



## Research Article

# Building a Mission-Oriented Church in Ghana in the 21st Century: The Role of Theological Education

This paper was presented as part of the 10th Archbishop Le Maire Memorial lectures instituted by the St. Nicholas Anglican Seminary at Cape Coast, where I was the Keynote Speaker in 2018.

### ABSTRACT

This study examined the role of theological education in building a mission-oriented church in Ghana in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The study sought to find answers to the goal of theological education in Ghana; the motives for the church in embarking on mission; the models of theological education in Ghana; the structure and content of theological education in Ghana; how theological education in Ghana could be mission-oriented. The qualitative research methodology was employed with a focus on a case study of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and Anglican Church of Ghana. Observation, Interview and Content Analysis of documents were used for data collection. The findings were that the goal of mission was to alleviate poverty, ignorance and hardships. The motives for mission were cross-cultural, international, co-operative and holistic. Different models of theological education were used. The study recommends theological education be provided for pastors and lay leaders in fulfilment of UN SDG 4, which seeks to provide equitable quality education; and equal opportunity be given to females to receive theological education, in fulfilment of UN SDG 5, which seeks to achieve gender equality.

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### INTRODUCTION

Theological Education is a subject that has been dealt with extensively by a number of theologians at the global level. In Africa, several theologians have also contributed to the discussion on the subject. These include John Samuel Pobee of Ghana,<sup>2</sup> Justin Ukpong of Nigeria,<sup>3</sup> John Cosmas Njoroge of Kenya,<sup>4</sup> Tony Balcomb of South Africa,<sup>5</sup> and Kangwa Mbuluki of Zambia.<sup>6</sup> Among these theologians were women like Mercy Oduyoye of Ghana,<sup>7</sup> and Mary Getui of Kenya.<sup>8</sup>

In Ghana, some scholars have also contributed to the study of theological education. From the Mainline Church

<sup>2</sup> John Samuel Pobee, Good News Turned by Native Hands, Turned by Native Hatchets and Tendered with Native Earth – A History of Theological Education in Africa. In *Handbook of Theological Education in Africa*, pp. 13-27.

<sup>3</sup> Justin Ukpong, Inculturation Theology in Africa: Historical and Hermeneutical Developments. In *Handbook of Theological Education in Africa*, pp. 530-542.

<sup>4</sup> John Cosmas Njoroge, Theological Training and Formation in the Eastern Orthodox Churches in Africa, In *Handbook of Theological Education in Africa*, pp. 292-300.

<sup>5</sup> Tony Balcomb, Theological Education and the relevance of African worldviews – Shifting the Paradigm, In *Handbook of Theological Education in Africa*, pp. 576-588.

<sup>6</sup> Kangwa Mbuluki, Theological Education for all God's People: Theological Education by Extension (TEE) in Africa. In *Handbook of Theological Education in Africa*, pp. 832-840.

<sup>7</sup> Mercy Oduyoye, Doing Popular Theology through the Institute of Women in Religion and Culture in Accra, Ghana. In *Handbook of Theological Education in Africa*, pp. 958-965.

<sup>8</sup> Mary Getui, Theological Education in the Seventh Day Adventist Church (SDA). In *Handbook of Theological Education in Africa*, pp. 440-442.

tradition, Kwabena Asamoah Gyadu has contributed to theological education in the Methodist Church, Ghana.<sup>9</sup> Opoku Onyinah and Emmanuel Kwesi Anim have contributed to the study of theological education in the Pentecostal Churches in Ghana.<sup>10</sup> Similarly, Thomas Oduro has devoted his theological study to African Independent Churches in Ghana.<sup>11</sup>

This study examines the concepts “Church” and “Mission”; the goal of theological education in Ghana; the motives for churches to embark on mission; the models that are used for providing theological education in Ghana, suggests what should be done by theological institutions to make theological education in Ghana mission-oriented.

## WHAT IS A CHURCH?

In Christian Theology, the concept of “church” is studied under the branch of theology which is referred to as “Ecclesiology”. Ecclesiology is the study of the Christian Church, comprising its origin, its relationship with Jesus Christ, its role in salvation, its polity or governance structure, and its leadership. The term “Church” is coined from the Greek word “ekklesia”, which literally means “to call out”. The “Church” therefore refers to people who have been called out for a purpose, i.e., to fulfil a mission.<sup>12</sup>

The origin of the church can be traced to several sources. Whereas some trace its origin from the Old Testament era, others think otherwise, and believe that the church started during the New Testament era. Those who are of the view that the church started in the Old Testament era trace its origin to Adam (Gen. 3), whereas others trace it to Abraham (Gen. 12). Some people also opine that the church was established when Paul started his missionary journey (Acts 13); whereas to others, the church started on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2).

