

PROJECT ABSTRACT

Masters of Divinity

Adventist University for Africa

Theological Seminary

**Title: A PROGRAM TO PROMOTE SPIRITUALITY IN FAMILY LIFE IN THE
JABE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN BUJUMBURA
DISTRICT**

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Date completed: April 2021

This research set out to examine the level of spirituality in the families of the Jabe Seventh-day Adventist church. Information was collected from Christian literature, the spirit of prophecy, and a thorough examination of biblical principles on families' spirituality. The data collection and analysis on the realities of spirituality dynamism in families of the Jabe Seventh-day Adventist church was carried out using a quantitative approach, with a survey, a questionnaire, the data were analyzed using correlation and the results showed that there is a need for spirituality revival in the families of the Jabe SDA church. And the program was designed and implemented to address these issues. The evaluation of the implementation showed positive and the program was effective for improving the spirituality of the Jabe SDA church.

Adventist University of Africa

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A PROGRAM TO PROMOTE SPIRITUALITY IN FAMILY
LIFE IN THE JABE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
CHURCH IN BUJUMBURA DISTRICT

A project

presented in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Masters of Divinity

by

Paul Irakoze

April 2021

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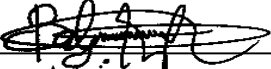
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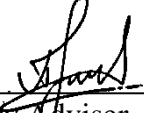
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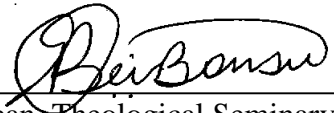


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I dedicate this research project to Almighty God who blessed me with a healthy life during this uncertain time. My sincere thanks goes to my beloved wife Anitha Arakaza and daughters Bithiah and Ramiah who always prayed for me and gave me the words of hope and encouragement. To my leaders of ECD and BUM who supported me financially and morally. And to all my relatives and friends who encouraged me and prayed for me during a hard time my family went through.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the problem	4
The Purpose of the Study	4
The Significance of the Study	5
Limitation of the Study	5
Methodology	5
Definition of Terms.....	7
Chapter Summary	8
2. THEORETICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS.....	9
The Word “Spirituality” in Greek.....	13
Biblical View of Spirituality in Family	17
Old Testament View of Spirituality in Family	17
New Testament View of Spirituality in Family Life.....	21
Spirituality in Family in the Ministry of Jesus.....	22
Spirituality in Family in the Early Church.....	23
Ellen G. White on Spirituality in Family Life	26
Spirituality in Family – God’s Plan	28
Spirituality in Family as a Center of Worship.....	29
The Spirituality in Families Shines Outside	30
Spirituality in Family Life in the Times of the End.....	31
Other Christian Authors on Spirituality in Family Life.....	35
The Importance of Spirituality in Family Life.....	40
Chapter Summary	45
3. DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL SETTING.....	46
Description of the Republic of Burundi.....	46
Geographical Situation	46
Economic Situation.....	48
Country Population	49
Religion	50
Description of Seventh-day Adventist Church in Burundi	52

Background of Jabe Seventh-day Adventist Church	53
Survey on Spirituality in family life in the Jabe Seventh-day Adventist Church	55
Research Approach	55
Research Population and Sample Size	55
Sampling Techniques.....	55
Data Collection Procedure	56
Highlights on the Dataset and Demographic Findings	57
Pertinent Observations Related to Family Spirituality	60
Significant Bivariate Correlations Relevant to Family Spirituality	61
Chapter Summary	63
4. INTERVENTION PROGRAM: PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION	65
Program Design	65
Program Preparation, Scheduling, and Implementation	66
Program Evaluation	69
Some Additional Immediate impacts of the program on Family spirituality.....	71
Impact on Personal Revival	71
Impact on Mid-Week Prayer Meetings	71
Impact on Family Worship and Bible Study Promotion.....	71
Impact on Daily Prayer Promotion	72
Conclusion	73
Chapter Summary	73
5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMANDATIONS	75
Summary	75
Conclusion	77
Recommendations.....	78
APPENDIXES	80
A. RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE.....	81
B. LETTERS.....	84
BIBLIOGRAPHY	86
VITA.....	91

