

**PENTECOSTALISM, CHURCH-STATE CO-OPERATION IN EDUCATION AND HEALTHCARE IN GHANA**  
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**ABSTRACT**

This article examines and evaluates how the Ghanaian state and Pentecostal church can co-operate to bring relief to citizens via education and healthcare. The currents of public theology in the areas of education and healthcare present in Ghanaian Pentecostalism today are given serious critical engagement. Empirical evidences are compared with scholarly research in public theology to produce insights of the Ghanaian Pentecostal church's theology in the spheres of education, and healthcare. While it may be true that the state is obliged to provide good and quality employment, education and healthcare to citizens, Ghanaian Pentecostals have begun to realise that the state cannot carry the burden alone. They maintain that a Christian discipleship must respond to all aspects of the Ghanaian life: spiritual, psychological, social, and economic. Through critical engagement this article seeks to formulate a theological construct for church-state relations in the granting of education and healthcare to Ghanaians.

**INTRODUCTION**

The Ghanaian Pentecostal approach to the causes of evil and suffering often neglects human responsibility (private and social). This article will answer the question: How do Ghanaian Pentecostals make their Christian discipleship impact in the private and social spheres of Ghanaians? I will examine the significance of Ghanaian Pentecostals' activities in the public sphere, typically in education and healthcare delivery. This article employs both empirical and secondary data to systematically describe, evaluate, and formulate how some Ghanaian Pentecostals are bringing relief to Ghanaians in particularly employment, healthcare and education. The article does not rest, however, principally on interviews and other empirical data but seeks to construct theological reasons for a Ghanaian Pentecostal public theology in education and healthcare. Indeed, Ghanaian Pentecostalism has a mission to Ghanaians in all spheres of life. Such a mission requires that Ghanaian Pentecostals engage the public sphere in a liberating and involving manner. Thus, such Christian mission demands scholarly investigation into the usefulness of some Ghanaian Pentecostal ideas and practices in developing a relevant Christian theology that does not neglect human responsibility.

The point is that members of the church are citizens of the state so the church cannot ignore its social responsibility. Consequently, I will look at the currents of public theology in the areas of education and healthcare present in Ghanaian Pentecostalism today. Empirical evidence is compared with scholarly research to produce insights by the Ghanaian Pentecostal church's theology in education and healthcare. One critical document to help in this enterprise is the Roman Catholic *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*.<sup>2</sup> Appealing to Scripture and tradition, this Roman Catholic document discusses the various aspects of the church's involvement in human welfare.

The general good of Ghanaians encompasses their social, economic, political, and cultural fulfillment. Consequently, a public theology of this sort demands scholarly investigation into what the church and state must do to grant Ghanaians meaningful lives. In other words, a formulation of a public

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<sup>2</sup> Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, Rome: The Vatican [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/justpeace/documents/rc\\_pc\\_justpeace\\_doc\\_20060526\\_comp\\_endio-dott-soc\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/justpeace/documents/rc_pc_justpeace_doc_20060526_comp_endio-dott-soc_en.html) (accessed 1.11.2012)

theology that holds both the church and the state accountable to Ghanaians is imperative. This is very important considering the present-day concern with a praxis-oriented theology. In other words, theology must make the transcendent Being of God “immanent” in the existential realities of human society. Other works, from the Protestant perspective, equally stress the need for co-operation between the state and the church in the search for meaningful life for all God’s children. This means acknowledging minority interests in the provision of quality education and healthcare. Thus, H.M. Vroom writes extensively on the necessity of granting such liberties.<sup>3</sup> He draws attention to the kind of relationship that must exist between the church and state. This means the recognition of minority interests in the provision of quality education and healthcare. Although the contexts of these works differ from the Ghanaian situation, their implicit ideas can be adapted to develop a local Pentecostal public theology in Ghana.

By the state I refer to the government and various organs/bodies which are involved in the governance and welfare of the Ghanaian society. The state’s tasks differ from those of the church, although they may compliment one another. The idea behind separation is that the one shall not interfere in the policies of the other. Both parties have to find a way in the ambiguous situation that the one shall not reign over the other. As we shall see the Ghanaian Pentecostal church works directly as church per its national leadership, local churches, Christian (church bound) organisations. It also works indirectly through non-church bound NGOs and individual ‘professional’ Christians such as politicians, lawyers, educationists and medical personnel. Each of these levels helps the state to meet the aspirations of the Ghanaian person in various aspects/fields of national need. In doing this the church appreciates its limitations and the importance of the state doing what is necessarily good for the nation’s wellbeing.

I will examine three tasks of the state to Ghanaians which are prerequisite for the state’s promotion of the ‘common good’ of Ghanaians.<sup>4</sup> They are (1) the granting of religious freedom for the church and minorities; (2) the provision of quality education and; (3) the provision of quality healthcare.<sup>5</sup> First, peace and development depend to a large extent on the kind of relationship that exists between the state and religion. Second, no nation can develop without highly educated manpower to solve its numerous problems. Finally, a country’s development is tied to the health of its people. A sick people deprive a country of its scarce economy needed for developmental purposes.

Due to these three tasks of the state, I will also examine four tasks of the church: (1) advocacy and support; (2) education; and (3) healthcare. There are reasons for these church tasks. First, the church must provide haven to the weak and poor in society. Second, the church must help Ghanaians to obtain quality education to help build their nation. Finally, the church must bring healing and health to Ghanaians in every sphere of their lives: spiritual, physical, psychological, emotional, etc.

## THE TASKS OF THE STATE

Volume 2 of the *Population Data Analysis Report: Policy Implications of Population Trends* (2005) published by Ghana Statistical Services came up with some revelations.<sup>6</sup> The report acknowledged deepening levels of poverty as a major problem that has afflicted Ghana for some decades. It also suggested and attributed this to the deteriorating conditions of employment. This makes it imperative for the state to

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<sup>3</sup> H.M. Vroom, ‘Sphere Sovereignty in a Highly Pluralistic Culture: Kuyper’s Theory Recontextualised’, paper delivered at the Tokyo Christian University (April 20, 2004).

<sup>4</sup> *Compendium*, ch. 4 para 166-168

<sup>5</sup> See Agnes Abuom, “Women’s Issues in Health and Education”. In: Belshaw Deryke *et al*, eds, *Faith in Development* (World Bank and Regnum Books International, 2001), 111-30.