For those who trace the origin of the church to the New Testament era, some trace its origin from John the Baptist, whereas others trace the origin of the church to Jesus Christ. Even among those who trace the origin to Jesus, they give different time periods. Some trace the origin of the church to the time of the Call of the Twelve Apostles (Matt. 10); Peter’s Confession at Caesarea Philippi (Matt. 16); the Last Supper (Matt. 26); and on the first Easter Sunday night after the Resurrection of Jesus Christ (John 20).

The Church is meant to serve a purpose. The Church exists when the people hear the Word of God, and respond to it by performing rituals like singing, praying and sacraments for the purpose of obtaining salvation; To ensure effective management of the church, leaders are appointed, elected, consecrated or ordained and assigned certain responsibilities to perform. Leadership therefore plays key role in Church organization.

Depending on the nature of the church’s theology and doctrine, and the nature of government of the church (whether Episcopal, Presbyterian or Congregational), leaders may assume titles like Bishops, Deacons or Deaconesses, Elders, Ministers, Presbyters, Pastors, Apostles and many others. The need for effective leadership for the church calls for ministerial formation, hence the institution of seminaries and theological institutions.

The author’s position is that the church is made up of people who hear the Word of God, and give positive response to the message. The Church is made up of children, youth, adults, men and women, males and females. Therefore, any assembly of God’s people that discriminates against other members, by virtue of their sex, race, colour, ethnicity or social status cannot adequately be described as a church. It is for this reason that theological education must play key role in supporting the building of a mission-oriented church.

Jesus Christ, the founder of the Church, expressed his own theology of mission through the declaration which he made in Luke 4:18-20, that He had been anointed by the Holy Spirit to preach good news to the poor, proclaim freedom for prisoners, bring recovery of sight to the blind, release the oppressed, and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. The Church therefore exists to carry out a mandate, i.e., to fulfil the mission of Jesus Christ. This gives the church its focus and makes it mission-oriented.

## WHAT IS MISSION?

According to David Bosch, the South African missiologist, the work of “mission” requires that a person or group of persons are sent to a particular destination to perform a task or an assignment.<sup>13</sup> From the definition, two parties are involved in mission. These are the “Sender” and the “One who has been sent”. For the one to be sent to respond positively to the Sender, he or she must understand the **goal** of mission. Secondly, the one who has been sent must develop certain **motives** that will help him or her to fulfil the mission. Finally, the one who has been sent should develop certain **strategies** to help him or her to achieve the goal. This must therefore help us to define our theology of

<sup>9</sup> Kwabena Asamoah Gyadu, Theological Education in Methodist Churches in Africa. In *Handbook of Theological Education in Africa*, pp. 380-387.

<sup>10</sup> Opoku Onyinah and Emmanuel Kwesi Anim, Pentecostal Theological Education – A Ghanaian Perspective. In *Handbook of Theological Education in Africa*, pp. 393-401.

<sup>11</sup> Thomas Oduro, Theological Education in African Independence Churches: A Plethora of Pedagogies. In *Handbook of Theological Education in Africa*, pp. 423-432.

<sup>12</sup> David N. A. Kpobi, *Mission in Ghana: The Ecumenical Heritage*. Accra: Asempa Publishers, 2008, p. 7.

<sup>13</sup> David Bosch, *Transforming Mission*. New York: Orbis Books, 1991, p.1.

mission.

“Theology of mission” is defined as “... the basic presuppositions and underlying principles which determine, from the standpoint of Christian faith, the motives, strategy and goals of the Christian world mission.”<sup>14</sup>

### The Goal of Mission

Mission must be understood as a calling from God to liberate His people from oppression, hardship, ignorance and poverty, among others. Therefore, for the church to engage in mission, it is required to work towards the alleviation of poverty, ignorance and hardships. Mission has its foundation in scripture. The Old Testament provides a theological foundation of mission when God used Moses to deliver the Israelites from bondage under the leadership of Moses (Exodus 6). The initiative came from God. As a result, God is seen to be the originator of mission. Therefore, all those who give positive response to the Word of God and are “called out” are to embark on mission. It is for this reason that the Church of God should be mission-oriented. The church should not add to the burden of people.

Similarly, from the New Testament perspective, God’s mission was executed when Jesus Christ responded to God’s call to fulfil His mission on earth, as quoted by the Prophet Isaiah,

Then I heard a voice of the Lord saying “Whom shall I send?  
And who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I, send me!”  
(Isaiah 6:8 - NIV).

