

ABSTRACT

EMPOWERING MERE SDA CHURCH DISTRICT WOMEN
FOR PERSONAL EVANGELISM

by

Naomie Katore Katana

Adviser: Anna Galeniece, DMin

ABSTRACT OF POST GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

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Name of Researcher: Naomie Katore Katana

Name and degree of faculty adviser: Anna Galeniece, DMin

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Chapter 1 introduces the reader to the project. It presents the Giriamas' in their culture before and after accepting SDA message from the missionaries.

Chapter 2 is based on a research of a theological call of the woman.

Women in many parts of the world are known for their place being around the house. This chapter encourages women to pull out from their common places and engage themselves in personal evangelism, following the example of other women called by God to serve and witness.

Chapter 3 presents Mere local setting in terms of its natural geographical setup, historical background, social and economical status, incorporating the myths, rituals, community hierarchy and anthropology.

Chapter 4 deals with Program Development, a Seminar on Women Empowerment in Personal Evangelism, Design/Preparation, Implementation and Evaluation.

Chapter 5 reflects the Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations of this project for Mere SDA district women to be empowered for personal evangelism.

As a result of the project, women at Mere district took the whole issue positively that 3 new members were baptized early February, and 5 more were still in baptismal class. They are growing forming more small groups for Bible study, and house to house visitation. Their main challenge is converting Muslim women to Adventism. The women's joy is that, they have gained confidence, working for their Lord in personal evangelism.

Adventist University of Africa

EMPOWERING MERE SDA CHURCH DISTRICT WOMEN
FOR PERSONAL EVANGELISM

A project

presented in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts in Pastoral Theology

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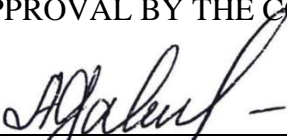
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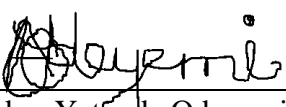
APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE:



Adviser: Anna Galeniece, DMin



Dean, Theological Seminary:
Sampson Nwaomah, PhD



Reader: Yetunde Odeyemi, PhD

Extension Centre: Main campus

Date: August 2, 2013

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DEDICATION

Glory be to God

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AUA	Adventist University of Africa
SDA	Seventh-day Adventist

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background Information

The first Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Missionaries came to the Coast Province of Kenya in 1949. They camped at Singwaya, Kilifi District and worked among the Giriama community. They learned that women never went to school. These women were housewives. The girls just helped their mothers in housework and farming.

The missionaries expressed love to the locals in spite of the language barrier. They mingled with them, showing them new methods of farming. They demonstrated to them even how to till the land. The missionaries introduced new ways of hygiene. Instead of using the bush, they dug pit latrines and taught the locals how they are used. The missionaries associated freely with Giriama people and developed useful friendship. Eventually, they learned the Giriama language, which made communication fast and easy. The missionaries adjusted to the level of the local community as much as possible in order to reach them with the gospel message with little friction.

The traditional dress of the Giriamas' covered both men and women from waist to just above the knees. Men wrapped a sheet around their waist and women had a thick sheet or several pieces of clothes gathered on a piece of rope or a string, then tied around the waist. For both men and women the chest remained bare. The missionaries had brought some clothes with them, which they gave to the new Christians. Their mode of dressing was soon associated with conversion. Once someone accepted to be a Christian, that person was expected to dress like the missionaries.

The missionaries went house to house teaching the locals the importance of education for both men and women. The community was delighted with the new message about the living God and education. With time, a few young people were chosen to start their primary education in Changamwe, the first SDA Missionary School. Almost at the same time, a plot was bought at Singwaya. A church and a primary School were constructed on that plot a few years later. In spite of the fact that the School was taken over by the Government, it was still under the church's sponsorship.

In 1956, the missionaries moved to a new center called Sabaki, on the Northern side of Malindi town. The Giriama of the area gave their hearts to Jesus in big numbers. The missionaries purchased a piece of land and started a school. Pastor Hosea from Tanzania accompanied them and helped to translate the gospel message from English to Kiswahili so that the local community would understand. A man by the name Daud Lewa and his wife Elizabeth joined Pastor Hosea, and worked with the Missionaries as evangelists. This couple was of great use, as they helped the missionaries to communicate to the community in their native language.

Elizabeth was of great help as she worked together with the missionaries' wives, in house-to-house ministry. They placed much emphasis on personal hygiene, clearing of the compound, burning the rubbish, putting up latrines and washing hands after visiting the latrines. The local community was introduced to drinking boiled water to counteract water-borne diseases. They were also introduced to new mode of dressing. The locals started to dress like the missionaries, and joyfully adopted their new Christian names.

In 1961, a missionary called Mr. D.P. Baker with his wife, Pastor Hosea, Daud Lewa and his wife Elizabeth, visited Mere region, which is situated 10 kilometers west of Malindi town. The whole team went into the villages, men to men, and women to

women, telling them about Jesus and the importance of education. They were warmly welcomed in the community, and were able to purchase a piece of land on which they set up a Church and a school. Thus, the first school was established in Mere region where both men and women, young and old, started taking classes.

These missionaries laid a good foundation for personal evangelism through house-to-house visitation. Out of their hard labor, a church was established with a membership of 15 converts, out of which 10 were women. Christ Himself established this type of house-to-house evangelism when He was speaking to ordinary people (Matt 4:18-19). Christ's disciples followed His example throughout the time.

The missionaries trained the new converts in all aspects of Christianity. The tithes and offerings receipts in appendix A is clear indication of the through work and its impact on the converts. In 1960s, an offering of sh.4 was big sacrifice. However, although the majority of converts were women there were no receipts in female names. This was one of the evidences that the male dominance began very early in the church. This study aims at changing this trend in all church activities and especially in personal evangelism.

Statement of the Problem

The majority of women in Mere SDA Church District feel inferior to men, which hinders them from active personal evangelism program. Even the tithes and offering receipts show the problem began very early in the church. No receipt in female names could be traced as shown in appendix A. This is due to tradition, abject poverty and illiteracy. About 20% of women participated in the Church activities, such as Dorcas and Women's Ministries, yet only as per calendar of events. Training and resource materials

have been a great hindrance to women endeavors in the ministry. Considering the urgency of the great commission and the biblical call to all believers for active evangelism, Mere district women have to get out of their comfort zone and work for the master. The need of women evangelists has not been strongly emphasized as the Spirit of Prophecy suggests.

The Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to develop a program of empowering women for personal evangelism in Mere SDA Church District and beyond. This will be done through theory lessons and practical sessions on personal evangelism. Women need to be educated on the great commission, so they have freedom to go and evangelize as Christ's disciples, and to finish the work of God in these last days of earth's history. This project aims at providing for the above need in the simplest way possible. A seven-day seminar of theory classes in the morning and practical lessons in the afternoon in the neighborhood ought to leave the women active in their respective churches. A follow-up of the work done and encouragement will be organized with the district church pastor who is in charge of baptism and church membership.

The Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is that the women of Mere SDA Church District will be empowered for personal evangelism so that they fulfill the great commission given by the Master for every believer. In this way, the burden and the very purpose of being a Christian will be fulfilled in the territory of a local church, the whole Kenya Coast Field. This study can become beneficial to all women around the world interested in evangelizing their communities. The department of Women Ministries in the Kenya

Coast Field will also benefit from the program since it can be used to empower other women in other regions to increase the SDA Church membership in the whole coastal region.

This study is the first of its kind in this territory. It will not only equip women, but also serve as a challenge and a resource material to other applied theologians in the coastal region. The seminars and training that are part of this study will set the pace in personal evangelism of Mere region.

Delimitation

This project will only deal with empowering women for personal evangelism. The women will be taught and trained in the best ways to apply personal evangelism to win souls for Christ continually. The areas to be given special attention are the following:

- Personal spiritual preparation
- How to enter a home and the starting
- Carrying out a personal bible study
- Closing prayer and remarks.

The target group and area is women in Mere SDA Church district. Although the Africa Mijikenda tribes' cultural background will be the base of study, the Giriama culture receives all attention in this study.

Methodology

The methodology in this study is a combination of historical research methods, surveys and interviews. While there are no direct written materials on this problem, there are many historical references and documents on SDA Church development in Mere region, which are scantily available.

CHAPTER 2

EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN FOR PERSONAL EVANGELISM

Personal evangelism is one-to-one ministry to which every woman is called to join in order to witness for Christ. Jesus' Great Commission involves preaching the gospel and making disciples of all people throughout the world (Matt 28:18-20; Mark 16:15). This commission is given to the church today, to both men and women alike. Luke 24:33-35 shows that the commission and opening of the believers minds to understand the Scriptures were not given only to the eleven but to the whole company for the purpose of evangelism. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to empower the 120, who were waiting in the upper room in Jerusalem. The book of Acts testifies that at the Pentecost, God's power was given to both men and women for bringing unbelievers to salvation (Acts 1:14-15; 2:1-4). Later, the same book tells, "the Holy Spirit fell on them all, and they spoke the word of God with boldness"(Acts 4:3). This power was not limited to men only, but the Spirit filled women also, to complete the work of spreading the gospel.

T.B. Kilpatrick says, "The Christian has lived in vain who has not borne his witness to his associates and sought in private to introduce them to the one whom he claims as a friend and master."¹ Women during the Pentecost never hesitated to proclaim the good news of the gospel. With boldness the women preached as the other disciples did.

¹T. B. Kilpatrick, *New Testament Evangelism* (Cincinnati: Jennings & Graham, 1911), 206.

Jesus used the empowerment of the Holy Spirit as a way of inviting people to preach the gospel. Every believer, including men and women, has a call to mission. These people are involved in the great commission of preaching the gospel to the whole world (Matt 28:18-20). Bearing in mind that Christ's disciples were not only men, but also women amongst them (such as Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of Jesus, and others), today's female disciples should take part in witness for Christ.

Bill Bright says, "Loving others, showing them Jesus Christ in word and deed, is not a job for pastors or ministry workers only. It's a joyful task to which God has commissioned everyone who calls himself a Christian."² Though through one woman, Eve, the whole world entered into sin, now through many women the world is to be reclaimed back to the Lord. To this Ellen G. White says, "Christ has given to the church a sacred charge. Every member, women included, should be a channel through which God can communicate to the world the treasures of His grace, the unsearchable riches of Christ."³ Further, she warns that, "the end is near, and that God is calling the church, including women, to be co-workers together with Him, being empowered by Him to take others with them, into the kingdom. Women should be channels of light. Around us will be angels of Heaven commissioned to sustain, strengthen and uphold us as we are working for the salvation of souls."⁴

²Bill Bright, *Witnessing Without Fear* (San Bernardino, California: Here's Life, 1987), 35.

³Ellen G. White, *The Acts of Apostles* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1911), 601.

⁴Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church, 6 vols.* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948), 456, 437.

The Woman as an Evangelist

Women in different communities, localities and nations share common problems. It is important to remember that a community consists of individuals and family units. Each family has its own individual needs, problems, fears, joys and sorrows. Women need to come close to the people they want to serve and form close relationships with them. They should always be ready to assist them spiritually, economically and otherwise.

God is calling women to share His heart to others. Evangelism begins when people pray for themselves and for un-believers as only the saved can lead others to salvation. When this is done, God's power is available to flow through the women and the Holy Spirit draws unbelievers to God through Christ. The result is that women find purpose and meaning in their lives by knowing God and sharing Him with others. "When women communicate the truths they have learned, they tend to share and feel which is uniquely different from the way men tend to think and talk."⁵

T.B. Kilpatrick states that, individuals are direct objects in evangelism.

It (The power of God) finds normally its instrument in a person and recycles from man to man by the media of personal relationships. The Christian minister, accordingly, and all Christian by the very fact of their being such are called to this greatest and most effective type of evangelistic effort, the winning of the individual soul for Christ.⁶

People are not saved as nations, communities, churches or families, but as individuals. The women's personal work, therefore, is vital in achieving success in every kind of personal evangelism. The challenge of personal evangelism for women is that

⁵North American Mission Board, 4200 North Point Parkway, www.namb.net/heartcall, 11 October 2012.

⁶T.B. Kilpatrick, *New Testament Evangelism* (Cincinnati: Jennings &Graham, 1911), 204.

they cannot reach a thousand, unless they start with one. For them to become great preachers in the world, they must start with individuals.