<sup>6</sup> “Population of Ghana: National Trends”. In: *National Population Council Fact Sheet, 1* (June 2004). [http://www.npc.gov.gh/assets/Factsheet1\\_PopulationofGhana\\_nattrends.pdf](http://www.npc.gov.gh/assets/Factsheet1_PopulationofGhana_nattrends.pdf) (Accessed July 12, 2012).

be concerned about the employment needs of Ghanaians. Many Ghanaians do not have meaningful jobs. Others do not have sustainable jobs with good working conditions. Yet God gave the earth to all humans to enjoy (Gen. 1:28-29). Thus, the principle of the universal destination of goods recognizes that all humans have the natural and inherent right to the level of well-being necessary for them.<sup>7</sup>

Many employees do not earn a living income but live from hand to mouth. Yet the cost of living continues to escalate daily. Because of this, many parents find it difficult to educate their children and perform other parental duties. But, as Amanda Bruscano correctly notes, “Although education cannot guarantee socioeconomic mobility or even financial stability, it offers a child the possibility of having a better life than his parents had”.<sup>8</sup> The lack of parental support can result in child delinquency,<sup>9</sup> child labor,<sup>10</sup> etc. that eventually disorients society. Poor salaries also result in civil unrest when aggrieved workers go on strike and demonstrate to demand better working conditions. Strikes and demonstrations tell heavily on national income, peace, and political stability. In the past, strikes and demonstrations provided grounds for military takeovers with dismal consequences for the nation. In recent times, strikes have wreaked serious havoc on the lives of many innocent people. For example, academic work has been disrupted because of striking teachers.

Similarly, patients have died because health workers and professionals go on prolonged strikes to demand better working conditions. All this happens because governments often turn a deaf ear to the demands of workers. Consequently, the Ministry of Finance, the Fair Wages and Salaries Commission, Parliament, and the Executive must all work together to ensure that Ghanaians are given their just due by the state and private employers.<sup>11</sup> Unjust wages are a grave injustice against the person of the worker and are condemned by God (Lev. 19:13; Deut. 24:14-15; Jas. 5:4). This is because “a salary is the instrument that permits the laborer to gain access to the goods of the earth,” and therefore “remuneration for labor is to be such that man may be furnished the means to cultivate worthily his own material, social, cultural and spiritual life and that of his dependents”.<sup>12</sup>

To conclude, I want to state that it is true that neither the state nor the church can provide jobs to meet all the needs of its citizens. Since historical contexts differ from individual to individual, it is imperative that regulatory interventions are put in place to ensure the equitable distribution of goods for all.<sup>13</sup> Today’s globalized economy makes it imperative for nations to position themselves to benefit from one another. Not only does a country consume other countries’ goods, but it can actually use their expertise to benefit themselves.

In the Ghanaian situation, prudent and workable economic measures can be studied and adopted from other economies and tailored to suit the local context. Where necessary, such measures can include using foreign expertise to educate and encourage the youth to add value to the country’s raw materials to earn higher income. In this way, the nation curtails its overdependence on expensive imports of its own exported raw materials. Again, it saves the nation from losing hard foreign currency needed for development. Furthermore, it safeguards citizens from being unscrupulous consumers of exotic goods that can sometimes be detrimental to their health. The point, then, is that the state should build a good and efficient infrastructure, such as naming all the streets to make traffic easy and safe, have good laws to govern the

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<sup>7</sup> cf. *Compendium*, ch. 4, para. 172

<sup>8</sup> Amanda, Bruscano, “Child Labor in Ghana: An Analysis of Perceptions and Practices”. In: *African Diaspora Collection at DigitalCollections@ SIT* (2011), 20.

<sup>9</sup> Gail A. Wasserman, et al. *Child Delinquency Bulletin Series*, US Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (2003), 5.

<sup>10</sup> Bruscano, “Child Labor”, 14.

<sup>11</sup> Francis Owusu, “On Public Organizations in Ghana: What Differentiates Good Performers from Poor Performers?” Ames, IA: Iowa State University, Department of Community and Regional Planning (2005), 3-10.

<sup>12</sup> *Compendium*, ch. 6 para 302.

<sup>13</sup> cf. *Compendium*, ch. 4 para 174.

conservation of land for business corporations and farming activities, and educate people to take initiatives and establish businesses and give jobs to other people.

## RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

A nation cannot claim to protect the rights of its citizens without also enshrining freedom of religion in law. Freedom of religion is imperative for church-state complementarity and mutual respect.<sup>14</sup> This convivance implies that there is religious freedom for all citizens, which requires respect for people's value systems and religious convictions. This is important in Ghana today given that there are other religious groups whose interests are essential for the good of society. According to a survey conducted by the Ghana Evangelism Committee in 1999, the three major religions practised in Ghana are Christianity, Islam, and traditional religion.

The 2000 Ghana census report indicated the percentage breakdown of religious affiliations of Ghanaians as follows: Christians 69%, Traditionalists 8.5%, Muslims 15.6%, and others 6.9%. There are also non-religionists.<sup>15</sup> The presence of all these worldviews makes it imperative for the state to grant religious freedom. As C.B. Peter points out, church-state conflicts are matters of identity that emanate from their individual need for self-preservation. Conflicts are overcome when each sacrifices its own identity for the greater good.<sup>16</sup> Freedom of religion is important for affirming the intrinsic dignity of each human person and ensuring freedom of conscience.

The doctrine of *imago dei* implies that the "inalienable requirement of the dignity of the human person ... exists where reciprocal bonds, governed by truth and justice, link people to one another".<sup>17</sup> Therefore, Ghanaians have the right to make their own decisions, whether they be political, social, or religious in nature. Nobody, not even the state, has the right to infringe on this liberty without affecting a very vital part of their being: their dignity and conscience. The right to make decisions according to one's conscience is intrinsic to the creation of humankind (Gen. 3). Not even God thought it necessary to impose his will on humankind; rather, he respected people's right to decide for themselves.

The state must enact good laws to govern society. But, though it can compel people to obey those laws, it cannot actually make people honest, helpful and willing to contribute to society. Religious traditions can help the state here with respect to the character formation of its citizens. Therefore, the state needs sports clubs, schools, and religious organisations. But since it cannot grant all this, it has to give people the freedom to live according to their possibilities and ideals. The fact still remains that the state's need of the church (and religion) in meeting the needs of its citizens can also be the cause of tension with the latter.

The point is that religious organisations can be parochial in their actions and conduct.<sup>18</sup> Such parochialism ignores non-believers and at times lobbies for influence on national policies to the detriment of minority interests. Therefore, the separation of state and religion has to be clearly and unambiguously inscribed in law to avoid plausible legal challenges to its constitutionality.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, Ghana does not have a problem with establishing religions, even though there is the need to ensure the limits of permissibility

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<sup>14</sup> Telephone conversation with Pastor Siaw Ennin, COP, July 17, 2012.

<sup>15</sup> see United States Department of State, *2009 Report on International Religious Freedom—Ghana*; cf. Kwabena J. Asamoah-Gyadu, *Traditional Missionary Christianity and New Religious Movements in Ghana: A Comparative Study of Attitudes toward Each Other's Faith and Practice*, Unpublished MPhil thesis submitted to the University of Ghana, Legon, Accra, Ghana (June 1994), 2-3.