Again, in the New Testament, during Jesus Christ’s post-resurrection ministry, he gave the disciples a command (the Great Commission), to fulfil His mission as follows:

Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth  
has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations,  
baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the  
Holy Spirit, ...’ (Matthew 28:18-19 - NIV).<sup>15</sup>

According to William Barclay, when Jesus gave the above statement to the disciples, He assured them of His power, gave them a commission, and promised them a presence.<sup>16</sup> It was against this background, that the Basel Evangelical Mission Society (popularly known as the Basel Mission) which established the Presbyterian Church of Ghana in 1828 saw mission as a calling from God to liberate people from oppression, hardship, ignorance and poverty. In response to God’s divine mandate (i.e. The Great Commission), the Basel Missionaries responded in 1828 and came to the Gold Coast to establish the Basel Mission Church which has now become the Presbyterian Church of Ghana.<sup>17</sup>

Noel Smith has reported that in response to God’s mandate, the first batch of the Basel Missionaries who responded to the call to mission was given specific instructions as follows:

First, they were to adapt themselves to the climate; secondly, they  
were to take time to select a site for a permanent mission; thirdly,  
they were to master the local language at all costs; finally, they  
were to present the gospel with love and patience. In this way, ...  
they will be able to heal the bleeding wounds, which ‘greed of  
gain and the cruel craftiness of the European have caused’.<sup>18</sup>

### Motives for Mission

The biblical foundation of mission must challenge people to consider the kind of motives that they have for embarking on mission. Terry C. Hulbert suggests four motives, which he thought could be helpful to guide us in mission. These are: cross-cultural, international, co-operative and holistic.<sup>19</sup> Hubert is of the view that mission should be cross-cultural, meaning it must cut across different cultures; should have international dimension by going beyond the borders of countries; should require a co-operative effort of all, rather than becoming an individual affair. He proposed that mission should be holistic.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Neil Stephen, Gerald H. Anderson & John Goodwin, (eds.) *A Concise Dictionary of the World Mission*. London: Lutterworth Press, 1971, p. 594.

<sup>15</sup> In the Greek translation, the command is not in “Go”, which is a participle, and should have taken “ing” at the end, thus the correct translation should have been “Going” or “As you go”. The “make disciples” is an imperative, which is the command in the text.

<sup>16</sup> William Barclay, *Gospel of Matthew, Vol 2*. Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press, 1967, p. 417.

<sup>17</sup> Seth Asare-Danso, *Historical Analysis of the Effects of Education Acts on Basel Mission Education in the Gold Coast/Ghana (1950-2007)*. PhD Thesis, University of Ghana, Legon, 2011.

<sup>18</sup> Noel Smith, *The Presbyterian Church of Ghana, 1835-1960. A Younger Church in a Changing Society*. Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1966, pp. 28-29.

<sup>19</sup> Terry C. Hulbert, *World Missions Today*. Wheaton, Illinois: Evangelical Teacher Training Association, 1981.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

An examination of the Basel Mission activities revealed that it worked towards the fulfilment of building a mission-oriented church in the then Gold Coast. First, the Basel Mission believed that building a mission-oriented church required that our motive for mission should be **cross-cultural**.<sup>21</sup> It believed that culture or language should not be a barrier to the spread of the gospel. For this reason, they recruited and sent out missionaries from European countries to the Gold Coast to engage in mission. These missionaries studied the local languages of the people and committed them into writing. This was based on the presupposition that the gospel should be incarnated in the vernacular.<sup>22</sup> Consequently, J. G. Christaller helped to develop the Twi language, while Zimmerman helped to develop the Ga language. In the Basel Mission schools, the Instruktion, i.e. guidelines were provided compelling the missionaries to use local language as a medium of instruction. In a study conducted about the work of the Basel Mission, the author consulted the Church Chronicle of the Emmanuel Congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana at Kibi. It was observed that the events that were recorded in the Chronicle were written in the vernacular (i.e. the Twi Language). The use of the local languages therefore became a major feature of Basel Mission language policy in the Gold Coast.<sup>23</sup>

The Anglican Church of Ghana also demonstrates the cross-cultural nature of mission. Initially, when Bishop Hamlyn was transferred by the Church of England from Nigeria to Cape Coast in 1904, he opened congregations in Cape Coast, Accra, Tarkwa and Sekondi. Membership was made up of mainly Europeans in government service, and the medium of communication for the service was English. However, in 1907, Bishop Hamlyn established a congregation for Yorubas in Sekondi, and another congregation for Fantes at Essikado. At the same time, Rev. Ernest Bruce who had left the Methodist Church and joined the Anglican Church helped in establishing the St. Mary's Anglican Church in Accra for Ga speakers.<sup>24</sup>

Secondly, the Basel Mission believed that mission should be **international**, involving believers in many countries around the world.<sup>25</sup> This motive has its theological basis in Genesis 12:1 where Abraham was asked by God to leave his country, his people and his household from Ur of the Chaldeans and go to Haran, in order to fulfil his mission mandate. Therefore, from the theological perspective, the Basel Mission believed that mission should involve all believers in all countries around the world. For this reason, missionaries were drawn from different European countries and sent to the Gold Coast.