Personal ministries endeavors to inspire, motivate, equip, train and mobilize all members for a dynamic Christian service with the conviction that “The church of Christ is organized for service” and “Every son and daughter of God is called to be a missionary; we are all called to the service of God and our fellow men.”⁷

The Bible has several examples of women who served as Evangelists, both in the Old and New Testaments. Miriam, the elder sister of Moses (Exod 15:1-17), led in songs of praises to God for the wonders He did to them from Egypt until crossing of the Red Sea. Queen Esther saved her people by facing the king at un-authorized visit (Esth 5:1-3).

In the New Testament, Paul expressed his personal greetings to some women who served with him in the ministry. These were Phoebe, Priscilla the tent maker and evangelist, and Mary who worked very hard (Rom 16:1-6). Discreet and humble women are needed to work in explaining the truth at their homes. All who work for God should have the Martha and Mary attitude. God is calling for earnest women workers. He calls for persevering women who will take their minds from self and their personal convenience, and will center them on Christ.⁸

⁷ Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1905), 148, 395.

⁸ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol 6 (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948), 118.

Individual Empowerment

A man known as Manoah had a wife who was barren. The angel of the Lord appeared to her and said, “You sterile and childless, you are going to conceive and have a son. Now see to it that you drink no wine or other fermented drink and that you do not eat anything unclean, because you will conceive and give birth to a son. No razor may be used on his head, because the boy is to be a Nazirite, set apart to God from birth and he will begin the deliverance of Israel from the hands of the Philistines” (Judg 13:2-5). This woman served the Lord as an evangelist by obeying, observing and keeping all the instructions given by the angel of the Lord.

Individual empowerment is a gift of the Holy Spirit through inspiration by God Himself to an individual. God sent the Holy Spirit over Mary and she conceived by Him. Mary, without knowing a man, accepted the calling to the service and mission of carrying the baby Jesus in her womb. The empowerment and calling do not consider the age. Mary was called being a very young girl. In acceptance she responded, “Nothing is impossible with God.”⁹

Mary was called upon not just to hear or use the phrase, but also to believe Gabriel’s sign to her that God can do anything, even with the pregnancy of her elderly cousin, Elizabeth (Luke 1:26-37). If it is possible for God to allow a barren woman to become pregnant, then His promise is true that He can pour out His Spirit upon women to proclaim the gospel in these last days. The Bible says in Joel 2:29, “Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my spirit in those days.” Deuteronomy 6:20 adds, “My son, keep thy Father’s commandments, and forsake not the law of thy

mother.” It is evident that women are empowered to teach the law of God to their children.

Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, served as a personal evangelist for keeping the angels’ instructions to her unborn baby. It is a good example for all godly women to be enlightened of the knowledge of where their mission starts. By so doing, Elizabeth preached and molded a character of the great prophet who prepared the way for Christ. This is to say, women are empowered to train and teach even their unborn babies. Munroe comments on this, “After the fall, but before the man and woman were banished from the Garden, the man gave the woman a name. ‘Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living.’(Gen 3:20). The name Eve in Hebrew is Chavvah, and it means “Life – giver.”

The writer further adds, “God created the woman gestational ability as an integral part of her nature. She has a physical womb and a spiritual womb. She receives things into herself, nurtures them until they mature.”¹⁰ Knowing how Christ emptied himself for the salvation of the seed of a woman and that He died for them, women in one accord should not neglect the high calling for this mission. They are to learn to understand how Christ feels about each individual. Ellen White says, “One soul is of infinite value; for Calvary speaks its worth. One soul won to the truth will be instrument in winning others and there will be an increase result of blessing and salvation.”¹¹

⁹Phyllis J. Le Peau, *Understanding Women in the New Testament* (Chicago: Intervarsity Press 1996), 12.

¹⁰Myles Munroe, *Understanding the Purpose and Power of Women* (Whitake House, Bahamas: 2001), 134.

¹¹ Ellen G. White, *The Art of Personal Evangelism* (Takoma Park, Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1934), 190.

Empowering Women to Witness

The great commission that God has given to all is the spreading of the gospel “to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people” (Rev 14:6). The mandate commissioned by Jesus is vastly different from the mandate given to the biblical Israel. Israel was commissioned to create a caring community that reflects the true God. They were placed at a crossroads of civilization, where all nations would come to them and learn of the true God. This method of soul winning is known as centripetal. Mission from outside, for example the queen of Sheba came to Jerusalem to learn and prove the wisdom of King Solomon (1 Kgs 10).

In contrast to all nations coming to Israel, Christ commissions the new Israel to go out to the nations. Women being Christ’s disciples are sent as the salt and light of the world (Matt 5:13-16). The great commission (Matt 28:19-20) of reaching people, nation and tongues is known as centrifugal. This method is commonly used in personal evangelism.

The Old Testament emphasis is not Israel moving out in mission, but on others, spontaneously converging on Jerusalem. They are attracted by the evidence of the God of Israel uniquely and gloriously present in the midst of His people. Therefore, they come to pay homage to a foreign deity, not compelled by conquest but convinced by the covenant God has established with Israel and extends to the world.¹²

Women are to go out and reach others. This does not diminish disciple making as their aim, but that disciple making is to be accomplished in the process of *going* rather than *waiting* for people to come to them. In the great commission, Jesus is demanding that His disciples go. This is not a command that Adventist women should ignore. They

¹² Eddie Gibbs, *I Believe in Church Growth*. (London: T.J Press, 1981), 33.

are not *asked* to go to the nations; they are *commanded* to go. There is an urgency connected to their going—to proclaim and warn the world of His soon coming.

In accordance to this Bruner says,

Because the imperative of the verb (*poreuthentes*) is used three times in the gospel to mandate people physically to go somewhere (Matt 2:8; 11:4; 28:7), the “move” here is probably also a dynamic command and not just a causal auxiliary. (Thus *poreuthentes* should probably not be translated “*as you go*”; it is part of the missionary command and means, “get moving!”). Because Jesus is Lord, disciples should keep making extensive decisions, be reaching *out*; be seeking ways to get in touch with people.¹³

Women’s involvement in personal evangelism is not something which anyone can just rash into. Women must keep in mind that they are dealing with people’s eternal lives, and that they must treat others very carefully. Women should ask for wisdom from God, through prayers. The only way to prepare for the command “go” is to spend time with God, so that if they go out He will protect them from temptations, and He will give them words to speak. If women are to draw others to God by the power of Christ’s love, then they must yield their lives and methods totally to Christ. They should have daily spiritual experience with Jesus, to constitute them as His very core witness. Ellen G. White confirms this by saying, “Personal efforts for others should be preceded by much secret prayer; for it requires great wisdom to understand the science of saving souls. Before communicating with men, commune with Christ.”¹⁴

The Lord commissioned His disciple, among who were also women, saying, “You will be my witness through Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria” (Acts 1:8). In this context, each Christian has a Jerusalem consisting of the surrounding community where

¹³ Fredrick Dale Bruner, *Matthew*, Vol 1. (The Church Book, 1906), 2.

¹⁴Ellen G. White, *Christ Object Lessons* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1900), 149.

people live and with whom he/she associates. Thus, the purpose of empowering women in the church for evangelism is equipping and mobilizing them to accomplish Jesus' given task within their sphere of influence. They are called to this noble task and heritage; therefore, they must be involved in the outreach of the Lord's church, being ready to witness to people of other religions.

All SDA Church women are to take part in soul winning activities from the District to the Field level and higher. Their main aim is to teach and proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ in response to the command of Jesus Christ in the context of the Three Angels' message (Rev 14:6-12). Honoring this original purpose, women are to continue to communicate the good news with the objective to win, hold, and train for Jesus men, women, boys and girls in Mere SDA church District.

As a way of empowering women for personal evangelism, they must be taught different methods of personal evangelism, such as:

1. Door-to-door evangelism
2. Giving personal Bible studies
3. Distribution of literature
4. Running some community programs¹⁵
5. Befriending people
6. Small group ministries

The list is not exhaustive, other methods may be included as the need and opportunity arises.

Personal Evangelism as a Ministry of Love

Personal evangelism is the individuals efforts based on the methods of

Jesus, driven by love for God and people, and assisted by the Holy Spirit. Women also get involved in sharing the good news with others in their families or elsewhere, winning them for Christ and teaching them to become soul winners. Visitation is a process of extending God's love to people. One minister said, "Pastoral visitation is incarnation: the word became flesh and visited among us."¹⁶

Women can be an extension for Christ to their neighbors, expressing God's love. Women in personal evangelism demonstrate spiritual authority from above, which was commissioned to them by Jesus Himself. When visitation is done a heart is touched. Ellen G. White says,

When a minister has presented the gospel message from the pulpit, his work has only begun. There is a personal work for him to do. He should visit people at their homes, talking with them in earnestness and humility. There are families who will never be reached unless the stewards of his grace enter their homes and point them to the higher way.¹⁷

Women should confidently extend their work beyond the minister's pulpit. The world needs true friendship and love. By showing genuine love, women should associate with people and meet their needs. In this lonely world, people long for someone to reach them and touch them with love. Jesus reached the needy and showed Himself as a true friend of sinners. Imitating what Jesus did, women can win the hearts of many by speaking the good news at every opportunity opened to them.

Mere Church women can reach the Lord's loving flock either as individuals or as a whole. A deep relationship can be developed between the community and the

¹⁵*Personal Ministries Handbook* (Kendu Bay, Kenya : Africa Herald Publishing House, 2007), 3.

¹⁶Jonas Arrais, *Wanted: A Good Pastor* (General Conference Ministerial Association, 2011), 74.

¹⁷Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1943), 187.

women just through visitation. This can be a long-term commitment in the Lord's vineyard.

Though the economical status of Mere as a district is poor, and educational level of the population is low as data in this study indicates, the Lord's Holy Spirit is ready to accompany all who give themselves to the Lord's commission. Though they may not stand at the pulpits to preach, visiting homes regularly can establish familiarity and true fellowship amongst their fellow members and their neighbors. Personal evangelism is a duty for every woman to be consistently engaged in. In this process Ellen G. White says, "It is not enough to preach to men; we must pray with them and for them; we must not hold ourselves coldly aloof from them, but come in sympathy close to the souls we wish to save, visit and converse with them. The minister who conducts the work outside the pulpit in proper manner will accomplish tenfold more than he who confines his labor to the desk."¹⁸

Visitation, especially of women to women, brings them together. When people are visited at their homes, prayed for, smiled or wept with, they easily grow in God's love. When leaving their homes, God's character is left in their thoughts, minds and hearts. Jesus, as the best example, after entering homes of people, saw their need (Mark 1:29-31). Thus, for example, He became a familiar guest in the home of Martha, Mary and Lazarus.

Women can do community services, such as general cleaning in market places, to demonstrate personal hygiene; even a hospital general cleaning can be done with special prayers for patients. As patients are visited, a little gift of general supplies such as toilet

¹⁸Ellen G White, *Pastoral Ministry* (Silver Spring, MD: Ministerial Association, GC of Seventh-day Adventists, 1995), 225.

soap, toothpaste, and some literature will be very appropriate. Visiting hospitals women can serve the heavenly meals to the sick and dying.

The needy are scattered by the devil everywhere. The streets overflow with naked, hungry and homeless, waiting for the women's kind hearts. The prisons teem with souls ready to perish, somebody needs to reach them in time. Women can outwit all in reaching across bars, even over the death roll. At the same time when death has struck, neighbors and relatives offer many tears, but the SDA women shoulders and hands can provide the double hope. Hope that life is still worthy living and hope of eternal get-together for believers in Jesus Christ.

The contemporary lifestyle keeps parents and guardians being busy to care for their youths. In the absence of their parents, women evangelists are the only hope for these children and youth whose little time left for the embattled parents is consumed in self-groups and society. The women can waylay them there and point them to the heavenly officer who will provide more than they wish for.

Empowered Women

Among women called by God to serve in the ministries, is Ellen Gould Harmon, later Mrs. White, who was called to serve the Lord at the age of 17. God empowered her to serve from a congregation of 10-20 people in attendance to an audience of 5,000-20,000. She was able to give her testimony and message effectively. Ellen had a very low level of education, but because she accepted the call of God, He was able to use her. In addition, she was the woman who ministered alongside with her husband, thus being a co-founder of the SDA denomination.¹⁹

¹⁹*SDA Encyclopedia*, 1996 ed., s.v. "Kingsway College."