<sup>16</sup> C. B. Peter, "Spirituality and Social Transformation: Some Biblical Models for Conflict Resolution". In: *Ogbomoso Journal of Theology* 16:1(2011), 60.

<sup>17</sup> *Compendium*, ch. 3 para 199.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. The Lausanne Movement, *The Cape Town Commitment: A Confession of Faith and a Call to Action* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2011), 42-43.

<sup>19</sup> Carolyn Evans and Christopher A. Thomas, "Church-State Relations in the European Court of Human Rights", Evans. MRO.doc. <http://www.law2.byu.edu/lawreview/archives/2006/3/4EVANS-THOMAS.FIN.pdf> (2006), p. 700 (Accessed October 30, 2012).

that safeguard the religious freedoms of minorities. This is why it is necessary that the state define parameters that protect the rights and privileges of all citizens. Hence, Ghana's constitution enshrines the protection of individual rights and freedom of association including religious. It is against this backdrop that the insistence on rights and freedoms ought to be pursued within the limits of "the common good and public order, and, in every case, in a manner characterised by responsibility".<sup>20</sup>

Religious freedom does not mean nonchalance towards religious behaviour and tendencies. On the one hand, the state respects the religious convictions of all its citizens. On the other hand, it guards against religious conflicts among its citizens. Again, it means that people are not to use religious convictions and beliefs as cloaks for civil disobedience. The state expects adherents of religions to act in the best interests of society, and all religions want their values to be accepted in the public sphere. Consequently, the fact that the state does not interfere in religious freedom is not to be construed as synonymous with misguided behaviour or the non-fulfilment of civic duties. Rather, it is the co-existence by the state and the church (and religions) as partners in the search of a meaningful life for all Ghanaians. An important fact that must not have to be overlooked is the intertwining of the freedom of religion and the freedom of expression. Indeed, a dichotomy between them will, in effect, lead to a misconstrued protection for the "extensive use" of freedom. Thus, a legal censoring of disturbance of religious services by the public (Christians, Muslims, or other religious groups) cannot constitute a state infringement of religious freedom.<sup>21</sup>

Throughout this discussion, I have argued that the freedom to belong to whatever religion they prefer and to express their convictions on national matters is integral to the rights of Ghanaians. And yet such freedom does not imply irresponsible attitudes that the state may not stem. Freedom (religious or otherwise) is intrinsically dependent, to a large extent, on the quality of education accessible to people.

## THE PROVISION OF QUALITY EDUCATION

Public trust in state-run education is waning today in Ghana due to a number of factors. Numerous government efforts have not yielded the needed results for many reasons.<sup>22</sup> First, there is low morale among teachers. Teachers claim they are often not paid on time and not enough. Their meagre salary prevents them from living in decent accommodations, and they are unable to meet their personal, social, and financial obligations. The net effect is that they have a low social status. They therefore explore other ways of increasing their income or leaving the system. Second, inadequate teaching and learning resources contribute to the low performance of both teachers and students. Third, compounding this problem is the lack of parental support for teachers' work. Many parents do not show commitment to their children's education, especially at home. They do not monitor their homework or provide basic learning materials such as pencils and exercise books. Some even involve their children in farming, petty trading, or fishing during school days or/and hours. The result is that many school-leavers are often unprepared for higher education or ill-equipped to face life. But education is originally and primarily the inalienable duty of parents.<sup>23</sup> All this has a negative impact on public education.

Ghana needs a robust national policy of educational restructuring via free quality education for all citizens. Such a policy must ensure that all students (in public and private institutions) benefit from the resources of the Ghana Educational Trust Fund.<sup>24</sup> It must consciously and conscientiously integrate practical scientific

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<sup>20</sup> *Compendium*, ch. 3 para 200.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Heiner Bielefeldt, "Interview: Protecting and Implementing the Right to Freedom of Religion or Belief: Interview with Heiner Bielefeldt". In: *Journal of Human Rights Practice*. 3:3 DOI: 10.1093/jhuman/hur021.@the author (2011) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 232.

<sup>22</sup> Stephen P. Heyneman, coordinator, "Review of Basic Education Quality in Ghana in Basic Education in Ghana: Progress and Problems, Final Report" by the Mitchell Group. Sponsored by the USAID (June 2009), 16-22.

<sup>23</sup> *Compendium*, ch. 5 para 246.

<sup>24</sup> *Compendium*, ch. 5 para 246)

education to prepare the Ghanaian for global relevance.<sup>25</sup> Such an education is required if the country is to take advantage of the opportunities of globalization. In our globalized world, nations are interested in the increase of their per capita base, and this becomes possible when citizens are educated in a relevant way.

As the foregoing discussion has shown, Ghanaians deserve access to quality education. This is critical for Ghana's development. Therefore, the state must ensure that all its citizens obtain quality education. Quality education must make a nation better able to offer quality healthcare to its citizens. Indeed, during the 2012 presidential campaign the issue of quality education became a hot debate between the opposition New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the incumbent National Democratic Congress (NDC) candidates. While the NPP's Nana Addo Danquah Akuffo-Addo promised to provide free basic and senior high education, the NDC's incumbent president, John Dramani Mahama rebuffed his opponent, and contended that school buildings were the prerequisite.

### THE PROVISION OF QUALITY HEALTHCARE

According to Ghana Statistical Services (2005)<sup>26</sup>, healthcare is one of the problematic areas in Ghanaian society. The rate of outpatient visits per capita increased steadily from 0.36 (1996-1998) to 0.49 (2001). The overhead cost of health provisions and services are very expensive for both the national economy and individual income. Although the John Agyekum Kufour administration (2001-2008) established the National Health Insurance Scheme, it does not cover all illnesses. The scheme replaced the "Cash and Carry" system of user fees,<sup>27</sup> to ensure equitable and universal access to healthcare services for all Ghanaians.<sup>28</sup> Today, patients complain of receiving inadequate supply of drugs. Health providers complain of government's delay and partial commitment to its obligations under the scheme. Thus, health problems continue to escalate daily. Malaria and HIV/AIDS continue to plague many Ghanaians.

The escalation of some health problems is due to the stifling of information about disease incidence. This is sometimes due to ignorance or a fear of stigmatization.<sup>29</sup> To compound the problem, Ghana's health market is flooded with counterfeit drugs and quack medical practitioners. This state of affairs is worrisome. It is therefore incumbent upon the state to pass laws to punish perpetrators so that Ghanaians can enjoy good health. Indeed, through its institutions like the Ghana Standard Authority and the Pharmacy Council, the state must ensure the safety of consumables in the country, including drugs. Similarly, the Medical Council must monitor the activities of medical personnel to flush out fake ones.