Initially, missionaries were recruited from South-West Germany (mainly Lutheran) and Switzerland (Reformed).<sup>26</sup> Among the first batch of four Basel Missionaries who came to the Gold Coast in March 1827, three were Germans (namely Karl L. Salbach, Gottlieb Holzwarth and Johannes Henke), and one was from Switzerland (Johannes Gottlob Schmidt). Similarly, in 1831, among the three Basel missionaries who came to the Gold Coast, two were from Denmark (Andreas Riis and Peter Petersen Jaeger), and one was from Saxony (Christian Frederich Heinze).<sup>27</sup>

Later, some black Christians were recruited from Jamaica and sent to the Gold Coast in 1843. They were not missionaries but they were sent to the Gold Coast to demonstrate to Africans that black people could also practise Christianity.<sup>28</sup> It is therefore not surprising that many of the Charismatic Churches that are established these days add "International" to their names, so we can hear of "Cross Fire International Ministry", "Jesus Generation International Ministry", and many others.

The Anglican Church demonstrated the international nature of mission when in 1720, the Royal African Company (RAC), an English merchant company, requested the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel to send Chaplains to their trading posts outside the USA. In response to mission, Thomas Thompson offered himself to be sent to Cape Coast after 30 years in 1751. He then became the first SPG Missionary in Ghana, and for that matter, the first Anglican Missionary.<sup>29</sup>

Thirdly, building a mission-oriented church requires that our motive for mission should be holistic. The Basel Mission for example understood mission to be **holistic**.<sup>30</sup> Peter Wagner quoted John Calvin as teaching that all believers have a dual mandate to fulfil - a cultural mandate to transform society, and an **evangelistic mandate** to save souls.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Cephas N. Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*. The Netherlands: Boekencentrum Publishing House, 2006, p.54.

<sup>23</sup> Ulrike Sill, *Encounters in Quest of Christian Womanhood: The Basel Mission in Pre- and Early Colonial Ghana*. Leiden: Brill, 2010. p.104.

<sup>24</sup> David N. A. Kpobi, *Mission in Ghana: The Ecumenical Heritage*. Accra: Asempa Publishers, 2008, p. 80.

<sup>25</sup> Terry C. Hulbert, *World Missions Today*. Wheaton, Illinois: Evangelical Teacher Training Association, 1981.

<sup>26</sup> Cephas N. Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*. The Netherlands: Boekencentrum Publishing House, 2006, p.52.

<sup>27</sup> Noel Smith, *The Presbyterian Church of Ghana, 1835-1960. A Younger Church in a Changing Society*. 1966, pp. 28-29.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, p.37.

<sup>29</sup> John Samuel Pobe, *Initiation to be African Anglican*. Accra: Asempa Publishers, 2000; David N. A. Kpobi, *Mission in Ghana: The Ecumenical Heritage*. Accra: Asempa Publishers, 2008, p. 79.

<sup>30</sup> Terry C. Hulbert, *World Missions Today*. Wheaton, Illinois: Evangelical Teacher Training Association, 1981.

<sup>31</sup> Peter C. Wagner, *The Church in the Workplace*. Ventura: Regal, 2006, p. 36.



The author is of the view that this helps to explain the holistic nature of mission, as perceived by the Basel Mission. As a result, it demonstrated its concern for meeting not only the spiritual needs of people, but also their social, economic and other needs. This theology was developed from Jesus' own theology of mission which he declared in Luke 4:18-20,

The Spirit of God is upon me,  
because he has anointed me  
to preach good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for prisoners  
And recovery of sight to the blind,  
To release the oppressed,  
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord (NIV).

With the above declaration, Jesus clearly defined the holistic nature of His mission on earth, which had a mixture of spiritual, political, social and economic motives. It was this theology of mission of Jesus that influenced the Basel Mission to embark on holistic mission, leading to the establishment of congregations, schools, health facilities, and trading company, among others.<sup>32</sup>

Fourthly, a mission-oriented church must have a co-operative attitude towards mission. The Basel Mission had this kind of **co-operative** attitude towards mission.<sup>33</sup> This attitude guided the mission to recruit and send to the Gold Coast people with a variety of skills and professionals who could contribute individually and collectively to promote the welfare of the people among whom they worked. The use of their varied skills contributed to the success of the mission work that they embarked upon.