At the age of 17, this young woman was unaccustomed to society, shy and meeting strangers was a painful experience for her. “As she prayed for the burden to be removed from her young shoulders, Ellen sensed instead the repeated directive from God that she should share with others what God was revealing to her.”²⁰

God’s call has not changed with time. He is calling women of today. God is ready to use any woman of any level of education (or no education), just as He did it with Ellen White. Through prayer, God is ready to empower them for evangelism. It is evident that the Holy Spirit inspired Ellen G. White’s writings, as was her preaching ministry. White encouraged women to take an active part in the sacred ministry of the gospel. She was among the rare women of America who succeeded in public speaking addressing large audiences. She cited her own experiences as follows:

In my youth God opened the scripture to my mind, giving me light upon the truths of his work, I went forth to proclaim to others the precious news of salvation. My brother wrote to me and said, “I beg you do not disgrace the family. I will do anything for you if you will not go out as a preacher.” “Disgracing the family,” I replied. Can it disgrace the crucified? If you would give me all the gold your house could hold, I would not cease giving my testimony for God. I will not keep silent for when God imparts His light to me He means that I shall diffuse it to others according to my ability.”²¹

The empowerment of women for evangelism is not something new. God empowered women for His work way back in 1840s. During the great religious movement known as Millennial movement, which was inaugurated by William Miller, many talented and willing to be used by God women were itinerant preachers and

²⁰Josephine Benton, *Called by God* (Smithsburg, MD: Blackberry Hill Publishers, 1990), 139.

²¹Ellen G. White, “Looking for Blessed Hope” *Signs of Times*, (n.d.), 29.

lecturers. One of the women who responded to God's calling and turned into an advent preacher was Lucy Maria Hersey.²²

Since the 19th century and up to today there have been many SDA women fully involved in the ministry for the Lord. As an example to this, Thomas E. Durst says, "I have been interested in various discussions about women ministers in our denomination. It may interest you that an ordained minister, Mrs. Minnie Sype, baptized my mother into the SDA church in early 1900s."²³

Surely, today is the time God is looking for more women who love their Lord and who are willing to work for the Master and be filled by His Spirit.

Christ speaks of women who helped Him in presenting the truth before others, and Paul also speaks of women who labored with him in the gospel. In this time of crisis, the Lord has a work for the women. The Lord promised that He will work through them. If they are imbued with a sense of their duty, and labor under the influence of the Holy Spirit, they will have just the self-possession required for this time. The Savior will reflect upon these self-sacrificing women the light of His countenance, and will give them power that exceeds that of men. They can do in their families a work that men cannot do, a work that reaches their inner life.²⁴

Women Called to the Work

All women are called to work for the Lord, whether they group themselves as Women Ministries, Dorcas, in small groups or as individuals, what is needed is women at work. There is a need for a call for a larger number of women to be engaged in the ministry to the suffering humanity, uplifting and educating them to believe in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.

²²Nancy J. Vyhmeister, *Quality Research Papers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008), 218-219.

²³ E. Thomas Durst, "A Real Lady Preacher," *Insight*, 1974, 1-2.

²⁴ Ellen G. White, *Evangelism* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1946), 464.

The following E.G. White comment is true not only for women in America, but also for women in Africa, especially in Mere SDA church District. She writes, “I am pained because our sisters in America not more of them are doing the work they might be doing for the Lord Jesus. Many women love to talk. Why can’t they talk the words of Christ to the perishing souls?”²⁵

This character trait of women loving to talk is seen everywhere. It is a special talent and a blessing to them. It would be of a good cheer to share their talks and words of hope to the perishing souls and win them for Christ. The Lord assures women that He will work through them, if they can take their place in His work at this time of crisis. The Savior will reflect through these self-sacrificing women the light of His countenance, and will give them power that exceeds that of men. They can come close to the hearts of those whom men cannot reach. They can bring comfort in times of loss of a spouse or a child. They can assist during childbirth in a village. Their presence can bring blessings of God in joyful occasions, such as a wedding.

History: A Woman’s Place

Women in many parts of the world are known by the tradition of their place being around the house. Their duties include cooking, taking care of the children and gardening. They are rarely heard in the public places or in church activities because everything that requires leadership is left only for men. Thus, the church is facing a great challenge of getting women out of their place and into the work of the Lord. To this Myles Munroe has something to say, “And so is the world put back by the death of everyone who has to sacrifice the development of his or her peculiar gifts (which were

²⁵Ellen G. White, *Evangelism* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1946), 465.

meant, not for selfish gratification, but for the improvement of the world) to conversionality.”²⁶

In the 1960s, a man known as James Brown came up with a song entitled “It’s a man’s world.” It reflects the one-sided picture of the world ruled by men only. Even though women are there, this world was made for men. It is designed only for them. Women are just filling in where needed. Women have to stay in their place because this is a man’s world. Nevertheless, in reality, does the world really belong to men?

One of the worst results of sin to human race is segregation between a man and a woman. From the very beginning of sin man begun accusing the woman to God as a trouble causer (Gen 3:12). Since then, in almost all nations and tribes women are treated lower than men. They are regarded as of inferior mind, as children, and in some cases as good only for sexual relationships and child bearing.

Genesis 1:26-28 clarifies that both Adam and Eve were created by the plan, scheme and pre-meditated layout of God. They were made in the image and likeness of God. They were given power to rule and manage the created material world, and the role of reproduction and propagation of the human race. Women are termed as weaker vessels in their physical framework, but not in their intelligence or in their spiritual matters.

If so, what place do women hold in it? Historically in nearly every nation and culture, women have been regarded as inferior to men, holding a secondary place. Some of these perceptions of women are still persistent today. The list presented below can be endless in number and ideas, like:

²⁶Myles Munroe, *Understanding the Purpose and Power of Women* (Bahamas: Whitake House, 2001).

1. Women are inferior to men, second-class citizens
2. Women are weak, incapable of real strength
3. Women lack intelligence, so they can't contribute to society
4. Women deserve abuse
5. Women are domestic slaves
6. Women are servants, only to meet their master's needs
7. Women are personal properties of men
8. Women will be saved through men
9. Women cannot fully understand the Word
10. Women cannot stand alone for Christ.

In spite of the fact that this problem is universal, it was not the plan of God at the creation or redemption. To the Lord, men and women are equal (Gal 3:28), and all are invited to the great commission of spreading the gospel to the whole world (Matt 28:19-20). Women should feel free to cross the borders of "women's place" and join in full force in the great commission of Jesus Christ.

Women in Procreation

Women should not feel inferior to men at least for the following reasons:

1. They were created in God's image (Gen 1:27)
2. God blessed them to be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth (Gen 1:28)
3. God equally included them with men in the plan of salvation (John 3:16)
4. Salvation is through Christ's blood for all (Gen 3:15, 21).

Knowing that women are included in the plan of salvation, God has empowered them to be involved in proclaiming the gospel. Women are like branches in the vine; Jesus promises to make them more fruitful (John 14:1-2). This evidences that women are

gifted with many creative abilities that can assist their loved ones, community and the wider world. A woman can be creative in many ways, including the following:

1. She sees possibilities and potential
2. She processes words, ideas, plans needs and problems faster
3. She conceives and invents
4. She protects what she has received while it develops
5. She multiplies what she is given.²⁷

Summarizing the above mentioned, it can be said that a woman is an entire research and development department all in one. In this, she reflects the nature of her Creator who “gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were” (Rom 4:17).²⁸ Once women are properly trained in different methods of personal evangelism, they can use them to win many souls for Christ.

Women Restoration

There are major prophecies that describe the restoration of women and men in the context of the establishment of God’s kingdom. One of them is quoted from Joel by Peter in Acts 2:17-21.

“And it shall be in the last days,” God says, “That I will pour forth of My Spirit upon all mankind; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; even upon My bond slaves, both men and women, I will in those days pour forth My Spirit. And they shall prophesy. And I will grant wonders in the sky above, and signs on the earth beneath, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and glorious day of the Lord shall

²⁷ Myles Munroe, *Understanding the Purpose and Power of Women* (Bahamas: Whitake House, 2001), 135.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 125.

come. And it shall be that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

Joel spoke of the same Spirit of God being poured upon all flesh. *All flesh* means the total population of the whole world. However, as of today, only the Spirit of God has touched a portion of the world’s population. Furthermore, because of the above-mentioned reasons women are not collaborating with men in ministry in the midst of a worldwide harvest of souls. In most countries, no massive outpouring has happened, and women are still considered second-class citizens, both in the society and more often in church.²⁹

The promise of Joel is real, and this is the right time for revival and reformation. All women should ask the Lord in prayers for the outpouring of the later rain, to finish the work men cannot accomplish alone. Ellen G. White admonishes women with the following statement,

In the various branches of the work of God’s cause, there is wide field in which sisters may do good service for the Master. Many lines of missionary work are neglected. In different churches, much work, which is often left undone or done imperfectly, could be accomplished by the help that our sisters, if properly instructed, can reach what is not reached by our ministers. Among noble women who have had the moral courage to decide in favor of the truth, for this time are many who have tact, perception and good ability and who may make successful workers.³⁰

In addition to this, Wayne Grudem says,

My sisters, do not become weary in the distribution of our literature. You may all engage in successfully, if you are but connected with God in this work. Before approaching your friends and neighbors, or writing letters of inquiry, lift the heart to God in prayers. All who with humble heart take part in this work will be educating themselves as acceptable workers in the vineyard of the Lord.³¹

²⁹E. D. Silvano, *Women, God’s Secret Weapons* (Ventura, CA: 2001), 89.

³⁰Ellen G. White, *Daughters of God* (Silver Spring, MD: Review and Herald, 1998), 114.

³¹Wayne Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth* (Chicago: Intervarsity Press, 2004), 136.

Thus, being filled by the Holy Spirit, women can get fully involved in various types of evangelism, starting with personal and ending with saturation evangelism (Acts 5:28). They can join the army of the Lord in various lines of home missionary work. God's daughters can invite other women who are interested in learning methods of outreach to a seminar or any other learning event. Women can identify their spiritual gifts and fully use them for God's glory. They can discover their call and get involved in many ways of evangelistic outreach activities. Adventist women are to take seriously the responsibility of helping everyone within their reach and sphere of influence. In this way, the Adventist sisterhood is to be restored to its full potential as it was on the day of God's creation.

The SDA women should be encouraged to leave their comfort zones or the "woman's place" and turn to the Lord's calling, involving themselves in personal evangelism. Success in this calling is only through prayers, asking the Lord for the power of the Holy Spirit of the latter rain (Joel 2:28, 29). They should remember that they have an important place in God's plan, and they are spiritually equal with men. They should lay aside their cultural beliefs, the feeling of inferiority, and be ready to respond to the call and the Lord's teachings. They should be ready to learn, for Paul insisted that women be given the same opportunities to learn as men. Women cannot teach spiritual truths to their children, lead people to Christ, or obey God if they are not given the opportunity to learn. Adventist women are to learn to study their Bible and be taught how to conduct Bible studies for others. Women ought to attend history lessons on how other women were called to witness and serve the Lord.

This call to personal evangelism to Mere region women is not easy. It is to pull them out from traditional settings and geographical conditions that are against women's deep involvement in personal evangelism. It is a push against the normal routine and poverty to heed the Master's call into active ministry. As the following chapter uncovers Mere history and geography, the urgency of empowering women in this region will become clear.

CHAPTER 3

DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL SETTING

The Geographical Setup of Mere SDA Church District

This chapter gives a brief description of the Mere SDA Church district, its historical background, as well as its growth and activities. It also includes the outcome of Mere women group discussion and thinking on various challenges facing women in personal evangelism.

Mere is situated along the northern coastal region, of the Coast Province, about 100 kilometers from Mombasa town. It is found in Malindi District, Kilifi County, about 10kilometers east of Malindi town. The neighboring sub-locations of Mere are Ganda in the East, Sabaki in the North, Northwest is Malimo, Kakuyuni in the West, and Msabaha in the South. Appendix E shows the location of Mere. The population of Mere sub-location is 9,350 persons, as per 2010 censor's records. The entire Mere community is comprised of Mijikenda tribes, (95%), and the Giriama tribe is the majority. The land slopes northwards to one of the great rivers known as Galana, which is known in Nairobi as Arthi River. Due to the fertile plain land, the community practice mixed farming.