The need for the state to assure Ghanaians of quality healthcare for quality living is imperative. Since the wealth of the nation depends on the health of its people the state must lay down appropriate modalities to ensure that all Ghanaians follow healthy lifestyles. This is a task the state must take very seriously. In what follows I will examine the church's responsibility in the pluralistic, democratic state of Ghana.

### THE TASKS OF THE CHURCH IN SOCIETY

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<sup>25</sup> Telephone conversation with Pastor Siaw Ennin, COP, July 17, 2012.

<sup>26</sup> Ghana Statistical Service, *Ghana: Population Data Analysis Report; Policy Implications of Population Trends*, (August 2000), p. 2

<sup>27</sup> Sara Sulzbach, *et al*, "Evaluating the Effects of the National Health Insurance Act in Ghana: Baseline Report", Bethesda, MD: Partners for Health Reform *plus* (2005), 87.

<sup>28</sup> George Frempong, *et al*, "An Evaluation of the National Health Insurance Program in Ghana". A paper presented at the Global Development Network (GDN) Dissemination Workshop at Pretoria, South Africa (July 2009), 3.

<sup>29</sup> Ghana Health Service 2010 Annual Health Sector Performance Review Ghana Integrity Initiative. <http://www.tighana.org/giipages/publication/Voice%20of%20the%20people%20Survey.pdf> (Accessed August 4, 2012).

The church is called to be the “salt and light” of the world (Mt. 5:13-16). It is salt in the sense that it preserves society against putrefaction. The church has preservative and conservative functions. Through the social activities of its leadership, church-bound organisations/NGOs, local assemblies, and individual members, the church preserves society.

### Advocacy and Support

The church is required to respond to the existential needs of members and society. This means it has to be committed to the welfare of neglected groups in society: the disabled, the aged, deprived rural communities, children, women, and so on.<sup>30</sup> The church cannot afford to ignore these neglected groups if it hopes to give meaning to its mission and purpose in the world.

#### a) The Disabled

Disabled people make up 15% of the world’s population, forming the “world’s largest minority”.<sup>31</sup> Although the global responses to disability, prompted by people with disabilities to see their plight as a human rights issue, has changed considerably since the 1970s,<sup>32</sup> in Ghana people with disabilities (blindness, deafness, paralysis, and so forth) are often marginalized. Many people see people with disabilities as less than human, as if they have no value.<sup>33</sup> Ghanaians are yet to realize that disability is not the end of a person’s life and that it is a part of the human condition that we can suffer at some point in our lives. Consequently, people with disabilities face insurmountable institutional, attitudinal, and environmental barriers.<sup>34</sup> This is because they are considered an economic liability for families and society. It is for this reason that the church is called upon to befriend, respect, love, and effect justice for people living with disabilities (Ps. 140: 12).<sup>35</sup> The church must help society appreciate the inherent potential victims so society can treat them with fairness. It is presumptuously suicidal to think that disability is the lot of non-Christians. There are many Christians today who wrestle with disability problems despite the church’s belief in divine healing.

To integrate into society, people with disabilities require rehabilitation, but, unfortunately, rehabilitation centers are scarce in Ghana. Since good centers are expensive to build, the national church should take it upon itself to do this. In this way, it demonstrates in practical terms its concern for the disabled. It must also train professionals to man them. This is important because of the sensitive nature of disability: disabled persons require a great deal of care, love, and tenderness, which Christians are required to offer (Lev. 19:14; cf. Isa. 35:3). It is obvious from the foregoing discussion that the church should be seriously interested in the plight of disabled people. It must establish rehabilitation centers and train personnel to manage them. But the church must not neglect the aged in its demonstration of love and care either.

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<sup>30</sup> Cf. Philomena N. Mwaura, “New Religious Movements: A Challenge to Doing Theology in Africa”. In: *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology*, 13:3 (2003), 14.

<sup>31</sup> See Mariam Kemple, et al. “Shaping Disability Rights through Shaping the Disability Movement”. A Review Essay of Lisa Vanhala, *Making Rights A Reality? Disability Rights Activists and Legal Mobilization*, *Journal of Human Rights Practice*. 3:3 (2011), 355.

<sup>32</sup> See ‘World Bank Indicators Ghana Population’ <http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:MD27Atge034J:www.tradingeconomics.com/ghana/population-total-wb-data.html+World+Bank+Indicators:+Ghana-Population&cd=3&hl=en&ct=clnk> (Accessed August 7, 2012).

<sup>33</sup> David W. Anderson, “Fields Ripe for Harvest: Forgotten Ministry to the Disabled”. In: *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology*. 13:3 (July 2003), 24.

<sup>34</sup> cf. Kemple *et al*, ‘Shaping Disability’, p. 355.

<sup>35</sup> Anderson, ‘Fields Ripe’, p. 24; Lausanne, pp. 56-57.

### **b) The Aged**

The aged in Ghana are vulnerable. There is no state welfare scheme for them, and their pensions are penurious, unable to meet all their nutritional and health needs. Although the National Health Insurance Scheme provides free healthcare for the aged, as pointed out above it is no longer efficient and effective. Economic hardship has also made it almost impossible for many Ghanaians to care for their aged relatives. Thus, the traditional communal/tribal solidarity is being undermined. The church must show its support for the aged in all this.

As demonstrated by the headquarters assembly, Ahenfie, of the Royalhouse Chapel International in Accra, local churches can become the source of succor to the aged.<sup>36</sup> Such ministry to the aged must have both an evangelistic and an anthropological focus. One, it must make Christ's love personally experiential for the aged. Second, it must become an avenue of reuniting and reconciling the aged with their relations. In the case of the Royalhouse Chapel, over 700 senior citizens, aged 60 years or more, gather at the church's premises every Thursday, where they are fed and given free medical care and drugs. The age range is significant. 60 years is the statutory retirement age for most Ghanaian workers. From this time on, the pensioner lives on his/her pension, which is often not enough to meet many of his/her needs. Since there is no national welfare scheme, the church plays the role of Good Samaritan in the lives of the aged. In this way, it bestows on the aged "sanctity of human life, shared identity ... a variety of spiritual, social and economic support [and] social networks".<sup>37</sup>

I have described how local churches can support the aged so that they can spend the rest of their lives happily. In this way, the churches become sources of hope for the marginalized in society. The church's interest must not stop here, but must also embrace the provision of social amenities for deprived communities.

### **c) Deprived Communities**

There are places in Ghana today where people lack the basic necessities of life. For instance, in many rural communities' people grapple with the problem of a potable water supply. Therefore, projects like the International Central Gospel Church's<sup>38</sup> construction of borehole pipes for Ghanaian rural inhabitants makes them Good Samaritans. Through its NGO, Central Aid, the church launched its Clean Water Project in November 2008. It constructed 20 boreholes fitted with hand-pumps in 19 communities (with an estimated total population of over 12,000 inhabitants). Some of the communities (all in the Ga Municipal Assembly catchment area) are areas in which the Buruli ulcer is endemic. Others have high levels of iron in their surface groundwater.