LIST OF TABLES

1. Educational Background of the Respondents	58
2. Occupational Background of the Respondents	58
3. Family Size of the Respondents.....	59
4. Baptismal Age of the Respondents	59
5. Former Religious Background of the Respondents	60
6. Pearson's Correlation Coefficients for Significantly Related Variables	62
7. Perceptions on the Impact of the Revival Program on Family Spirituality	70
8. Perceptions on the Impact of the Revival Program on Family Spirituality	70

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Seventh-day Adventist Church believes that Spirituality in family life is very crucial in every home. “The family was established by divine creation with marriage at its center. As the primary setting in which values are learned and the capacity for a close relationship with God and others is developed, its health is vital to the church's disciple-making mission.”¹ From the beginning, God established the family or home as a school of training where the parents can play an important role to educate spiritually their children and others who are staying together in their house by studying the word of God, singing, praying, and fellowshiping together. God started his mission in the family of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. The home of Adam and Eve at its center, was a spiritual family because the Creator himself is “Spirit” (John 4:24).

God himself is the foundation of every family because of his marvelous love for his children. The founder of the family is spirit that is why God wishes his people to be spiritual. He made the family a training ground for different purposes. It is in the family that children gain true spiritual education; the missionary work begins in the family.

The true or false Church starts from the spiritual education received; that is why families should be careful how they educate their children. The families need to

¹ General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists Church, *Seventh-Day Adventist Church Manual*, 18th ed (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2010), 89-90.

understand that the future of their children depends on them. “Home religion is greatly needed, and our words in the home should be of a right character, or our testimonies in the church will amount to nothing. Unless you manifest meekness, kindness, and courtesy in your home, your religion will be vain. If there were more genuine home religion, there would be more power in the church.”²

When all families are spiritually strong, the church members will grow spiritually in faith, in love, and they will witness to the surrounding communities, and the church will grow in number (quantity). A family is a place where parents should train themselves spiritually and educate spiritually their children and make their homes spiritual families. “It is in the home school that our boys and girls are to be prepared to attend the church school. Parents should constantly keep this in mind and as teachers in the home, should consecrate every power of the being to God, that they may fulfill their high and holy mission. Diligent, faithful instruction in the home is the best preparation that children can receive for school life.”³

Spirituality in family life is very important in the life of God’s people like during the time of Adam, Abraham, and Joshua to today. That is why the Seventh-day Adventist church puts emphasis on these practices within the church members. Spirituality in family life contributes to enhancing spiritual development, spiritual growth and wisdom in God’s peoples.

Spirituality in family life helps to instill in both old and young a consciousness of the Lord, His Word, and help others to be a spiritual family. “Our experiential

² Ellen G White, *The Adventist Home: Counsels to Seventh-Day Adventist Families as Set Forth in the Writings of Ellen Gould White* (Hagerstown, MD.: Review and Herald, 2001), 319.

³ *Ibid.*, 185.

communion with God is an important component of knowing God personally.”⁴ Being connected with Jesus Christ - the source of the real divine foundation of Spirituality, disunity, fighting, anger, jealousy, and all other bad behavior will not be seen in their homes. Families lacking divine spirituality are in trouble; the devil wants to control their homes every time, and that is why the church, community, as well as the country, are suffering.

Children grow up without the real foundation of divine spirituality; that is why they will behave like their parents because they didn’t find any divine spirituality in their family. “Christian spirituality involves a deepening trust and friendship with God for those who are in Christ Jesus.”⁵The church cannot be spiritual while the church members are not spiritual families. “The restoration and uplifting of humanity begin in the home. The work of parents underlies every other. Society is composed of families and is what the heads of families make it. ‘Out of the heart are the issues of life...’ and the heart of the community, of the church, and of the nation, is the household. The well-being of society, the success of the church, the prosperity of the nation, depend upon home influences.”⁶ Divine spirituality is necessary; it builds a beautiful home, unity, love, joy, blessings, and the church will benefit from it. Divine Spiritual family will impact the church, as well as the surrounding communities.