The Anglican Church believed in the co-operative nature of mission and for that matter, ecumenism. It has been documented that Bishop Aglionby of Accra was best known for his efforts in establishing good human relations, and good relations with other churches. He played a leading role in the formation of the Christian Council of Ghana, and he became its first Chairman in 1929.<sup>34</sup>

The co-operative nature of mission has led to the formation of ecumenical bodies like the Christian Council of Ghana, the West Africa Association of Theological Institutes (WAATI), the All African Conference of Churches (AACC), to which the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and the Anglican Church of Ghana belong.

## THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN GHANA IN A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The origin of theological education in Ghana could be traced to the schools. This is confirmed by Asamoah-Gyadu, who attributes the Christian growth and expansion in West Africa during the 19<sup>th</sup> century to some lay people who were able to spread the gospel. He indicates that these people were able to do that through the theological education that they obtained from the School system.<sup>35</sup> He cites the Wesley Girls High School and Mfantshipim School, both in Cape Coast and belonging to the Methodist tradition, where some students were trained as "local preachers" and sent out as "preaching bands" to adjoining villages to lead Sunday School worship and Children Service.<sup>36</sup>

Apart from the secondary schools, theological education was provided in the teacher training colleges (now colleges of education). A study conducted at Agogo-Ashanti in 2008 revealed that theological education was part of the curriculum of Agogo Presbyterian Women's College of Education. The girls were sent to the outstations like Juansa, Krofa, Akutuase and other nearby towns to do evangelism on Sundays. They referred to this practice as "Street Preaching". In a report, one of the students wrote in a manuscript dated 1955 that:

We the students of Agogo Presbyterian Training College visit some neighbouring villages each Sunday, and preach to the people. Throughout the past years of this college, "street preaching" has been carried out by many students. Though we are not trained much in theology, we try to collect some knowledge of the words of the Bible and of what we are being taught. With such inadequate knowledge and understanding, we preach the Gospel to the villagers whom we visit. We do hope that the Lord Himself waters our little seeds sewn into the hearts of those people, so that they may flourish with spiritual gifts.<sup>37</sup>

In Ghana, theological education was also provided at the seminaries. The first formal theological seminary was

<sup>32</sup> Seth Asare-Danso, *Historical Analysis of the Effects of Education Acts on Basel Mission Education in the Gold Coast/Ghana (1950-2007)*. PhD Thesis, University of Ghana, Legon, 2011, p. 95.

<sup>33</sup> Terry C. Hulbert, *World Missions Today*. Wheaton, Illinois: Evangelical Teacher Training Association, 1981.

<sup>34</sup> David N. A. Kpobi, *Mission in Ghana: The Ecumenical Heritage*. Accra: Asempa Publishers, 2008, pp. 81-82.

<sup>35</sup> Kwabena Asamoah Gyadu, Theological Education in West Africa, In *Handbook of Theological Education in Africa*. p. 146-153.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Cecilia F. Asare, a student of the Agogo Presbyterian Training College wrote down her experience in a manuscript which was entitled "Street Preaching", dated December 1955.

established in Ghana (then Gold Coast) on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1848 by the Basel Mission at Akropong-Akuapem, as part of their teacher catechist training programme. Another one was later opened at the Christianborg, Osu in 1850. However, this was transferred to Akropong-Akuapem Seminary in 1855.<sup>38</sup> The Basel Mission opened another seminary at Abetifi in 1898 to train evangelists. Regrettably, this was closed down during the period of the First World War (1914-1918) and was re-opened after the war. In 1923, the Abetifi Seminary was closed down again and the students were transferred to the Akropong-Akuapem Seminary. It was finally re-opened after the Second World War.<sup>39</sup>

In 1924, the Roman Catholic Church established a seminary at Amisano (near Elmina). In 1942, the Methodist Church, Gold Coast and the Presbyterian Church of Gold Coast jointly established a seminary known as the Trinity College, which was later relocated to Accra in 1964.<sup>40</sup> The Roman Catholic Church later established the St. Victor's Seminary at Tamale, and St. Peter's Seminary at Cape Coast in 1957. Other Seminaries were later established, and these included the St. Nicholas Seminary at Cape Coast. Currently, there are a number of theological institutions in Ghana which are providing theological education. These include Trinity Theological Seminary, Legon, St. Nicholas Seminary, Cape Coast, and St. Peter's Seminary, Cape Coast. It is important to note that a number of these theological institutions have added secular education to their curriculum and the institutions have been converted to university colleges. Other university colleges in Ghana include Maranatha University College, Dominion University College, Central University College, Pentecost University College, Christian Service University College in Kumasi, Good News Theological College and Seminary and Global Theological Seminary, Osu, Accra.