The socio-economic implications of providing good water for deprived communities are immense. First, water becomes accessible to the community. In terms of economic value, time and energy are saved and later channeled into doing other profitable activities. Second are good health results, leading to overall productivity of the community. Consequently, there is a general improvement in the people's social, economic, and health status.

The above discussion demonstrates the deplorable conditions some Ghanaians find themselves in. The alleviation of such situations calls for the church's response. Water is life, and there is an essential relationship between water and health. Therefore, when the Pentecostal church attends to this basic need they are dealing with an easily overlooked socio-economic problem and thus beef up their significance to

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<sup>36</sup> Royalhouse Chapel International, "The Aged Ministry" (2012) <http://www.royalhousechapel.org/index.php/en/ministries/13-ministries/75-the-aged-ministry> (Accessed March 29, 2012).

<sup>37</sup> Julia O. Basu, "The Influence of Religion". In: *Student Pulse Online Journal* (2011), 1-3. <http://www.studentpulse.com/articles/367/the-influence-of-religion-on-health> (Accessed November 1, 2012).

<sup>38</sup> International Central Gospel Church, "Projects" (2012). <http://www.centralgospel.com/?root=news&cid=3&PHPSESSID=6c7b2613224a94f622c0b7e29d12d6b885ba1c> (Accessed March 29, 2012).



society. At the same time, while many people may suffer privation in many cases, it is children who suffer most from the lack of quality education and quality healthcare.

#### **d) Children**

Children are the future and invaluable asset of any society or nation. According to “Population of Ghana: National Trends”,<sup>39</sup> 43.1% of Ghana’s population is under 15 as compared to 19.2% in the U.K. This means that a large percentage of Ghanaians are young and need special care, affection, and support to integrate them into society. Many Ghanaian children come from poor homes or are neglected by parents. As a result, “streetism” has become rampant in cities and towns. Children roam in streets or jeopardize their lives through selling petty goods on busy highways. Such a state of affairs is a recipe for a social nuisance for the nation.

Uncared-for children tend to become delinquent and engage in antisocial behaviour or conduct. This makes the church’s social interventions crucial for integrating children into society as viable, productive members. First, local churches must admonish and counsel Christian parents to care for their own children so as to stem “streetism” and delinquency.<sup>40</sup> Second, like the International Central Gospel Church, national churches must have viable educational sponsorship programs for brilliant but needy children, irrespective of ethnicity and religion. The church thus collaborates with the state in making quality education accessible to all Ghanaian children. It also makes it possible for the church to apply Christian love above social stratification.

The granting of quality care, Christian love, and education for needy children may sometimes be achieved when local churches co-operate with international NGOs. We see this in the partnership between some local assemblies of Ghanaian churches and Compassion International. Headquartered in Colorado Springs in the USA, Compassion International is a children’s advocacy NGO. It works with churches in the Third World to help children escape from poverty and be able to become responsible adults. It has been operating in Ghana since 2005.

Currently, more than 25,000 children<sup>41</sup> participate in more than 150 projects.<sup>42</sup> Because of their vulnerability, children are crucial to the organization.<sup>43</sup> Every Compassion child is connected with a sponsor in the US, UK, the Netherlands, Canada, South Korea, Germany, or Australia. Aside from its interest in children’s quality education, the organization is committed to providing each child with 100% health assistance. It accepts children from all religions. For instance, the 200 children registered at Pastor Nelson Agbove’s Gomoa Afransi Pentecost Child Development Centre, a local partner, included Muslims.<sup>44</sup>

The churches’ partnership with Compassion International affords them rare opportunities for effecting religious convivance in a pluralistic society. For example, through the project Christian and non-Christian children experience mutual acceptance and co-operation. The latter also indirectly experience Christian influence. More importantly, the church’s presence is better appreciated by its non-Christian neighbors. This is a necessary catalyst of religious co-existence in the country.

I have shown that children’s welfare must be a critical issue for the church and society. This is because the nation’s future depends on the quality of its children. As important as the church’s concern towards children is, it must also take the empowerment of women seriously.

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<sup>39</sup> ‘Population of Ghana: National Trends’, *National Population Council Fact Sheet, 1* (June).

[http://www.npc.gov.gh/assets/Factsheet1\\_PopulationofGhana\\_nattrends.pdf](http://www.npc.gov.gh/assets/Factsheet1_PopulationofGhana_nattrends.pdf). (2004), 3 (Accessed July 12, 2012).

<sup>40</sup> Alfred Koduah, *Who is Disturbing the Nation?* (Accra: Advocate Publishing Limited, 2008), 93-106.

<sup>41</sup> Compassion Ghana. <http://www.compassion.com/about/where/ghana.htm> (Accessed April 2, 2012).

<sup>42</sup> Interview with Deacon Asiedu-Siaw, March 24, 2012.

<sup>43</sup> Wess Stafford, *Too Small to Ignore: Why the Least of These Matters Most* (Colorado Springs, CO: Waterbrook Press, 2007).

<sup>44</sup> Interview with Pastor Nelson Agbove, November 8, 2009.

### e) Women Empowerment

As of 2011 women constituted 49.1% of Ghana's population.<sup>45</sup> They constitute the majority and greatest supporters of the church and home. Yet they are often marginalized.<sup>46</sup> Women occupy a secondary position in the labor market, a situation that lumps them together with other "disadvantaged" groups that fill the gap in the labor market.<sup>47</sup> Although women empowerment advocacy and programs are a commonplace phenomenon, many Ghanaian women remain on the margins of society. Thus, as of 2006 only 2 women were ministers of state, 16 ministers and 1 cabinet member compared to their male counterparts of 3, 47, and 16 respectively.<sup>48</sup> As of 2005, only 20 women were members of the Bar Association of Ghana compared to 77 men.<sup>49</sup>

Compared to men, few women are gainfully employed or equipped with enough skills to make a good living.<sup>50</sup> Women therefore depend on their husbands for their own survival and that of their children.<sup>51</sup> The connection of poverty with chauvinism and how they together deface the African woman is addressed by Mercy Itohan Omoigui, who observes that "masculinity has been equated with male superiority over women," thus assigning women to "subsidiary position below the poverty line".<sup>52</sup> For cultural reasons, many Ghanaians still struggle to accept woman as leaders in politics, church, and work.

As Timo Fleckenstein rightly points out, in today's world there is a departure from the male breadwinner model to "adult worker model."<sup>53</sup> Therefore, it is imperative that the church take women's issues seriously. It must advocate for their empowerment, through which women become independent and are able to contribute meaningfully to their homes and national progress. This is why local chapters of women's fellowships/ movements of the Pentecostal church must spur on their empowerment programs for members. Just like the COP's Women's Movement, church fellowships must emphasise the significance of women in society, promote skills training, and encourage education of girls.