The religious history of Mere community is rich. There are two Mosques located within the community, and 13 Christian churches other than the three SDA churches. The fourth SDA church is at the boarder of a neighboring sub-location, at Kakoneni.

The community is not highly educated, but most people are able to speak their native language, Kiswahili and English. Only about 1% of the community is very primitive and illiterate.³²

The Historical Background of the Giriama

The *Giriama* belong to the *Mijikenda* community, which comprises of a group of nine tribes, namely the *Giriama, Chonyi, Kauma, Kambe, Rabai, Ribe, Jibana, Digo* and *Duruma*. They are located along the Coastal Region of the Indian Ocean in Kenya, East Africa. They spread from the South Coast of Kenya, South Mombasa in *Kwale* District, to Northern Coast, Kilifi and Malindi District.

The whole community of *Mijikendas* migrated from Somali at a place called *Shungwaya*, in the early 16th-17th centuries. They lived among the *Galla* people, who fought and ousted them to have monopoly of trade in the region. The *Galla* people are herdsmen; thus they chased out the *Mijikendas* to have enough field for grazing their cattle.³³

Seven of the *Mijikenda* tribes settled in the Northern coastal region in Kilifi and Malindi districts. The other two tribes, the *Duruma* and *Digo* settled in the southern Coast, spreading downwards to Tanga in Tanzania.

The *Giriamas* moved all the way from Somali with their cattle, sheep and goats. They settled deep in the forest, inland from the Ocean, looking for good pasture. They also practiced small-scale farming. They chose those territories deliberately for security,

³² Juma Masudh, Assistant Chief Ganda Location, Malindi District, Kilifi County, interview by author, Adventist University of Africa, Kenya, 10 September 2012.

³³ Stefano Yaa Kithi, an Adventist Pioneer, Jimba/Gede, Malindi District, Kilifi County interview by author, Adventist University of Africa, Kenya, 11 September 2011.

avoiding their enemies, the *Oromo*, *Arabs* and *Maasai*. They had their sacrificial places, called *kayas*,³⁴ deep in the forest. The elders were in charge of the *kayas*, which were used in worshipping and giving sacrifices to gods.

Social and Economic Status of the Giriama

The *Giriama*s were polygamists. They believed that when one has a large family, he was rich. The men were protectors of the family. Females were taught farming and in-door activities, such as cooking and storytelling. They considered women and children as “tractors” for farming. The more women and children one had, the more ‘*Jembes*’ in the farm.³⁵ Men and senior youth were herdsmen and hunters. The family unit was composed of the husband, wives, and children and extended family members from the kinship system. For entertainment, they had dancing, wrestling and storytelling done in the evenings. Men and women recreated separately except at certain celebrations, such as during rites and rituals when there is joint dancing. At 10 at night, girls went to sleep with their grandmother, while boys went to sleep with in their grandfather’s hut.³⁶

Gillette observed that kinship is the most powerful dynamic of social structure within the society, as it serves as a central principle in social organization.³⁷ This is very true in Giriama tribe as the extended family is a core tenet. Though women had a lower

³⁴“Kaya’s,” <http://www.tribes.co.uk/countries,kenya/indtgenous.digo.html> (17 March 2012).

³⁵Kithi Yaa Kithi, Village Elder (Headman) Bate, in 1958, interview by author, Adventist University of Africa, Kenya, 22 February 2012.

³⁶C. Michael Kirwen, *African Cultural Domains* (Nairobi Kenya: Mias Books, 2010), 55.

³⁷Cynthia Gillette, “*A Test of the Concept of Backwardness, A Case Study of the Big Society in Kenya*”(PhD desertion, Cornell University, 1978), 105.

status, second to that of men in the family, the elderly women were respected for their accomplishment in the home.

Originally, the *Giriama* community practiced small-scale farming. They primarily grew cowpeas, maize, bananas, cassava, coconuts, cashew nuts, sweet potatoes, simsim, oranges, pineapples and mangoes, enough for their needs. They also kept domestic animals like cows, sheep, goats, chickens and ducks for their domestic use. However, from the time when the Government sub-divided the land into settlement schemes, the *Giriama* community has been operating at survival level with poverty. This is because the settlement schemes took their land and no development projects were initiated. A section of the community is engaged in small wholesale trade of farm products such as oranges, mangoes, cashew nuts and vegetables. Their backwardness in development is not only necessitated by their low involvement in economic activities, but also their traditional beliefs and practices in witchcraft.³⁸

Myths and Rituals

Among *Giriamas*, as in any other African tribes, and other people of the world, myths together with rituals constitute what students of language call a primary language. Symbolic language expresses the truth of human existence in a way that rational language cannot. The man, as the father and head of the family, is supposed to manage rituals that deal with the smooth running of the family. The mother is responsible for the household and involved in rituals of child bearing, naming and marriage. Father-in-law and mother-in-law are involved in some marriage rites that accompany the marriage of

³⁸Samuel D. Lumwe, “*An Assessment of the Traditional and Islamic Beliefs and Practices among the Digo Muslims of South Kenya Coast Region with a Review to Implement a Viable Witnessing Program*” (Master’s project, Adventist University of Africa, 2009), 47.

their daughters³⁹. The rest of the extended family, such as uncles and aunts, are important, especially at times of certain rituals.

John Mbiti antes Middleton saying, “A myth is a statement about society and man’s place in the surrounding universe, such statement are symbolic one, so that an important Anthropological problem becomes one of understanding the reality that the statement is used to symbolize.”⁴⁰

The *Giriama* believe that for cleansing or forgiveness of sins, blood was to be shed. In such a sin as adultery, the cleansing (*mayingane*) needed blood of a lamb. The lamb was to be perforated at its side where the stomach is, to get blood and the stomach contents. The concerned people in adultery sat together, and asked to confess their act before the congregation. While the lamb is groaning in pain, the stomach contents, mixed with blood are sprinkled all around the home. At the end of the cleansing, the lamb is slaughtered, for all the people to feast. The whole process is called *kuzizinya-mudzi*.⁴¹

Community Hierarchy

The *Giriamas* like the Israelites of old, had specific tribes or clans that were chosen by God for specific purposes, like the Levites for priesthood. The basic level of hierarchy for the *Giriamas*, a specific family or clan known as *mbari*, forms a kinship system. The hierarchy further develops along the lineage of *mbari*. Each *mbari* has a

³⁹C. Michael Kirwen, *African Cultural Domains* (Nairobi Kenya: Mias Books, 2010), 82.

⁴⁰J. Middleton, *Introduction in Myth and Cosmos: Readily in Mythology and Symbolism* (Garden City, New York: The Natural History Press 1967), 42.

⁴¹Kithi Yaa Kithi, Village Elder (Headman) Bate, in 1958, interview by author, Adventist University of Africa, Kenya, 22 February 2012.

name, and they share common names for differentiation from the other *mbaris*. Their relationship is very strong; it serves as the central principle in social organization, settlement of dispute, even inheritance of goods, marriage and divorce.⁴²

All *Mijikenda*'s share the same rituals during drought. The traditional elders would pray for rain to come. It is believed that the element of shortage of rain could mean that the ancestors were not happy with the community. Some years ago, traditional leaders who were in charge of the spiritual, social and economical needs headed the community. According to Gillette's research, the *Kubo* was a chief-rain maker who was believed to have an intermediate position. He was assumed to be the most powerful person among the living. He was the one who did sacrificial offering to the ancestors. His role was to bring the blessing of rain upon the community, which led to productivity of the land.⁴³

The *Giriamas* had the same beliefs on rainmaking. Gillette further observes that rainmaking power was an important element of leadership because, "In the traditional *Giriama* society the welfare of the community was partially defined in terms of the condition of farming."⁴⁴

⁴²C. Michael Kirwen, *African Cultural Knowledge: Themes and Embedded Beliefs* (Nairobi, Kenya: Mias Books, 2005), 45.

⁴³Cynthia Gillette, "A Test of the Concept of Backwardness: A case Study of the Digo Society in Kenya" (PhD Dissertation, Cornell University, 1978), 109.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 110.

Anthropological Perspectives

Marvin K. Mayer defines anthropology as the study of a human being through all ages and in any social-cultural setting within which he/she is found.⁴⁵ A person is both a spiritual and social being; spiritual in the sense that he/she always has an inner desire of relating to super natural powers. He/she cannot live alone. Due to this, a human being has been the object of many studies.

In this regard, Hiebert observes that, “People are social beings, influenced by the dynamics of their social environment, and a familiarity with these psychological mechanisms is important to understand mission process.”⁴⁶ Hence, the study on cultural mission would not be complete if the anthropological aspect in mission is not addressed, just as Edward C. Pentecost rightly stated that, “To understand man is to understand his culture.”⁴⁷

Giriamas like other African societies believe in supernatural spirits. Among the *Giriamas*, the spirits of ancestors are called *koma*. These non-human beings live in places called *kigojo*, which could be a very big tree, a cave or deep in the forest. There are also family shrines called *Mafingo*. The community shrines are located in isolated places, named *kaya*.

For the *Giriamas* week consists of only four days, namely *kwaluka*, *kurimaphiri*, *kwisa* and *Juma*. During the fourth days people never perform any type of work, for it is their day of rest. The elders go into the forest to take the offerings on behalf of the community.

⁴⁵ Steven A. Grunlan and Marvin K. Mayers, *Cultural Anthropology, A Christian Perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1979), 23.

⁴⁶G. Paul Hiebert, *Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1983), 16.

⁴⁷Edward C. Pentecost, *Issues in Missiology; An Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1982), 79.

In case one was found to have violated the law, the elder of that specific *mbari* is to be questioned and a punishment is given to the culprit for annoying the ancestors. The society was educated early in life on these laws in various ways based in age groups. Children are given scaring stories of bad things, which would happen if one disobeys while the youth was directly instructed on the benefits of the laws and what they were expected to do. Their insights of spiritual realities whether absolute or apparent, are extremely sharp. Although the spiritual world plays such an important role in Giriama life, just a little has been done on this subject.

Mere SDA Church District Women Educational Background

Education has an important role to play when it comes to evangelism. Educated women are effective in educating and properly training other women to the glory of God. Mere SDA church district women are not highly educated. Four women (3%) do not have any formal education, nine women attended adult literacy classes (6%), 69 women (48%) went through primary education and 41 women (28%) went through secondary school education. Only 25 women (15%) went through college education. Churches with this standard of education call for special attention for a secure future.

Figure 1 shows that a large section of Mere community depends on primary level of education for sustenance and development.

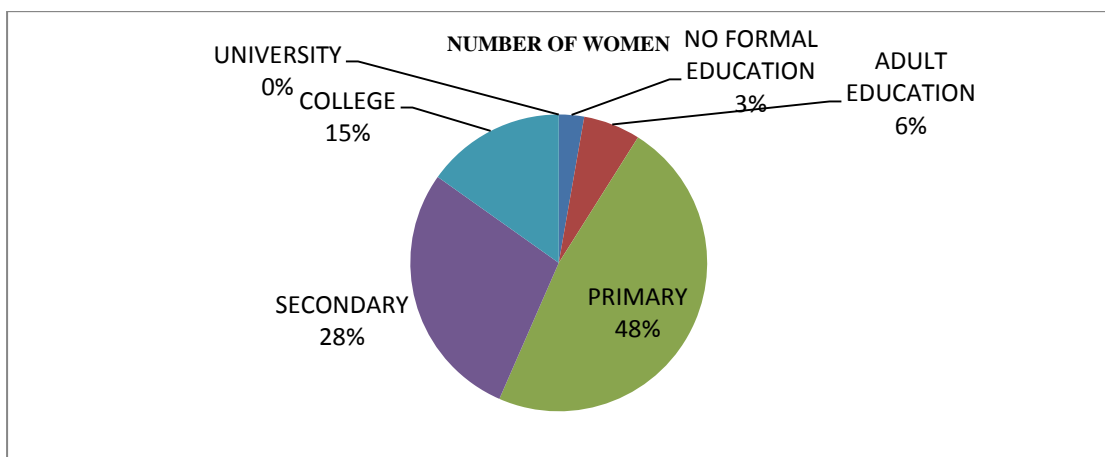


Figure 1: Women’s education background summary, Mere SDA church district

For more information, the educational statistics for each Church in the given region is shown in the Appendix B. At the same time, Tables 1 and 2 below present some statistical information about women in the church.

