and Full-Time Ministries of Methodist Church Nigeria?
13. If the conversion of Paul demonstrates that the preaching of the Word is God's chosen method for the communication of the Gospel of salvation, what about the church which does not prioritise this.
14. How do you assess the priority of Methodist Church Nigeria today in relation to this divine task?
15. In what ways would Paul's Damascus road experience and his call be of benefit to the Pastoral Ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria?
16. What is your opinion on conversion experience and call to Pastoral Ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria in the context of Paul's Conversion and Call?
17. What should be the basis for having effective witnessing in Methodist Church Nigeria?

iii. Questionnaire Sample

Department of Religious Studies,
Faculty of Arts,
University of Ibadan, Ibadan.

Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire is aimed at collecting views of the people in Methodist Church Nigeria regarding Methodist Church Pastoral Ministry in Nigeria. It is purely an academic exercise and your anonymity is fully guaranteed. We, therefore, solicit your sincere and objective response.

Thank you.

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Instruction: Please tick the appropriate column

1. Age: a) 18 – 30 years b) 31 – 40 years
 c) 41 – 50 years d) 51 – 60 years
 e) 61 years and above
2. Sex: a) Male b) Female
3. Ministry served in the Church:
 a) Pastoral Ministry b) Non- Pastoral Ministry
4. How long have you been in the Church?
 a) Less than 10 years b) 10 years above
 c) 20 years above d) 30 years above

SECTION B: PASTORAL MINISTRY IN METHODIST CHURCH NIGERIA

Instruction: Please tick the column that best expresses your opinion

5. It is necessary for a man/woman to have personal conversion experience before he/she goes for the Pastoral Ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria. a) Yes b) No

Please state your reason(s) _____

6. There are cases of those who enter the Pastoral Ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria first and later had personal experience. a) Yes b) No

State the results of not having personal encounter with Christ before entering the ministry

7. One needs to receive a specific call of God, like Paul, before entering into the Pastoral Ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria. a) Yes b) No

State the reasons for your answer _____

8. Anyone who receives a call into the Pastoral Ministry of Methodist Church Nigeria must abandon his secular work. a) Yes b) No

State the reasons for your answer _____

9. There is the need to know from God if the call is for Full-Time or Part-Time.

a) Yes b) No

State the reasons for your answer _____

10. There is nothing like a Part-Time Ministry. a) Yes b) No

State the reasons for your answer _____

11. Paul refers to his Damascus Road experience as both his conversion and call.

a) Yes b) No

State the reasons for your answer _____

12. Conversion is gradual and not sudden. a) Yes b) No

State the reasons for your answer _____

13. If somebody comes out in response to an altar call, it is only the message of that day that

wins him/her to Christ. a) Yes b) No

State the reasons for your answer _____

**SECTION C: CAUSES OF INEFFECTIVENESS IN THE PASTORAL MINISTRY
IN METHODIST CHURCH NIGERIA**

14. The ineffectiveness in the Pastoral Ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria is caused by failure to see a need for a personal encounter with God before entering the Pastoral ministry.

a) Yes b) No

State the reasons for your answer _____

15. The ineffectiveness in the Pastoral Ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria is caused by receiving a Pastoral call in the Ministry through other influences rather than the Spirit of God.

a) Yes b) No

State the reasons for your answer _____

16. The ineffectiveness in the Pastoral Ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria is caused by lack of understanding of the fact that the Pastoral call of one's spouse automatically becomes the call of the marriage partner. a) Yes b) No

State the reasons for your answer _____

17. The ineffectiveness in the Pastoral Ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria is caused by disregarding the fact that one's spouse matters much in one's success in the Ministry.

a) Yes b) No

State the reasons for your answer _____

**SECTION D: EFFECTS OF INEFFECTIVENESS IN THE PASTORAL
MINISTRY IN METHODIST CHURCH NIGERIA**

18. The ineffectiveness in the Pastoral Ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria is caused by lack of commitment to service and loss of self-esteem.

a) Yes b) No

State the reasons for your answer _____

19. The ineffectiveness in the Pastoral Ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria may lead to loss of spiritual vitality and lack of commitment to service of the Laity.

a) Yes b) No

State the reasons for your answer _____

20. The ineffectiveness in the Pastoral Ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria may lead to ineffective witnessing Church. a) Yes b) No

State the reasons for your answer _____

21. The ineffectiveness in the Pastoral Ministry in Methodist Church Nigeria affects its spiritual, numerical and financial growth.

a) Yes b) No

State the reasons for your answer _____

22. Some members are defecting to other churches, while others are breaking away because the Church has lost its original message. a) Yes b) No

State the reasons for your answer _____

Please list other effect(s) you know _____