The over 15,167 local chapters of the COP's Women's Movement run specially tailored programs for women in the COP.<sup>54</sup> The programs include housekeeping practices and health related matters. The national leadership sometimes provides expertise to the local chapters. Sometimes, local COP pastors organize empowerment programs for their female members. For example, to help the women in his Lassia-

<sup>45</sup> World Bank Indicators Ghana Population <http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:MD27Atge034J:www.tradingeconomics.com/ghana/population-total-wb-data.html+World+Bank+Indicators:+Ghana-Population&cd=3&hl=en&ct=clnk> (Accessed August 7, 2012).

<sup>46</sup> C.O. Otunba, Akintunde, "An Address". In: Protus O. Kemdirim and Mercy A. Oduyoye (Eds.). *Women, Culture and Theological Education* (Enugu, Nigeria: SNAAP Press, 1998), 15.

<sup>47</sup> Rosemary Dawson, 'Men's Work, Women's Work', in Kathy Keay (Ed.). *Men, Women and God* (Basingstoke/Norton Shores MI: Marshall Morgan/Scott Publications Ltd., 1987), 132.

<sup>48</sup> Kofi Agyemang-Duah et al, *Women and Men in Ghana: A Statistical Compendium* (2006), 4-5. [http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/docfiles/Gender%20Statistics%201%20%20\(Women%20&%20Men\).pdf](http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/docfiles/Gender%20Statistics%201%20%20(Women%20&%20Men).pdf). (Accessed August 20, 2012).

<sup>49</sup> Agyemang-Duah, *Women*, 6.

<sup>50</sup> Ghana Statistical; Cf. *Population and Housing Census* (2005), 6. <http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/docfiles/Ghana%20in%20Figures.pdf> (Accessed November 14, 2012).

<sup>51</sup> Akintan Oluwatosin, 'Cultural Values: A Factor in the Realisation of Women Empowerment in Ijebu-Land', in Dorcas Olu Akintunde, (Ed.). *African Culture and the Quest for Women's Rights* (Ibadan: Sefer Books Ltd., 2001), 125-33.

<sup>52</sup> Mercy Itohan Omoigui, "Tradition, Poverty and the Church". In: Dorcas Olu Akintunde, (Ed.). *African Culture and the Quest for Women's Rights* (Ibadan: Sefer Books Ltd., 2001), 113.

<sup>53</sup> Timo Fleckenstein, "The Politics of Ideas in Welfare State Transformation: Christian Democracy and the Reform of Family Policy in Germany". In: *Social Politics*. 18:4 (2011), 543-44; Cf. Dawson, "Men's Work", 128-42.

<sup>54</sup> The Church of Pentecost, *Headquarters, Regional Areas, Movements, Committees and Boards Comprehensive Reports for the 39th General Council Meetings*, held at the Pentecost University College, Sowutuom Campus, Accra (May 5-9, 2011).

Tuolu District of the Wa Area change their self-image, Pastor Awua-Fordjour organized workshops with the assistance of the UNDP, Africa 2000 (an Accra-based NGO).<sup>55</sup> These workshops, which were organized during the period from 2006 to 2009, targeted not only COP women but also various women groups in the entire community. Through these social actions, the church was able to preach the gospel, win many converts for Christ, and open new assemblies. Consequently, attendance rose to 1,208 and the number of assemblies rose to 24 after a new district had been carved from his district. With the help of the US Embassy in Accra, a Shea butter processing center was established to add value to the abundant Shea butter seeds for export. To achieve this feat, the pastor had to embark on serious capacity building programs to change his congregants' mindset about some obnoxious cultural practices and beliefs. These programs equipped them to contribute meaningfully to home and society and thus brought out their innate abilities and talents to fulfill the creation mandate of humanity.

The creation story offers a motif for the Pentecostal promotion of skill training and industry. As the Creator (Gen. 2:2; Job 38-41; Ps. 104; 147) God commands humanity to work the soil (Gen. 2:5-6), cultivate and care for the garden where he had placed them (Gen. 2:15). Human beings thus exercise regal authority over all creation (Gen. 1:28).<sup>56</sup> Also, Jesus' life and ministry stress the importance of work in God's economy (Mt. 13:55; Lk. 6:3; 2:51; Mt. 25:14-30; Jn 5:17). And work must be pursued skillfully.

I have argued that it is important that Ghanaian women be empowered for a meaningful place in society. The Pentecostal church can help by integrating the empowerment of women into the church's support program. This is because they constitute a critical part of society. Again, the church's advocacy and support tasks to a large degree make it imperative to enter the field of education as well.

## Education

Many political problems in Ghana can be attributed to the high rate of illiteracy and poverty in the population. Again, many unemployment problems in the country boil down to how ill-equipped many Ghanaian youth are.<sup>57</sup> Even so, many school-leavers lack employable skills for fitting into society and go round looking for non-existent jobs. Unlike their forebears Ghanaian Pentecostals have begun to see the need to revamp government efforts to make education accessible to every Ghanaian.

Through relevant, quality education the church should help Christians identify and work with their gifts. This will enable them to take care of themselves, their families, and support the needy in society. The Bible is clear on the gifts of Christians (Rom. 12; 1 Cor. 12). Gifts differ from one another: leadership, generosity, help, knowledge, wisdom, oration, insight, and others. These gifts are for the mutual benefit of all. For effective use and benefit, these gifts require grooming and sharpening. This is the task of church leadership (Eph. 4:11ff.) so that the entire church can grow to act like Christ in a sick world. In Christian social thought, all people are believed to possess gifts and limitations (1 Cor. 12). They all have to use their (each other's) gifts in building up the body of Christ (church) and also society. Although giving gifts to the poor does not equal solidarity, to some extent gift giving and solidarity are related. Both are related functionally and in manifestations, in spite of their etymological and historical differences.

Gift giving is an act that creates and maintains a social bond, and thereby revitalizes society. The Hebrew word *chêsêd* is sometimes translated as "solidarity." It usually (most of the time) means "steadfast love." But at other times it simply means "kindness" (Josh. 2:12, Authorized Version). Consequently, solidarity can result in gluing people together, either through mutual identification and sharing of certain

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<sup>55</sup> Interview with Pastor Awua-Fordjour, September 19, 2009.