Table 1: Mere education statistics

Age in Years	Not Educated	Adult Education	Primary	Secondary	College	University
18-25	0	0	27	17	7	0
26-40	0	0	29	15	8	0
41-100	4	9	13	9	7	0
Total	4	9	69	41	22	0

Table 2: Educational percentage: Mere SDA church district women education background summary

Level of Education	No Formal Education	Adult Education	Primary	Secondary	College	University
Number of Women	4 3%	9 6%	69 48%	41 28%	22 15%	0

Table 3: Mere SDA church district women membership statistics

Church Name	Year of Organization	Pioneer Membership	Current Membership
Mere	1959	15	108
Kavunyalalo	2002	60	55
Mijomboni	2007	45	25
Kakoneni	2007	29	30

Table 3 provides the background of women membership in each local congregation from the time of organization of a church to the present time. The changes in membership figures for past years and the factors responsible are analyzed below.

As it was stated earlier, the *Giriamas* never valued women education. This is why women in Mere region, as well as Mere SDA church district, have such low level of education. In most African societies it was unwise to invest in the girl child. The answer to this is only one: she will be married to another family to be a wife and a mother until she dies.

There is also the deadly trend where all of educated women shift permanently to urban centers. This assures that nobody is left in the rural areas to uplift the community. They never consider it their obligation to give back to the community that brought them up. These town dwellers are only brought home by either hunger for votes during elections or ceremonies in particular burial. Therefore, the rural Mere is for school dropouts due to finances, early pregnancies and marriages. The cream of the society migrated to cities with all their education and money. The semi-illiterate mothers are left with the burden of bearing and raising more kids for the cities. The good work of the missionaries came to establish in the rural areas is drained to the urban centers. A project by the county government to raise the educational level of rural women is long overdue. This study project starts influencing the Mere region community by organizing a seminar for Mere SDA women. The seminar for personal evangelism is comprised of theory classes and hand on practical training for immediate application. The seminar setup details are laid down in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

PROGRAM DESIGN, IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

Program Design

The SDA churches in Mere pastoral district are far apart from each other and therefore organizing general meeting require a lot of preparation. The researcher visited each church and the surrounding regions to ascertain the best central place for the seminar, group discussions and visitations. All the four churches in this region have similar surroundings. They are in Muslims, Christian and African traditional religious settings. However, the Muslims and the Christians are in majority in the community.

In the discussions in each church, there was a unanimous view that Mere SDA church was in a better position for the seminar as it was on the main road. Appendix E shows the position of Mere SDA church on Tsavo road. Choosing this particular church for the seminar would also be suitable for the group discussions and accommodation as it is in the same compound with a boarding primary school. Mere polytechnic, a school and a shopping centre make planned visitations become practical. A place with many communal establishments is not only easy to locate but also open for new ideas.

There were three items raised in the discussions in the churches. These were timing of the seminar, transport and accommodation. The women requested that seminar be over the holidays when their children are at home. They also requested for transportation assistance. Their economical status does not favor them to meet the

expenses of transportation to the district central meeting place, where the seminar is to be conducted.

It was also necessary to take some preparatory steps before seeking for permission from the Mere District pastor to conduct a seminar on how to empower women for personal evangelism. The researcher had to make the following arrangements for the conducting the women's seminar. At first, the researcher requested for an allocation of funds of 10,000 Kenya Shillings from the Kenya Coast Field in order to cover transportation and other related expenses. The support was granted to conduct a four-day seminar in the district. Each church is to send as many women as possible.

Secondly, the idea of training women and empowering them for evangelism was shared with the Field President, and he supported it. The Field committee met and it was voted that the researcher could continue with the seminar at the district.

The Mere district Pastor was handed a letter from the Field. A copy of the letter with all the relevant details is in Appendix C. The idea was received positively, and all women in each church were informed. They all prepared for the seminar, which was conducted on 18-21 December 2012.

The Seminar

The seminar to prepare women for ministry was entitled *Women Empowerment in Personal Evangelism*. The seminar had four sessions: devotions, lessons, group discussions, and visitations.

Devotions

Every morning from 7:30 until 8:30, a devotional thought was given from the book of Acts 1:8; 2:1-4, stressing the Revival and Reformation. The purpose of the message was to invite God into the participants' hearts and help them build a new

relationship with Him. After the sermon was presented, the congregation entered into an intercessory prayer session, led by the researcher.

One of the secrets of revival is a determined effort in praying. Prayer is a growing relationship with God. Women are to seek a deeper relationship with God if they are to experience revival in their lives. Relationship with God grows vertically day-by-day, and it creates a desire to seek the Lord and His presence in their daily lives. Taking a minute to pray for a specific item, a seven-minute intercessory prayer was introduced as follows:

1. Praises: Praise God for who He is: He is powerful, He is good, He is holy and He is worth to be praised.
2. Thanksgiving: Thank God for what He has done for you in general, for health, good home, for answering your prayers and that you know Him.
3. Forgiveness: Ask him to forgive you the known and unknown sins, your wrong judgments, plead for forgiveness for your spouse, children and church members.
4. Guidance: Ask for help to stay upright with God, to put you in right relationship with people at home and other group members.
5. Request for others-intercessory prayers: Think of other families who have not known God, friends who need help in terms of money, strength, guidance. Pray for street families.
6. Requests for yourself: Ask God for spiritual growth, to keep hold on Him, give you His salvation, joy, health, and ability to work for Him.
7. Finally, listen: Stop for a minute, listen quietly, and ask Him, “What would you have me to do today?” Is He whispering to you something?

Seminar Lessons

The lessons were organized as follows:

Lesson 1: One-to-One Ministry

There are many strategies of reaching people for Christ, but one of the most important is one-to-one ministry. It allows the person to get closer to other people. Jesus' life and ministry emphasized this approach. That is why He came down from heaven to seek the lost (Luke 19:10). Spiritual arousal and enlightenment is a soul-to-soul business. A loving relationship cannot be developed unless there is a close contact. Ellen White explains on this saying,

Your success will not depend so much on your knowledge and accomplishments as upon your ability to find your way to the heart. Being social and coming close to the people you may turn the current of their thoughts more readily than by the most able discourse. The presentation of Christ in the family by the fireside and in the small gathering in private home is often more successful in winning to Jesus than a sermons delivered in the open air to the moving through or even in halls or churches.⁴⁸

The Mere SDA church district women were called to use the example of Jesus of getting close to people. Reaching people at their places in time of need make them feel that women are caring and trustworthy. Love in action shakes any heart into positive activity all the time and anywhere. When earthly needs are addressed sensitively then trust in spiritual guidance takes hold of the mind. As missionary women get close to others, they can easily make friends. Once they make friends, whenever they need, with the target of evangelizing they should be at the forefront saying, "Can we have a word of prayer? Can we have a text reading before we pray? Do you have something which you feel we can present before the Lord in prayer?" Such questions make people feel that one is much concerned about them and they will be ready to listen.

⁴⁸Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1915), 193.

Lesson 2: Listening to People

Another very important method in evangelism Jesus used is to listen. As it was mentioned above, the greatest help women can give is a listening ear. Everybody is saying or shouting something but no one responds, as nobody is ready to listen. The patience to listen and the art of active listening are nowhere to be found in this busy world. It has been said that many would solve their own problems if they would have somebody to hear their story. Jesus Himself, being the expert in witnessing, always took time to listen and sympathize with people, and only then, He met their needs. When Jairus visited Jesus, his major need was his child to get well. However, Jesus listened to him and even allowed some time to pass by. Though it seems like Jesus delayed with answering to the request of Jairus, eventually He did it in a mightier way than Jairus could imagine (Matt 9:24-25).

Lesson 3: Mingling with People

The following E. G. White quotation presents the whole plan used by Jesus in winning the souls for the Kingdom. She writes, “Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching people. The savior mingled with people, as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘follow me.’”⁴⁹

Heather-Dawn Small adds to this,

The Savior mingled with people as one who desired their good. In order to mingle, we must go into the community and make friends. As we mingle with people and share Christ’s love with them, it may surprise us

⁴⁹ Ellen G. White, *Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1905), 143.

to help others. Make it a part of your ministry to mingle, to make friends, to meet new people. This is a wonderful first step.⁵⁰

As Jesus mingled with people, He expressed His sympathy for them. Jesus first miracle was in a wedding ceremony. He was there with the visitors when the wine jars ran dry in the middle of the party time. His intervention to stop the party spoiler jolted even the master of ceremony; the new wine was a tone higher in quality than what had been served (John 2:1-10).

In Mark 5:36, Jesus joins a discouraged father with the words ‘do not be afraid, only believe.’ Then He visits the family to expel death and mourning. In order to find opportunities to witness, women need to mingle with people. Weaner argues that, “Going about doing good” accomplishes more than many realize and more than anyone can measure. Neighborly friendliness makes room for an opportunity to supply a want, do a kindness, or give help in time of need. It will melt away prejudice, dissolve doubt, and open a way to the heart.⁵¹ Jesus has the plan and the Adventist women only need to follow Him and be His instruments. Weaner continues,

We must meet the people as they are, not as we would have them be. Some may be unlovely, unappreciative, some cold and distant, some hard and cynical, at first, yet the time will come when the Bible may be open and read, and if it seems appropriate, a prayer may be offered. This in turn leads most naturally to a Bible reading. The one befriended, and by this time an acquaintance, may or may not realize that he is being taught that which will lead to full enlightenment in the truth. It may then be that the interest aroused will warrant a frank and open suggestion for an appointment for further studies. With tears of joy the personal evangelist goes forth, tactfully sowing the seed for a future harvest, while in his

⁵⁰Heather-Dawn Small, *A Ministry to Every Woman: Touch a Heart, Tell the World*. General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist, 2005, <http://www.adventistwomensministries.org> (15 September 2012).

⁵¹Alonzo J. Weaner, *The Art of Evangelism* (Takoma Park, Washington DC: Review and Herald, 1934), 81.

personal devotions he intercedes for the interested one before the throne of God.⁵²

Mingling with people has many blessings, but the most important is to befriend someone desiring the best for him/her, to show sympathy by ministering to the needs and here fore, winning this person to Christ.

Lesson 4: Just One Soul for Christ

Often women fear to witness to great numbers, but are ready to witness to a single person. When each woman is witnessing and working with another, great things will happen. There is a great joy in Heaven when even one soul is won for Christ. One individual has always been of great importance to God. Ellen White reveals that the soul that has given himself/herself to God is more precious in His sight than the whole world. She further stresses by stating, “If but one soul would have accepted the gospel of His grace, Christ would, to save that one, have chosen His life of toil and humiliation, and His death of shame.”⁵³

Even Christ Himself started with two followers out of the twelve (Matt 4:18). So often, individual are neglected. One soul won for Christ is of infinite value. A won soul to the truth will be an instrument in winning other souls.

Jesus in one of His teachings encouraged His disciples on the work of evangelism. In the gospel of Luke (15:3-7) He said,

Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and losses one of them. Does he not leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it in his shoulders

⁵²Alonzo J. Weaner, *The Art of Evangelism* (Takoma Park, Washington DC: Review and Herald, 1934), 82.

⁵³Ellen G. White, *Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1905), 135.

and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and say, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep. ‘I tell you that in the same way there will be joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous person who do not need to repent.’

The Savior’s commission is a multiplication process. When He called the first disciple, this person went back and called another one to meet Jesus (John 1:44-46). Everyone who accepts the call of Jesus becomes His disciple—the person who learns of Jesus and follows Him. Something similar happened in Samaria. Sister White indicates that, “the one soul, of the Samaritan woman, whom Christ sought to help, became a means of reaching others and bringing them to the Saviour.”⁵⁴ This Samaritan woman became a disciple of Jesus and brought many others to Him. Today, Adventist women have the same privilege and responsibility—to bring others to Christ, one by one.

Every woman who hears the voice of the Master is to repeat the invitation, “Come” (Rev 22:17). The first interest in her life should be winning souls for Christ. If she cannot speak to a large congregation, she can participate in a small group or house-to-house evangelism. In these perplexing times, women’s homes can be places of sharing hope with the hopeless. Spiritual and emotional healing, even nurturing can take place in these homes. Through such activities, friendship among women is formed, hope, healing and encouragement are given, and needs are met. If every woman could let her candle shine, and other lights be candled, then the whole world will shine with full light.