### The Goal of Theological Education

Theological education is meant to prepare men and women to assume leadership positions and perform leadership roles not only in the church but also within various communities. It is therefore very important to equip these religious leaders with knowledge, skills and competencies required for mission. This has implication for their ministerial formation.

Theological education must therefore be used to adequately prepare the seminarian not only to preach the gospel, but also to save people from hardship and poverty. It is for this reason that seminarians are not only trained, but they are also educated, and more importantly, "formed", hence the term "ministerial formation".

As part of their ministerial formation, theological education should help to develop the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of the learners. Theological education should help to develop the cognitive domain by broadening the horizon of the learner, and making him or her knowledgeable on a wide range of issues, so that the minister could help in solving societal problems.

Theological education should help to develop the affective domain of the learner by moulding the character of the seminarian. The minister is supposed to be the "light of the world". This must therefore be reflected in his or her speech, thoughts and actions. He or she must have a good heart, because the heart is the seat of our emotions. Theological education should help the seminarian to develop generic skills. The one undergoing training must learn a number of survival skills, that will enable him or her to cope with all kinds of situations at their various pastoral stations where they will be working.

The goal of theological education has implication for the kind of training that should be given to seminarians. Let us examine some of the models of theological education and find out which of them are used for the training of ministers in Ghana, and their theological implications.

### Models Used for Providing Theological Education

Henry Griffith has provided a number of models of theological education.<sup>41</sup> Among these models, the ones that are mostly used for ministerial formation in Ghana are the following: The **Apprenticeship Model**, which was used by the Apostle Paul to train and mentor people like Timothy. It requires the trainee to work and understudy an experienced minister.

Some pastors are also trained by the **Correspondence Model**. By this model, the trainees are made to take Correspondence courses over a period of time. After successfully going through the course, such trainees are ordained.

The **Seminary Model** provides seminary education either by one religious denomination (e.g. St. Nicholas Seminary by the Anglican Church) or by a group of denominations (like the Trinity Theological Seminary, which is managed by the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, the Methodist Church, Ghana, the A.M.E. Zion Church, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana and the Anglican Church of Ghana).

<sup>38</sup> G. Owusu-Agyakwa, S. K. Ackah, S. K. & M. Kwamena-Poh, *The Mother of Our Schools: A History of the Presbyterian Training College, Akropong-Akuapem, and Biography of the Principals (1848 – 1993)*, 1993: 9.

<sup>39</sup> Seth Asare-Danso, *Historical Analysis of the Effects of Education Acts on Basel Mission Education in the Gold Coast/Ghana (1950-2007)*. PhD Thesis, University of Ghana, Legon, 2011:137.

<sup>40</sup> Cosmas Ebo Sarbah, *The Planting of Christianity in Ghana: A Critical Review of the Approaches*. In *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology*, Vol. 18, No. 2, 2014:15.

<sup>41</sup> Henry Griffith, *Models of Theological Education Yesterday and Today*, in *East African Journal of Evangelical Theology*, 45-51.

With the **University Model**, public universities are made to run theological education programmes and offer a number of theology courses, in addition to religious education courses, and other secular courses. The challenge with this model is that it may not allow more theological courses to be taken by the student, because of the secular nature of the institution.

**Theological Education by Extension (TEE) Model** was first used in Guatemala in the 1960s. TEE enables leaders of congregations to develop their gifts and ministries without leaving their place of work.<sup>42</sup> The Methodist Church, Ghana uses this model to train their ministers.

**Special Ministerial Training (SMT) Model** is an alternative theological education model that was introduced by the Presbyterian Church of Ghana in the early 1980s for the training of ministers. According to an informant, this was introduced at a time when the Presbyterian Church needed more ministers in the church but the use of the quota system for admission into the Trinity Theological Seminary could not allow for the training of more ministers.

According to an informant, the **Special Special Ministerial Training (SSMTP Model)** was designed by the Presbyterian Church of Ghana for some selected catechists who had served the church for many years. For such people, the church leadership thought that they seemed to have more experience but they did not have the requisite qualification to enter the seminary. The SSMT programme was designed for them for a very short period and they were commissioned as ministers.