<sup>56</sup> *Compendium*, ch. 5 para 255;

<sup>57</sup> See Kofi Asamoah, "Preparing the Youth of Today for a Vibrant Trade Union Movement Tomorrow". An Address delivered at the opening of the Ghana TUC National Youth Conference, held 17th December, 2011, at the Executive Conference Centre, Gimpa Campus (2011), 1-10. [http://www.ghanatuc.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/YOUTH-CONFERENCE\\_KEYNOTE\\_ADDRESS\\_DELIVERED\\_17TH-DECEMBER-2011-.pdf](http://www.ghanatuc.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/YOUTH-CONFERENCE_KEYNOTE_ADDRESS_DELIVERED_17TH-DECEMBER-2011-.pdf) (Accessed July 20, 2012).

norms and values, through contributing to some common good, or both.<sup>58</sup> Thus, solidarity implies we all use our gifts and accept each other's limitations and work together to build a good society in which one hand washes the other. This means that there will be no poor, because the solidarity system redistributes enough money so that they are all helped, at an acceptable minimum level.

Therefore, inherent in solidarity is reciprocal responsibility and mutual responsibility. The poor, the simpleminded are also worthwhile and have to contribute as much as they can. This means the optimal goal of solidarity is the good of all. This is made possible when each person's gift is harnessed and effectively enhanced through mutual co-operation according to everyone's respective possibilities to attain the "common good," by which we become committed to sacrificing ourselves for the sake of others. And this means desisting from exploiting and oppressing them and serving them instead (cf. Mt. 10:40-42; 20:25; Mk 10:42-45; Lk. 22:25-27);<sup>59</sup> Pentecostal churches' pursuit of education, especially vocational and technical/technological education, for their communities must be situated within the broader national interest. For a nation where 11.2% of the population between the ages 15 and 24 are unemployed, many young people have had to resort to negative attitudes and behaviour.<sup>60</sup> Some turn to armed robbery, hard liquor, hard drugs, and promiscuity. Others do odd jobs to survive.

From the foregoing, it is obvious that to offset the employment challenges in the country Ghanaian Pentecostal churches need to set up schools (elementary, secondary, technical, vocational, and tertiary) through their NGOs. Indeed, training people in skills is not "cultural genocide"<sup>61</sup> but a strategic socio-economic integrative tool of empowerment for the Ghanaian youth. This makes it possible to harness individuals' gifts so that they benefit themselves, their families, and society. Nevertheless, the challenges of the time make it imperative for the church to include science and technology in its educational agenda for Ghanaians.

#### **a) Church-State Co-operation in Education**

The question is: How does the church avoid conflicts with the state in its educational pursuit? We may say that the church and its members must set up educational institutions. It must provide the infrastructure and admit students to its schools. This is advantageous for both the community and the state. Through its pastoral influence, the church has a comparative advantage here. Pastors influence many people both within and outside the church. Consequently, they are better positioned to encourage and enlist the support and co-operation of parents and guardians in sending their children to school.<sup>62</sup>

Of course, there have been a great many misgivings concerning state involvement in mission schools. The state has been blamed for the deplorable state of Ghana's educational system since it took over full control of it. The moral decadence of students and of the general Ghanaian populace, lack of discipline, apathy for matters of national concern, etc. are some things that are attributed to the failure of state control. Consequently, a contemporary attempt by the state to involve itself in church-run schools has become suspect. This is why the state today needs to recognise the church's contribution to the country's education and provide the necessary democratic ingredients for its success.<sup>63</sup>

The state may have to adopt a number of positive approaches to mutual co-operation with the church. These may include granting the church freedom to run its own schools, train its students in Christian

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Aafke E. Komter, *Social Solidarity and the Gift* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 5.

<sup>59</sup> 1 Cor. 12 also supports the notion of the intrinsic value of each person, their responsibility for general welfare. (See *Compendium*, ch. 4 para 167, 193).

<sup>60</sup> cf. Agyemang-Duah *et al.*, *Women*.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Paul Kershaw and Tammy Harkey, "The Politics and Power in Caregiving for Identity: Insights for Indian Residential School Truth and Reconciliation". In: *Journal of Social Politics*. 18:4 (2011), 577.

<sup>62</sup> Interview with Pastor Maxwell Asiedu Adubofour, July 17, 2012.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Robert Aboagye-Mensah, "Some Theological Foundations for Creating a Democratic Culture in Ghana". In: *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology*. 4:1(1994), 31-8.

principles without interference. The state is responsible for high quality education and inspection of the quality of education but must leave the work to the professionals/institutions of the church. For example, the state can ensure that church universities have relevant and quality technical/exact faculties that are run by church-bound NGOs via professionals in the church but not by ministers of the church. On this point, the Roman Catholic Church has a different view of state-church than many Protestants. Nonetheless in the end both accentuate the personal gifts and responsibilities of all people.

Abraham Kuyper's neo-Calvinist principle<sup>64</sup> sphere sovereignty held that people with different gifts are accountable for different organizations within distinct spheres of life.<sup>65</sup> Therefore, specialists should hold responsibility over all public spheres such as health, schools, etc. (cf. 1 Cor. 12) without interference by Parliament or the government. It may be that sphere sovereignty, or horizontalism, comes very close to the Roman Catholic idea of subsidiarity. Nonetheless, subsidiarity agrees with the Roman Catholic hierarchy of gifts and responsibilities.

To this end the state has to "refrain from anything that would de facto restrict the existential space of the church and its members".<sup>66</sup> As Dietrich Bonhoeffer pointed out, the state is set up by God with limited rights and functions to help preserve the world by protecting order and justice.<sup>67</sup> Therefore, it has to grant freedom to people to work with their gifts. Consequently, Bonhoeffer is said to have recommended that the church take direct political action against the state when it interferes with its affairs.<sup>68</sup> Although Kuyper's view that God has given all people gifts has more to do with responsibilities than hierarchy, he nonetheless also granted the task of co-ordination to the government.

Of course, there is a real challenge in pursuing this. Such initiatives ought to recognise the religious convictions of non-Christians. As we have already seen in our discussion on the state and the provision of quality education, the state must ensure that all its citizens have access to quality education. Therefore, the state must ensure that the church's provision of quality education does not allow it to encroach on the rights of religious minorities.<sup>69</sup> This can be achieved by subsidizing the school fees of all students. In this way, the state's "control" of the schools can be justified and effective. The recognition of such minorities' rights means that the Christian founders and teachers do not "irresponsibly" impose their religious beliefs on non-Christian members of the school community. Thus, studentship in church-run schools must not become synonymous with forced church membership that leaves students and their parents with no choice.<sup>70</sup> Ghana has travelled a long way from religious monopoly and paternalism regarding "unwilling converts." Such a state of affairs is a manifestation of "unequal power relations".<sup>71</sup>

Since Christian founders see their social actions as evangelistic tools they must explore better ways of not infringing on the rights of others.<sup>72</sup> This may mean appealing, perhaps, to morality to influence their

<sup>64</sup> Vroom, "'Church'", Donk *et.al.* (Eds.). *Geloven in het publieke domein*, 9-11; also, "Why are We Inclined to Do Evil? On the Anthropological Roots of Evil". In: Hendrick M. Vroom, (Ed.). *Wrestling with God and with Evil: Philosophical Reflections* (Amsterdam/New York: Rodopi, 2007), 121-23.