Lesson 5: Follow Me

It is important for women to understand why they are involved in personal evangelism. “God expects individual’s service of each one who claims to be a

⁵⁴ Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1915), 195.

Christian.”⁵⁵ A lot of time has been wasted in doing nothing for the Master. If many women have been attending church and having no part in evangelism, then they have missed the point completely. Coleman argues,

The great commission of Christ given to His church summed it up in the command to “make disciples of every creature” (Matthew 28:19). The word here indicates that the disciples were to go out in the world and win others who would come to be what they themselves were-disciples of Christ. This mission is emphasized even more when the Greek text of the passage is studied, and it is seen that the word “go,” “baptize,” and “teach, are all participle which derive their force from the one controlling verb, “making disciples.” This means that the great commission is not merely to go to the ends of the earth preaching the gospel (Mark 16:15), nor to baptize many converts into the Name of the Lord, nor to teach them the precepts of Christ, but to “make disciples.”⁵⁶

Therefore, to make disciples Adventist women have to leave their comfort zone and reach out to others. Some women activities should be carried out with an evangelistic intent, some programs may be planned specifically to attract community women. These programs could provide the foundation for upcoming evangelistic meetings. Among many others, the women could do the following:

1. Neighborhood Christ-centered Bible study
2. Vegetarian cooking classes
3. Meals for kids
4. Welcome baby program
5. Literacy program.

These and other friendly programs should have the focus in mind, which is winning souls to Christ. Because such sessions do not have a goal of a show business but soul winning, many prayers are to be offered and appropriate preparations done.

⁵⁵Alonzo J. Weaner, *The Art of Personal Evangelism* (Takoma Park, Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1934), 21.

⁵⁶E. Robert Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Old Tappan, NJ Fleming H. Revell, 1963), 108.

Only when everything is done according to the Master's plan,⁵⁷ then with joy the Adventist women can bid their new friends to follow the Master. However, one should keep in mind that the work for a person's salvation is not finished when he/she accepts Christ as the personal Saviour. There is much growing or sanctification to be done in the life of this person. Coleman states our work is not finished unless we are assured that it will continue in lives of those redeemed. The success is thus not measured by moment or Conference report but by effectiveness with which the work continues through those won for Christ.⁵⁸ Therefore, Christ's invitation to "Follow Me" does not have a stop point. Adventists sisterhood should be a continuous godly influence in the life of a new Christian.

Discussions

From the beginning, the creation of the earth, to the New Testament time, the Lord worked with small groups in discussion. In Genesis 1:27 God says, "Let us make....." Small groups are good for easy sharing, interactions, and to monitor participation with each other. The researcher made remarks that as part of learning, the ladies will form six groups of ten members, with a representative from each church.

Two topics were presented for a discussion in these groups.

1. Matthew 28:19-20, for a discussion with the following guideline questions:

Whom was this command given to?

Were women also included in this command?

Who gave this command?

⁵⁷Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1905, 146.

⁵⁸E. Robert Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Old Tappan, NJ Fleming H. Revell, 1963), 110.

What is the command?

2. Reaching the veiled woman. Some guideline questions and discussion ideas were given, as such:

Why a normal visit cannot work?

Health methods

Sympathy methods

Needy methods

Social methods

After the first discussion, another issue for discussion was raised, How can Mere SDA church district women reach this goal of the great commission? After the first session of discussion, the women joined in a cheerful sharing of different ideas and experiences, remembering how the missionaries entered and worked in their region.

Visitations

Following Jesus example, which is the best, one can see that He moved from one place to another. Whenever He sent His disciples He did it two by two, then the twelve and the seventy-two. This was done to evangelize to the world. They started visitations with their neighbors. The only way to know your neighbor is through a visitation. All women need to learn the act of visitation in order to strengthen each other. The visitation groups were organized with ten women in each group, thus forming six groups.

These ladies were taught to practice and perform the following three steps:

Step 1 is familiarization. As Adventist women enter a home where elderly persons live, they greet with the culturally appropriate greeting - *Shikamoo!* After being welcomed and showed a place to sit the leader introduces the mission. Whenever possible, a visitation should start with prayer.

Step 2 is an offered song or chorus. Then a Scripture passage is read, and an elaboration of it is done.

Step 3 is another prayer. This time the leader appoints someone for the closing prayer, which should feature the needs of the family. The leader gives a closing remark and leads the team out of the house. The Bible study team finds time for a short analysis and prayer before the group enters another home.

Program Implementation

The seminar took place on 18-21 December 2012. The women started arriving by 7 am in the morning, and the program began at 9am. The researcher presented the devotion to the eagerly waiting women who were ready to be empowered for personal evangelism. The morning devotion closed with an altar call for all who wished to be used as instruments of personal evangelism in the hands of Jesus. The response was so good that the prayer session that followed was long but a blessed to all. The prayer session became a special feature as the ladies came forward with prayer requests for deliverance, health, family issues, and business ventures.

After the devotion, the district pastor gave a very warm welcome. The pastor introduced to the audience the women ministry director from the Kenya Coast Field of the Seventh-day Adventist church. They were all happy and ready for the lessons to start. It was commenced with a general prayer led by the researcher.

The morning devotions and the lessons generated a new group of women. As they studied the living Word of God and cried to the Master in prayers and supplications, the ladies opened up their hearts to Christ. More than half of the women attending the seminar renewed their relationship with God by prayer and dedication. These women cast their daily burdens to Jesus feet. In addition, this seminar's spiritual environment infused them with the spirit of humbleness. The presence of the Holy Spirit

vividly encompassed all present at the seminar. Several women in attendance confessed that the seminar was the best way to empower them for personal evangelism.

One occasion, after a lesson study discussion was done, two ladies gave their moving testimonies of their careless Christian lives that was a shame to Christ. Many listeners were left in tears as they could closely identify with the two renewed hearts. The testimonies and confessions united the group into a formidable team for personal evangelism.

The revival and reformation environment among the Mere SDA women group in attendance was taking its toll in leaps. It was no surprise when four women in the group desired a rebaptism, before engaging in personal evangelism to win others for Christ. The spirit of the day of Pentecost was taking charge of the group. The whole group, like in first chapter of the book of Act, moved forward in “one accord” in their prayers and supplications. The four days suddenly appeared to be too short for the full evangelism preparation. No wonder, it took fifty days for Jesus’ disciples to prepare for the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, as Acts 2 presents it.

The heavenly mood overflowed into the discussions. The two items, Matthew 28:18-20 and the mission to veiled woman, for the ten-member groups provoked very lively participation. At the start of every discussion, the verse was read aloud, for it had a big impact and a message for that day.

Six ladies confessed that though they read the verses many times, but they had never experienced the authority, power and pull of the promise like in the discussions. The groups came up with the following conclusions from the two discussion items:

Discussion point on Matthew 28:18-19:

- Jesus went to heaven and came with authority and power for all who would heed the command.

- These were the women, who delivered the message of the meeting place.
- Therefore, women were in the meeting receiving the command with others.
- The commission is for everyone to “Go”
- The work was to make disciples and believers, who would also Go.
- The given promise is Jesus ever presence.

Discussion point on the veiled women:

- The command is to go to all nations. The veiled women are included in this.
- The message is the same, only the approach differs.
- The personal evangelist ought to join the Muslim sisters in all social events to befriend them with clear goals of winning them to Christ.
- Join “Chama” not for loans only, but to associate with the veiled women.
- Exercise patience and perseverance when dealing with veiled women.
- If a member hears of any occasion that can be successful, then she is to inform the other members

The afternoon session was set aside for home-to-home visitations in the Mere SDA church neighborhood. Several women from the seminar were picked for a special training in personal evangelism. These trainees were the core group for application of the skills learned in the seminar visitations. They would form the pioneer group to prove the workability of this study in their churches and communities.

The researcher visited the surrounding homes with two women chosen from the seminar group. In each home, the researcher led the team as they gave studies in small groups. The same women were used in all discussions so that they could follow the course from the start to finish. In this way, the researcher passed the methods to the trainees practically.

The trainees were very useful in the study group as they helped the villagers locate the Bible verses, and sometimes read out the verses for the illiterate. The women trainees learned very fast the art of visitation and Bible study to small groups that the researcher allowed them to carry out the last two Bible studies.

The layout of the Bible study lessons with suggested topics was as follows:

1. The Holy Bible
2. Jesus is coming soon
3. Are the dead alive
4. The Sabbath
5. Health and lifestyle
6. Following Jesus in baptism

The complete layout of the lessons is located in the appendix D under the title Small Groups Bible Study Lessons. Every lesson began and ended with prayer. These prayers, being part of the lessons, were not general prayers. In particular, the last prayer included the requests of the group members for particular needs. The small group Bible study members read out all the Bible texts in the lessons, unless all of them were unable to read.

As the seminar program rolled on, it was evident that God was listening and participating with women. In one occasion the research was interrupted and informed that there was a Muslim burial in the vicinity. A team lead by researcher was dispatched to that burial. The team was very welcome, though its presence raised many eyebrows. Adventist women proceeded to the women section and joined in the crying and whispering. As they actively participated in all that was appropriate for the female gender, it was evident few more sharing would dilute the prejudice.

Mere region has many Muslims. A normal Christian visit cannot be effective since this is a secluded group. Diversity and patience are tenets to be picked and serviced in the mission to this assembly of people. As a seminar group joined the Muslim funeral ceremony, a picture of humanity with a common enemy appeared clear and solid. Fortunately, for the serious personal evangelist, the veil does not cover up humanity in Muslims. All women can cry and eat together. It is rightly noted that “We are all woven together in the great web of humanity, and whatever we can do to benefit and uplift others will reflect in blessing upon ourselves. The law of mutual dependence runs through all classes of society.”⁵⁹

There are many social events in Mere community that can be shared with all religions. Ellen G. White paints a picture that any help to the needy sends a good vibration even into heaven. Surely, Muslims are nearer than heaven. She writes,

Pure religion and undefiled before the Father is this: ‘To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.’ Good deeds are the fruit that Christ requires His followers to bear: kind words, deeds of benevolence, of tender regards to the poor, the needy, the afflicted.” When hearts sympathize with hearts burdened with discouragement and grief, when the hand dispenses to the needy, when the naked are clothed, the stranger made welcome to a seat in your parlor and a place in your heart, angels are coming very near, and benevolence makes melody in heaven. The Father from His throne beholds those who do these acts of mercy, and numbers them with His most precious treasures. “And they shall be Mine, Says the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels.” Every merciful act to the needy, the suffering, is regarded as though done to Jesus. When you succor the poor, sympathize with the afflicted and oppressed, and befriend the orphan, you bring yourselves into a closer relationship to Jesus.⁶⁰

The Muslims die, get sick, are needy, have ceremonies and have big room for love, sympathy and friendship. Jesus gave a counsel that can help penetrate all walls of

⁵⁹ White Ellen G. *A Call to Stand Apart* (Materials from EGW Estate, 2002), 62.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 60.

prejudice and doctrine. The veil cannot shield the Muslim women from Christ's love because He identifies with all needy humanity.

In Matthew 25:41-46 Jesus declares,

Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungered, and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in: naked, and ye clothed Me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not. Then shall they also answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee? Then shall He answer them, saying, verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

Sister White observed, "Jesus here identifies Himself with His suffering people.

It was I who was hungry and thirsty. It was I who was a stranger. It was I who was naked. It was I who was sick. It was I who was in prison ... He identifies Himself as being in person the very sufferer. Mark, selfish Christian: Every neglect of the needy poor, the orphan, the fatherless, is a neglect of Jesus in their person."⁶¹

Personal evangelism is among the best ways of reaching the veiled women. The type of results may be different but the Lord works in their hearts the same way. Their acceptance of the Gospel message may vary because of a lifelong doctrinal drilling in Islam or the fact that the family network among Muslims is very tight and anyone from outside of it, no matter how close he/she may be, is considered dead.

There is a report of an incidence that appeared in the Kenyan newspapers describing a woman who was jailed in Somalia for reporting rape.⁶² This shows that the veiled lady has no rights. The above observations show that believing in Jesus necessitates breaking away from both the family and society. It also bars early

⁶¹Ibid., 60.

⁶²*Saturday Nation*, 9 February 2013.

confession because it would result in aborting the whole process too early. This is why outcome from evangelism in Muslim community differs from any other evangelism.