### **An Appraisal of the use of the Theological Models**

Among the various models of theological education, the Presbyterian Church of Ghana has been using the Apprenticeship, Seminary, SMT and the SSMT Models to train its ministers. The difficulty with the use of the SMT and the SSMT models is that people who do not have very strong theological and academic background may not be well equipped for their ministerial work. This is likely to affect the work of mission, due to their lack of sound theological knowledge to address the problems of members of their congregation. This challenge could however be overcome through the use of continuous professional development and mentorship programmes to be organised by the leadership of the church for them, as well as the field experiences that the minister will gain. The Anglican Church of Ghana uses the Seminary Model to train its ministers.

### **The Structure and Content of Theological Education in Ghana**

To ensure effective ministerial formation, the seminarian should be given sound theological education. Regrettably, this is what seems to be lacking in some theological institutions. Theological institutions in Ghana seem to focus on theology courses, to the neglect of other secular subjects. In order to prepare seminarians to go and do the work of mission, they should be well equipped to go into the world to transform society.

The holistic nature of mission calls for diversification of curriculum for theological institutions.

Theological education must not be limited to the study of theology courses. The scope of theological education should be broad, touching on spiritual, socio-cultural, moral, psychological, philosophical, anthropological and environmental issues, among others.

In terms of structure, there seem to be no fixed duration that has been generally prescribed for theological education in Ghana. Therefore, the number of years that one spends in training depends on the kind of programme that the person wants to pursue, and the kind of church institution that is training the person. Some of the theological programmes lead to the award of Certificate in Ministry, Diploma in Theology, Bachelor of Theology (B.Th.), Bachelor of Divinity (B. Div.), Bachelor of Arts in Ministry (BAM), Master of Theology (M.Th.), Master of Divinity (M. Div.), Doctor of Ministry (D. Min.), Doctor of Divinity (D. Div.), Doctor of Theology (D. Th.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph. D).<sup>43</sup> In view of this laxity, theological education in Ghana is not strictly tied to ministerial formation. Therefore, one can enter for example, the Trinity Theological Seminary in Ghana to pursue the Master of Theology programme but after completion, that individual may not be commissioned by any church group.

### **Is Theological Education in Ghana Mission-Oriented?**

The main task of theological education is to equip members of the church to render service to God and to humanity. Now the question is: Are theological institutions adequately preparing men and women to perform this task? This author's response is emphatic "No!". The church in Africa is fast growing, and the church in Ghana is no exemption. Ordinary members of the church believe in the priesthood of all believers, and this has challenged them to have the zeal and enthusiasm to do the work of mission. This is to help them to win souls for Christ.

<sup>42</sup> Kenneth Mulholland, *Adventures in Training in the Ministry*. Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1976: 7.

<sup>43</sup> See Trinity Theological Seminary Brochure.

Regrettably, a large number of people who have been engaged in mission in the church are not given any theological training. Only a few people are trained for pastoral work in churches because of lack of resources and logistics to support the training of seminarians. This author is of the view that theological education must be given to all members of the church who are willing to study, without necessarily becoming ministers of the gospel.

This move will in turn throw a challenge to theological institutions to design programmes that could adequately resource and equip the lay people in the church to enable them participate fully in the work of mission. The Presbyterian Church of Ghana has responded positively to this challenge by establishing some Lay Training Centres to train the lay people in the Church. Examples of the Lay Training Centres can be found at Agona Nsabaa in the Central Region of Ghana, Tamale in the Northern Region of Ghana, and Manya-Kpongonor in the Eastern Region of Ghana. These Lay Training Centres are headed by Directors (Presbyterian Ministers).

Another reason why theological institutions are not mission-oriented is that some of them do not encourage gender equity. Some theologians have different understanding of the holistic nature of mission. They believe that women should not take active part in mission. As a result, they do not allow women to assume leadership position in the church, let alone allowing them to enter the Ordained Ministry. In the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, the issue of women ordination became a major debate in the church. A study conducted by Rev. Mrs. Grace Sintim Adasi<sup>44</sup> revealed that the Rev. Dora Ofori Owusu was the first female candidate to be ordained in the Presbyterian Church at Atlanta Presbytery in the USA after she completed her Master of Divinity degree in 1976. Regrettably, the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana did not recognise her ordination when she came back to Ghana.<sup>45</sup> Rev. Dr. Sintim Adasi's study also revealed that it was in 1979 that the Synod ordained Rev. Gladys Maku Nyarko and commissioned Rev. Alice Kyei Anti. That was the year that the PCG approved of women's ordination into the ministry. It has therefore become contentious, as to who was the first woman to be commissioned into the ministry.<sup>46</sup> Rev. Gladys Maku Nyarko had been a Deaconess and a Tutor at Aburi Presbyterian Women's Training College, yet she did not qualify to be called a Chaplain. This was somebody who had had theology degree from Canada. Eventually, when she was ordained into the ministry, she was not given pastoral gown to wear like her male counterparts. She was made to wear ordinary kaba and sleet (a traditional Ghanaian dress). Even though this unfortunate situation was regrettable, what is important is that this ordination encouraged other church leaders in Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Kenya to ordain female ministers.<sup>47</sup>

In the Anglican Church of Ghana, the story was not different. Women ordination in the church is a big issue. It was when this author attended the Archbishop Le Maire Memorial Lectures at the St. Nicholas Anglican Seminary in Cape Coast in 2011 that he saw female seminarians being enrolled at the seminary to undergo theological training in the Anglican Church of Ghana for the first time.