<sup>65</sup> See Hendrick M. Vroom, "Sphere Sovereignty in a Highly Pluralistic Culture: Kuyper's Theory Recontextualised". A Paper delivered at the Tokyo Christian University (April 20, 2004), 4.

<sup>66</sup> *Compendium*, ch. 4 para 186.

<sup>67</sup> Christiane Tietz, "The Church is the Limit of Politics: Bonhoeffer on the Political Task of the Church". In: *Union Seminary Quarterly Review*. 60:1-2 (2006), 24. <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=rft&AN=ATLA0001638437&site=ehost-live &scope=site> (Accessed November 9, 2012).

<sup>68</sup> Tietz, "The Church", 28.

<sup>69</sup> Thomas C. Berg, "Race Relations and Modern Church-State Relations". In: *Boston College Law Review*. 43:5 (2002), 1011-12; Daniel L. Chen and Jo Thori Lind, "Religion, Welfare Politics, and Church-State Separation". In: *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*. 42:1 (2007), 50.

<sup>70</sup> Berg, "Race", 1028-30; Bielefeldt, "Interview", 233-34.

<sup>71</sup> Bielefeldt, 'Interview', p. 234.

<sup>72</sup> cf. Andrew Kirk, *What is Mission: Theological Exploration* (London: Darton Longmans and Todd, 1999), 79.

students with the gospel ideals and principles. But again, how do they succeed here, considering the diversity of moral understanding in different worldviews?

I have argued that the church's educational pursuits must link up with the state. It must factor in the rights and freedoms of non-Christian stakeholders. This is important for church-state co-operation in education. The state should acknowledge the gifts and responsibilities of the people who are knowledgeable in the various domains of society such as healthcare, education, and politics. In addition to education, the church's involvement in healthcare for Ghanaians is also crucial.

## Healthcare

According to the Ghana Statistical Services report (2005) healthcare is one of the problematic areas in Ghanaian society. Health and healing are crucial and expensive for Ghanaians. The Pentecostal church has a duty to support the sick in fitting into society. It attends to the sick already through its numerous prayer meetings organized by local churches and prayer centers. Nonetheless, it must also carry this further to incorporate scientific medical care for the sick.

### A. Improved Healthcare

Indeed, there has been a paradigm shift in Ghanaian Pentecostal theology of healing. Early adherents rejected medicine (modern or traditional) as sinful.<sup>73</sup> Today, aside from recognizing the spiritual roots of some illnesses, adherents also acknowledge the psychological and medical aspect of healing and health. As exemplified by Pentecost Social Services, through their NGOs churches must set up hospitals, clinics, and health centers in needy communities where medical services are either unavailable or sparse. As stated in the Pentecost Social Services Performance Report 2011, the main aim of these institutions should be to improve quality healthcare for Ghanaians.<sup>74</sup> The establishment and maintenance of these institutions can be the responsibility of church NGOs. The church's professionals and specialists: physicians, psychologists, psychiatrists, nurses, pharmacists, paramedics, and auxiliary service providers like accountants must be encouraged to man the institutions. This enables it to utilize the gifts, talents, and expertise of its own people to ensure safe and proper healthcare for society.<sup>75</sup> Moreover, the church must encourage and inspire its Christian health professionals and business owners to establish private clinics, hospitals, pharmaceuticals, etc. to augment its efforts.

These discussions show that Ghanaian Pentecostals are becoming committed to the health needs of the country. Through the church's healthcare for Ghanaians, Pentecostals become sharers in society's responsibility to the suffering masses in Ghana. Such actions must not be carried out without the necessary cooperation with the state.

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<sup>73</sup> Susan Hanson, *A History of Pentecostalism in Ghana (1900-2002)* (Accra: Heritage Graphix, 2002), 69-70; Christine Leonard, *A Giant in Ghana* (Chichester, UK: New Wine Press 1989), 31-35; I.J. Vaughan, *The Origins of the Apostolic Church Pentecostalism in Nigeria* (Ipswich: Ipswich Book Company, 1991), 22.

<sup>74</sup> For instance, through its NGO Central Aid, the International Central Gospel Church supports institutions like the Ghana Heart Foundation, Princess Marie Louis Children's Hospital, the Plastic Surgery Department, and the Mamocare (breast cancer screening project) of the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital. Again, it collaborates with the Blood Bank of the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital annually to conduct two blood donation exercises for its members. See International Central Gospel Church (2012).

<sup>75</sup> Significantly, the COP has seven health institutions with 245 staff managed by the Pentecost Social Services. In addition to that, private COP members run the NGO, the church also involves its laity in other ways in its healthcare programs. Its various hospitals, clinics, and health centers are mostly manned by its medical personnel. Board members also include its health professionals.

## B. Church-State Co-operation in Healthcare

The church's involvement in Ghanaians' healthcare is a must. Yet it cannot succeed without a clearly defined relationship with the state. This means that clear boundaries must be drawn to define each actor's operations or functions. For instance, the church has to be able to establish, recruit staff, and run its own hospitals and clinics. The state should see to it that there is quality healthcare provided in church health facilities. It can pursue this by organizing quality assessments of healthcare in church-run health facilities. It ensures that the professionals from and institutions of the church, rather than state appointees, are in charge of the church's health facilities. The state must include the church-run hospitals/clinics in its health insurance scheme to subsidize the cost of healthcare for all. It can then ensure that there is no discrimination on religious grounds.

- C. But state involvement in church healthcare must not draw political capital from the church's efforts. This will have an adverse effect on the program as some citizens may read political meanings into the church's efforts. This will drastically affect the patronage of the institutions. I must say that it is important that the church cooperate with the state in its healthcare. Although providing a social good like healthcare is basically the task of the state, the church cannot leave the entire burden to the state. I will now proceed to summarize the discussions below.

## CONCLUSION

This article sought to answer the question: How do Ghanaian Pentecostals make their Christian discipleship impact in the private and social spheres of Ghanaians? The aim was to construct a biblical and theological basis for a Ghanaian Pentecostal public theology in education and healthcare. Consequently, we discussed, analyzed, and assessed the way the state and Ghanaian Pentecostals can respond to contemporary challenges in education, and healthcare in Ghana. We said leadership, local assemblies, and individual Pentecostals must co-operate with the state to contribute to the "purification" of these hitherto "evil" spaces in Ghanaian society. This involvement of the church in the social spaces is accompanied by dilemmas and ambiguities such as the relationship that should exist between the state and the church to ensure religious freedom for all Ghanaians.

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