The time scope of this project and seminar period could not allow for tangible results from personal evangelism among the Muslim women. Nevertheless, all the principles of evangelism suggested in this project are applicable to all women. The researcher has been in close contact with a family that has been evangelizing a Muslim family for four years. The two families have shared joys and sorrows together for this period of time. During the first three years, there were no signs of gospel penetration, only human friendship that seems to flourish. However, with the fourth year a young couple from the Muslim family started to attend many prayer sessions with the evangelist family. In one prayer meeting, the young couple requested for special prayers for a secret burden. The young couple appeared to be very troubled and after three months confessed that they had been struggling with dreams urging them to serve Jesus. Special prayers were organized and the young Muslim couple accepted the Lord Jesus as their Savior. Personal evangelism miracles are real and there are many of them.

The seminar participants were very interested in the small group lessons so several copies were given to each of them for later use in the community. Arrangements were also put in place with the district pastor for a continuous supply of the lessons.

Program Evaluation

The women seminar was a great success. It drew more women participants than many other church programs of the same standard. The attendance of 40% in Mere church district is a big positive step. Since transportation of the participants was donated by the Field office, it is clear that empowering women financially can enhance their participation in church activities and particularly in personal evangelism. A mind preoccupied by the pangs of poverty cannot bear good ideas for total servanthood that

evangelism calls for. Poverty is one of the factors that keeps many women to themselves, as those lowly educated mothers desperately ruminate on the availability of the next meal and how to fulfill the educational demands for their children, very little financial and emotional consideration is left for God and the great Commission.

Personal evangelism comes in with sharing of soul, self, and life with others. It is meeting persons in their natural environment and helping them look upward to Christ. The evangelist helps to remove many life's hindrances. This means getting involved in the daily life of local people not only in words, but also in action. Mere SDA women must have something in their hands to share.

However, lack of means should not eclipse the vision of a Christian, but it can constitute a real hindrance to active personal evangelism. Economic liberty would make the light of Mere SDA women shine clearer and further than the present. Visitation and the small groups study were received and participated with special eagerness, no fear or shyness accompanied the women as they joined the researcher in the house-to-house mission. Training gives not only the skills, but also the courage needed for personal evangelism. In a few days, the trained women gained courage to go out alone for lost souls for Christ. If the women had regular seminars or short courses on evangelism, health and giving Bible studies, the impact and the results of their labors would be seen.

Most of the women had primary level of education. This means that providing reading materials though good would not serve the purpose properly. Only seminars where the learner and trainer exchange ideas directly can help the women grasp the methods of Evangelism well. The sessions for home visitation were received with enthusiasm and the concepts presented practically were understood and practiced immediately. The women preferred practical teaching than the abstract ideas. Through the questions they asked and the things they did, the women's intelligence is higher than

their level of education. Though the researcher did not do anything towards upgrading their education, it was evident there was room for it. It is beyond the scope of this project and calls for attention in another study. Personal evangelism is not for those who have nothing and nothing to do. It is for women who set aside time and means for a holy course. So empowered women are better qualified for personal evangelism.

A few months after the seminar has passed; and the women under the guidance of the district pastor are still visiting and giving small group Bible studies. Some of their Bible study group members have matured for baptism. Eleven of them have been baptized and several more are on the way to baptism. This shows the project is viable and effective even in its beginning stage. The fact that the district pastor is still involved shows that this study will be useful to many more than the target group. In fact, the district pastor has been instrumental in collection of vital data for this project that aims to arouse many church members to the call for personal evangelism. If those who have known the way of life through this project are also trained for personal evangelism, then the eternal chain reaction has began. A Christian is worthy his/her salt as he/she gives spiritual birth to another Christian.

One of the major challenges that were observed is reaching Muslim women and witnessing to them. They stay indoors and customary they are not allowed to associate with other communities, especially Christians. About 50% of Mere community is Muslim, and reaching them is very difficult not only to the Mere SDA church district women, but even to other Christian denominations.

Phil Parshall and Julie echo the question for many in the following words:

What is the way to share our faith with the women of the veil? How can we build bridges into their lives with integrity? What are the points of contact that will open up an understanding of the gospel? Finally, what

evangelistic strategies can we learn from Muslim women who have stepped over the line and converted to Christ?⁶³

Muslim women are not easy to convert to Christianity because of the strong foundation laid on them through early Muslim schooling in the *Madrassa*. The major barriers for them are: God is far away and is neither interested nor involved in the daily life of a woman, and sin is something we all do and it is punished only if one is caught.

According to their beliefs, “*Allah* (God) is simply not close nor real, not vital, nor practical to woman’s life. He is an obstruct force to be obeyed, not loved. Intimacy with *Allah* is not part of Muslim woman’s thinking.”⁶⁴

The researcher also noted the positive impact of a woman trainer in a women project. The seminar participants felt free and were very active. Even the preliminaries of visiting a home were smooth and easy, as women knocked on the doors and called on other women.

The seminar was a success for all the parties involved. The participants were drawn from the four major SDA churches in the Mere religion. It was evident that if similar seminars were conducted in each church the results would be big, since each team would be dealing with familiar grounds and people. Furthermore, it would reduce the travelling cost and result into four complete trained teams in the Mere SDA district, thus making the outcome fourfold. The time for a big change in evangelism with women being in the lead is here. The year 2013 in Kenya is for the implementation of the new Constitution with big gain for inclusion of women in all institutions. Therefore, Mere

⁶³Julie & Phil Parshall, *Lifting the Veil* (The World of Muslim Women. USA: 2001), 225.

⁶⁴Myles Munroe, *Understanding the Purpose and Power of Women: A Book for Women and Men who Love them* (Whitake House, Bahamas: 2001), 226.

SDA women entry into personal evangelism is in tune with the prevailing political climate and the Master's call in the great commission.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This project started by defining personal evangelism as one-to-one ministry, which every woman would wish to join and witness for Christ. Personal ministry is the individual's efforts based on the method of Jesus, driven by love for God and people, and assisted by the Holy Spirit empowering women to share the gospel of Jesus with others. In personal evangelism women get involved with individuals or families in their homes or elsewhere, winning them for Christ and inspiring them to become soul witnesses.

Personal evangelism is an exciting adventure. Jesus intended that even women should be His instruments in winning souls for God. There is no reason for the church's existence if it does not experience the adventure of winning souls with Christ. At the heart of personal evangelism lies individuals or family units with their own needs, which cannot be addressed in a crowd. It is therefore vital to come close to those in need and serve them to form close relationships and be able to assist them spiritually. Personal evangelism is focused on individuals; people are not saved in great numbers but as individuals.

As illustrated below in the Figure 2, Christ's mission was to take the gospel to the people. He talked to all people, including poor and rich, great and lowly, met them at ordinary places, taught, trained and led them by example.

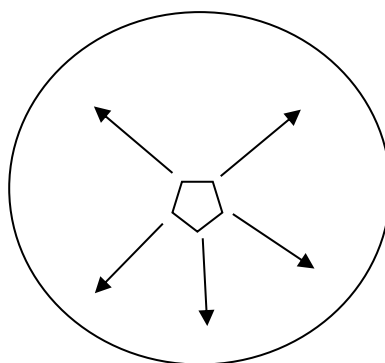


Figure 2: Personal Evangelism: Centrifugal

Personal evangelism is like a piece of diamond reflecting its light outward; however small it is, it radiates its rays of light out. Personal evangelism starts in small numbers, one-to-one, two-to-two, four-to-four onwards. Christ illustrated the multiplication principle when He started with the twelve men and scouted them out to homes of people; later He sent the seventy. At Pentecost, the group had grown to one hundred and twenty. After Pentecost, the group grew tremendously to three thousand.

Ellen G. White gives a clear understanding of evangelism methods. She strongly supports personal evangelism as a method of evangelism. She advises that people to be met at their homes and explained the Bible truth to the whole family. In her writings about evangelism, she stresses the importance of following Christ's preferred method, "Christ's method alone will give the true success in reaching people. The Savior mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed his sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence then bid them 'follow me.'"⁶⁵

⁶⁵Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1905), 143.

White cautions that human efforts should not be discouraged, “everywhere there is a tendency to substitute the work of organization for individual effort. Human wisdom tends to consolidation, centralization and to the building up of great churches and institutions.”⁶⁶ She indicates that the efforts will be more successful if done through personal evangelism.

The implementation of the program was completed successfully by carrying out the following;

1. Conducting an enrichment seminar to empower women in personal evangelism, so they would understand its importance and to recognize their unique talents and actively serve Christ in winning souls for Him.
2. Practical involvement of women in visitations and conducting simple Bible study lessons in the villages. Helping women to share their experiences and be role models to their non-active sisters thus becoming more effective in supporting their personal ministry at the district level.

Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to design, implement and evaluate a strategy to empower Mere district women in personal evangelism. After designing, implementing and evaluating the program, the outcome was encouraging. The women’s spiritual life was lifted up. Earlier they felt inferior in comparison to men, this attitude prevented them from being involved in personal evangelism program. Women became more meaningful and inspiring than they used to be before. They surrendered their traditional places (around the house) and got involved in the work of the Lord. They started spending more time in the word of God. A strong loving relationship has developed

⁶⁶Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1905), 147.

among the women, building a team for personal evangelism to serve the church and the surrounding communities in need.

Adventist women at Mere church district have learned listening skills and started to practice them in their evangelistic outreaches. Armed with the art of listening, women have begun serve people in their homes, minister in the churches and communities effectively. They have reached out to people's needs and hurts with accuracy. Doing this and seeing positive results has strengthened the female workers in God's vineyard and encouraged others not yet involved women to become God's instruments. To this Samaan clearly declares that:

A fundamental part of Christian witnessing involves how we come across to people, how we listen, how we care, and what impact we make on their lives as a consequence of their being around us. It is relating to others, those we rub shoulders with in everyday life in such a way that they clearly sense the love and power of Christ flowing from our lives to theirs.⁶⁷

Listening is one of the effective methods that helps to associate with other women in their respective places, and share the good news with them. Today, when everyone is busy and rushing to different directions, nobody has time to listen to anyone. Therefore, it is a unique opportunity for Mere SDA church district women to take time to learn of Jesus, listening skills and practice them in helping the suffering souls to find the relief at their Savior's feet.

The Mere SDA church district, which is composed of four churches, has a membership of only 145 active women. Since the time of missionaries' arrival in 1949, the number grew from 10 women converts to only 218. After the seminar 11 were

⁶⁷ Philip G. Samaan, *Christ's Way of Reaching People* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1990), 64.

baptized and others are still in baptism class. The growth rate will surely be higher after implementing the suggestions of this study.

The reason for this is that the women have not utilized personal evangelism enough in its evangelistic endeavors. In the great commission Jesus commanded His followers to make disciples. Adventist women have become spectators doing very little to help the growth of new converts.

Getting involved in Personal evangelism is not difficult one only needs Christ. The good news is that the work can start immediately. This type of evangelism is less expensive. Samaan states that, “Our mission as salt is to present Christ’s gospel in such an inviting and an enticing manner that people find themselves compelled by it. It was Jesus’ way and the way He wants us to follow.”⁶⁸

The SDA church as a whole should encourage its members for Personal evangelism for its growth. Barriers of various prejudices are to be removed for women to get involved in evangelism. Dobbins argues, “Christianity without evangelism is spurious Christianity and evangelism that does not seek to make full rounded disciples is counterfeit evangelism.”⁶⁹

Through this study project Mere SDA women should never go back to spurious Christianity by being busy with many religious activities at the expense of personal evangelism. The seminar experiences should help women in this region avoid the emergency of counterfeit evangelism that results in converts that cannot evangelize. The Master’s call and command is for making disciples who will make disciples, too.

⁶⁸Ibid., 28.

⁶⁹Gaines S. Dobbins, *Evangelism According to Christ* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949), 32.

The high calling in Matthew 28:18-20 calls women to be sensitive to the mission and all that is related with winning souls. Using all their efforts, they are to keep things going, fulfilling the great Commission of Christ. Jesus' method most frequently used, will ensure effective and successful personal evangelism.