## HOW THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTIONS CAN SUPPORT THE BUILDING OF A MISSION-ORIENTED CHURCH IN GHANA IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

Building a mission-oriented church requires a lot of support, resources and logistics, which are believed could be adequately provided by theological institutions or seminaries. Building a mission-oriented church in Ghana in the 21<sup>st</sup> century requires that Theological Institutions produce ministers and priests who would be equipped with sound theological knowledge that would help them to do the work of mission. This has implication for curriculum development in theological institutions.

Building of a mission-oriented church in Ghana in the 21<sup>st</sup> century requires that theological institutions must provide ministerial formation to priests who will not put their own interest above the interest of the people they serve. According to Cosmas Ebo Sarbah,<sup>48</sup> the prayer of such priests must be like that of Ignatius Loyola who prayed, saying:

Teach us, good Lord, to serve you as you deserve; to give and not to count the cost; to fight and not to heed the wounds; to toil and not to seek for rest; to labour and not to ask for any reward, save that of knowing that we are doing your will.<sup>49</sup>

To build a mission-oriented church in Ghana in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, theological education in Africa must be used to prepare

<sup>44</sup> Rev. Dr. Grace Sintim-Adasi is a Minister of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, and a Lecturer in Religious Studies at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon. She has just been appointed Principal of Agogo Presbyterian Women's College of Education.

<sup>45</sup> Grace Sintim-Adasi, *Female Clergy and the Administration of the Eucharist in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana: Attitudes and Perceptions*. *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology*, Vol. 18, No. 2, 2014: 45.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Rev. Dr. Cosmas Ebo Sarbah is a Roman Catholic Priest, and a Lecturer in Comparative Religion at the Department for the Study of Religions, University of Ghana, Legon.

<sup>49</sup> Cosmas Ebo Sarbah, *The Planting of Christianity in Ghana: A Critical Review of the Approaches*. In *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology*, 18, 2, 2014.



not only pastors and priests, but also lay leaders, teachers and other personnel who are engaged in doing the work of mission. This would help in fulfilling the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, which seeks to provide inclusive and equitable quality education (including theological education) to promote life-long opportunities for all.<sup>50</sup>

To promote the building of a mission-oriented church in Ghana in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, theological institutions should work towards addressing the issue of gender parity and give equal opportunity to females to be trained, in order to ensure gender equality, in fulfilment of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5.<sup>51</sup>

To promote the building of a mission-oriented church in Ghana in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, theological institutions and seminaries should diversify their curriculum to address issues that can promote mission. These may include the issue of governance, globalization, poverty eradication, population growth, migration and multi-culturalism, rapid urbanization, environmental crises, religious and ethnic conflicts, HIV/AIDS, Sexual and domestic violence, and Trans-gender issues, among others.

## CONCLUSION

The study has revealed that God built His Church for the purpose of using its members to carry out His mission. Mission was understood in terms of liberation of God's people from ignorance, poverty, oppression and hardships. The study has identified some key roles that theological institutions could play in promoting a mission-oriented church in Ghana in the 21<sup>st</sup> century through the provision of sound theological education. These include, the diversification of curriculum to address global and contemporary issues; addressing the issue of inclusivity and gender in theological institutions; dealing with the value orientation of seminarians; and the use of appropriate models for providing theological education, among others.

The author contends that if theological institutions play their key roles very well, they will be able to provide the kind of theological education that would equip pastors and church leaders with appropriate knowledge and skills required for building a mission-oriented church in Ghana in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. His contention would have implication for national development, as it would help to fulfil the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDG) 4, which seeks to provide equity and quality education; and UN SDG 5, which seeks to achieve gender equality by giving equal opportunity to females to receive theological education.

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<sup>50</sup> Goal 4: Quality Education, in *UN Sustainable Development Goals*, UNDP, 2020. <https://www.gh.undp.org> .

<sup>51</sup> Goal 5: Gender Equality, in *UN Sustainable Development Goals*, UNDP, 2020. <https://www.gh.undp.org>

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