Kilpatrick confirms,

The simplest, most direct and most efficient method is to reach Christian men and women to go personally to such souls as they can reach and tell them in a face-to-face intercourse, what God has done in Christ for those who trust Him. There can be no doubt that this is the most powerful evangelistic age the world has ever known. It is the only sound basis of true and permanent evangelism. He has also a duty of being himself the bearer of the gospel, by his own personal witness, to those who need its gracious message.⁷⁰

Women need to put more effort in the work of evangelism. It is so easy to miss the reason why the Lord called them to win souls for Christ. The Lord is waiting for men and women who are really identified with him. He needs potential people, ready for eternal life and fellowship with God. Anxious women are needed to rescue every perishing soul by sharing eternal life with her/him. Kilpatrick agrees, "Where such a personal work is being done all other work larger and less personal, becomes more effective."⁷¹

Recommendations

The researcher recommends proper preparations to be done, asking ministers to involve church members in training seminars for personal evangelism as a back up to gospel campaigns as an ongoing venture.

⁷⁰T.B.Kilpatrick, *New Testament Evangelism* (Cincinnati: Jennings & Graham, 1911), 218.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, 220.

The researcher recommends that local ministers in local churches introduce the personal evangelism strategies and that members be effectively grounded in them.

The researcher recommends that evangelistic team ascertain whether they have achieved and accomplished what the church set out to accomplish, and then critically and honestly evaluate evangelism in the local churches.

The researcher recommends that experienced church members accompany every willing member to evangelize in every church so that they also can experience the excitement and adventure of being part of God's work.

The researcher recommends women to go out and reach others. Disciple making is to be accomplished in the process of going rather than waiting for people to come to them. In the great commission, Jesus is demanding that His disciples go. This is a command. Adventist women should not ignore it, they are not asked to go but commanded to go. There is an urgency connected to the going to proclaim and warn the world of his soon coming. Asking wisdom from God through prayers is the only way to prepare for the command "Go." God will provide protection from temptation and will give them words to speak.

The researcher recommends women involvement in personal evangelism. Thus it is not something, which one can just rush into. Women must keep in mind that they are dealing with people's eternal lives and that they must treat others very carefully. A plan is to be implemented to use experienced and interested women to give Bible studies not only in a city setting, but also in a village setting. In doing this, the following points are to be considered:

1. The needs of a group as a whole are to be met.

2. The experienced Bible instructors can help in developing confidence in personal work by guiding the younger or non-experienced workers into a more purposeful visitation programs and skills in teaching the Bible.
3. Women to be taught how to conduct village meetings, personal and family Bible studies.
4. The Bible instructors are to show them the points to stress in each text used, following the principle of learning: I do-you watch, we do it together, you do-I watch.
5. After the discussion of the lesson, the Bible instructor appoints one of the women to lead the discussion as she watches them.
6. Then each woman must present it to another.

Ministers who will involve church members both men and women in personal evangelism, which is the most frequently used method of evangelism, will change the lives of church members. These churches will become meaningful places for worship. They will overflow with new members, because they would have seen and felt the love of Christ.

APPENDIX A

TITHE AND OFFERING RECEIPTS

CHANGAMWE MISSION of Seventh-day Adventists
P. O. Box 273 - Mombasa - Kenya Colony No. 2025

Kanisa la Malindi Kundi la Paziwani

Limepokea Panga la Kundi la Malindi Sh. 4 Senti 75

Limepokea sadaka ya Sh. Senti.

Kutoa kwa Stephen J. Kithi

Sahibi R.K. Mwangi Tarehe 21/6/54

Central Kenya Mission of Seventh-day Adventists
P. O. Box 1352 - Nairobi Kenya
"Zaka yote ya nchi... ni shauku kwa Deyana" Wd. 37/38

Nimepokea kwa: Jisitati No. 61061

Kanisa Malindi Zaka

Tarehe 16.12.58 Shs. Cts.

Sahibi Samueli Jumla 5

Central Kenya Mission of Seventh-day Adventists
P. O. Box 1352 - Nairobi Kenya
"Zaka yote ya nchi... ni shauku kwa Deyana" Wd. 37/38

Nimepokea kwa: Janattani No. 62622

Kanisa MERE Zaka

Tarehe 28.10.59 Shs. Cts.

Sahibi Samueli Jumla 30

CHANGAMWE MISSION of Seventh-day Adventists
P. O. Box 273 - Mombasa - Kenya Colony No. 7027

Kanisa la MERE Kundi la Paziwani

Limepokea Panga la Kundi la Sh. Senti

Limepokea sadaka ya Sh. Senti 80

Kutoa kwa Samueli Sitthasa

Sahibi S. Golu Tarehe 12-5-60

APPENDIX B

MERE SDA CHURCH WOMEN EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Age in Years	Not Educated	Adult Education	Primary	Secondary	College	University
18-25	0	0	6	5	2	
26-40	0	0	8	6	3	
41-100	0	4	4	3	3	
Total	0	4	18	14	8	

KAVUNYALALO SDA CHURCH WOMEN EDUCATION BACKGROUND

Age in Years	Not Educated	Adult Education	Primary	Secondary	College	University
18-25	0	6	3	3	0	0
26-40	0	12	6	3	0	0
41-100	3	5	5	4	0	0
Total	3	23	14	10	0	0

MIJOMBONI SDA CHURCH WOMEN EDUCATION BACKGROUND

Age in Years	Not Educated	Adult Education	Primary	Secondary	College	University
18-25	0	0	7	5	0	0

26-40	0	0	4	1	0	0
41-100	2	1	2	0	0	0
Total	2	1	13	6	0	0

KAKONENI SDA CHURCH WOMEN EDUCATION BACKGROUND

Age in Years	Not Educated	Adult Education	Primary	Secondary	College	University
18-25	0	0	8	4	2	0
26-40	0	0	5	2	2	0
41-100	2	2	2	1	0	0
Total	2	2	15	7	4	0

APPENDIX C

LETTER



SEVENTH-DAY
ADVENTIST
CHURCH

KILNYA COAST PILLI

P.O. Box 20073, Mt. Cass, Kenya
Tel: 254 2007308
Email: KCC@KCC

11th October, 2012.

TO: Mere District Pastor,

RE: EMPOWERING WOMEN FOR PERSONAL EVANGELISM

A four days seminar for empowering women for personal evangelism from 18th - 21st December, 2012, is prepared by the Women Ministries Director, Pr. Naomi Katore Kalana

The venue for this seminar is Mere Seventh-Day Adventist church. All women are highly invited to participate in this seminar.

With Christian regards

Pr. Zachariah Marwa
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Be not
Jesus is
Living God

APPENDIX D

SMALL GROUP BIBLE STUDY LESSONS

Lesson 1: The Holy Bible

1. What does the Bible say is the source of truth? (John 17:17)

2. From where did the Bible come? (2 Peter 1:19-21)

3. How did God communicate with the Prophets? (Numbers 12:6)

4. How much of the Bible given by God is inspired? (2 Timothy 3:16)

5. How long will the word of God exist? (Isaiah 40:8; Mathew 24:35)

6. In these troubled times what will be created in our hearts through the study of the Bible? (Romans 15:4)

7. How should I study the Bible? (Isaiah 28:10)

8. How often should I study the Bible? (Acts 17:10, 11)

Lesson 2: Jesus is Coming Soon

1. What promise did Jesus make concerning His return? (John 14:1-3)

2. In what manner will Jesus return a second time? (Matthew 24:27; Revelation 1:17)

3. How many people will see Jesus coming when He returns? (Matthew 24:27; Revelation 1:7)

4. Who will accompany Jesus when He returns? (Matthew 25:31)

5. What is the purpose of Jesus Second coming? (Revelation 22:12; John 14:3)

6. What will happen to the righteous people when Jesus comes again? (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17; 1 Corinthians 15:51-53)

7. What will happen to the wicked people when Jesus comes again?
(1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17; Isaiah 11:14; Revelation 6:14-17)

8. Is there a way we can know when the day is near? (Matthew 24:32-33, 36)

1. What did God tell Adam and Eve? (Genesis 2:17)

2. What did Satan say? (Genesis 3:4)

3. What two elements were used by God to make a living soul? (Genesis 2:7)

4. What happens to the body of man after he dies? (Genesis 3:19; Psalms 146:4)

5. What happens to the “breath of life” or the “spirit” at death? (Ecclesiastes 12:7; Job 27:3)

6. Where does every man go when he dies? (Ecclesiastes 3:19, 20)

7. But don't good people go to heaven? Didn't David go to heaven when he died? (Psalms 115:17; Acts 2:29, 34)

8. How much does man know during the time he/she is dead? (Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6, 10)

Lesson 4: The Sabbath

1. What special day did God set aside for all humankind to keep holy? (Exodus 20:8-11)

2. Why did God make the Sabbath anyway? (Exodus 20:8-11; Ezekiel 20:12; Isaiah 58:13, 14)

3. When was the Sabbath day created, blessed and set aside as holy? (Genesis 2:1-3)

4. For who was the Sabbath day made for? (Mark 2:27)

5. What day of the week did Jesus keep holy? (Luke 4:16; Matthew 24:20)

6. Did the disciples keep the Sabbath? (Acts 17:2; 13:14; 16:13; 18:4)

7. Why should I keep the Sabbath now? (Ezekiel 20:20; John 14:15; Isaiah 66:22, 23)

Lesson 5: Health and Lifestyle

1. Does the Bible give us principles of healthy living? (3 John 2)

2. Why did God give health rules to His people? (Deuteronomy 6:24; Exodus 23:25)

3. Does God's health rule have anything to do with eating and drinking? (Isaiah 55:2; 1 Corinthians 10:31)

4. What was man's original diet when God created him? (Genesis 1:29; 2:16; 3:18)

5. What kinds of creatures does God specifically mention as clean and unclean in the Bible? (Deuteronomy 14:1-19; Leviticus 11:12-27)

6. What does God say concerning those who continue to eat pork? (Isaiah 66:15-17)

Lesson 6: Following Jesus in Baptism

1. Is it necessary for a person to be baptized and be saved? (Mark 16:16)

2. How is baptism recognized in the Bible? (Ephesians 4:5)

3. What great commission did Christ give His church? (Matthew 28:19, 20)

4. Why did Jesus say it was necessary for Him to be baptized? (Matthew 3:13-15)

5. How was Jesus baptized? (Mark 1:9, 10; 1 Peter 2:21)

6. How essential is it that water and the Spirit should baptize a person? (John 3:5)

7. What was Paul told to do when he understood the plan of salvation? (Acts 22:16). By being baptized, the individual shows his faith in three experiences of Jesus. What are they? (Romans 6:1-6)

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Yaa Stefano Kithi, an Adventist pioneer, Jimba/Gede, Malindi district, Kilifi County,
Interview by author, Adventist University of Africa, Kenya. 11 September
2011.

VITA

Name: Naomie Katore Katana

Background: I was born in July 29 1961 to the late Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Chigumba at Lukore in Kwale district, Coast province. I have five sisters and one brother, all raised in SDA church. I was baptized into the SDA church at the age of 13 (1974).

Family: On December 12, 1985, I got married to one loving Mr. Joseph Katana of Malindi, Mombasa. We are blessed with three daughters and one son, Lydia Kadzo (born 1986), Emmanuel Baraka (born 1987), Constance Dama (born in 1992) and Tamari Kaidza (born in 1995).

Education:

1968-1974 Primary School Certificate at Lukore Primary School, Shimba Hills, Kwale, Kenya.

1975-1978 Secondary School Certificate at Matuga Girls Secondary School, Kwale, Kenya.

1981-1983 Certificate in Nursing from Kendu Adventist Hospital, Nyanza, Kenya.

1984-1985 Qualified as a nurse midwife at Pumwani maternity hospital, Nairobi, Kenya.

2003-2008 Graduated with Bachelor of Arts from University of East Africa, Baraton, Eldoret, Kenya.

2010-2013 A Masters of Arts in Pastoral Theology at the Adventist University of Africa, Nairobi, Kenya.

Experience:

2011-2013 Departmental Director of Women Ministry, Sabbath School, Children Ministry and Family Life at Kenya Coast Field.

2009-2010 District pastor in Mere SDA Church, Malindi station.

1994-2008 Community nurse for SDA Rural Services in Malindi.

1986-1994 Nurse in charge at Watamu SDA Dispensary, Malindi Kenya.

1983-1985 A nurse at Better Living Center, Nairobi, Kenya.

1979-1981 Untrained teacher at Kinango Primary school.