⁴ Klaus Issler, *Wasting Time with God: A Christian Spirituality of Friendship with God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 23.

⁵ Ibid., 25.

⁶ E G White, *The Ministry of Healing*, 349, accessed May 10, 2020, <https://m.egwritings.org/en/book/135.1760#1760>.

Statement of the problem

Spirituality in family life is a powerful dimension of personal experience and family life. Spiritual beliefs and practices help the families to educate themselves and to train their children as they are still young. Spirituality in family life helps the church members to grow because of their faith and good character which influence the spiritual and numerical growth of the church. In the Jabe Seventh-day Adventist church in Bujumbura district, there is a visible lack of moral behavior and less commitment, and dedication to consistent in prayer, meditation, and scripture study. Although even many families have fulfilled the requirements of the church such as attending the church program, preaching, singing, praying together, returning tithes and offering, they need also “to abide in Jesus Christ” (John 15: 4). Spirituality in family life will help the parents to grow together in the faith, and learning from, and encouraging one another. What are the causes of the decrease in spirituality in the family? What are the strategies that can enhance the value of spirituality in family life? How can these strategies promote family spirituality as the foundation for the mission of the church? The present study seeks to propose answers to these questions for the benefit of the families in the Jabe Seventh-day Adventist church.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the present study is twofold. The first one is to help the Seventh-day Adventist church members of Jabe to grow spiritually and have strong faith, help them to build their spiritual life in their homes. The second one is to help church members organize their homes as the center of spiritual development, spiritual growth, and witnessing.

The Significance of the Study

This study will help first of all the parents of Jabe Seventh-day Adventist church to know the values of family spirituality in their life that it will help them to make their home strong, and their Children also grow spiritually. It will be a resource for Pastors for training their church members. The study will be an important contribution to family spirituality.

Limitation of the Study

Jabe Seventh-day Adventist church in the Bujumbura district has over 150 families. Due to the big numbers of the family living in the different wards distant each other range as well as the limitations in size wards, the research will focus only on a few individuals randomly selected from different wards and different families. The respondents will also be assured of anonymity when giving information since the questionnaires doesn't require a person's identity. To be mentioned also the data will be collected from different people and different categories will be selected. As the word "spirituality" has a different meaning but in this reach, this study will limit itself to the Divine Spirituality.

Methodology

In this research, I interacted with sources from different books, articles from different scholars, and Seventh-day Adventist books especially Ellen G. White estate resources. This research mainly used a quantitative approach through a survey whereby church members shared their views by filling a questionnaire on spirituality in their family. The instrument that was used for this research consisted of two major sections, namely biographic information and research questions. Research questions

were 16 and mainly intended to collect data about the dynamics of spirituality in the family with particular references to the family (morning and evening) devotions, bible study, Sabbath school, personal daily prayer, and witnessing.

The population for this research was the family members of the Jabe Seventh-day Adventist church who are baptized and at least 18 years old. As at the time of data collection, the current records of the Church contained 500 baptized members, including those in transit (members to be removed or added to the register). Among all those members, only a few were below 18 years of age. The study determined to use 100 church members of age 18 and older, representing at least 20% of the population.

The technique that was used to collect data is known as Convenience Sampling which means a type of non-probability or non-random sample choice where target respondents who meet some practical criteria, such as easy accessibility, geographic proximity, availability at a given time, or willingness to participate are included in the objective of the research.

Due to the circumstances beyond my control, I could not be on the ground to participate in data collection. Notwithstanding that challenge, after designing the survey questionnaire and clearly describing the procedure for data collection, I selected a research assistant by the name of Celestin Ngarukiwenayo as to help me administer the questionnaire.

Prior to data collection, I had several discussions with him to be ensure that he understood the procedure. Data collection procedure that I wanted to use and this was the procedure to be used for the data collection and during the procedure. Having sought official permission from Church leaders, an announcement was made in the Church at Sabbath worship concerning the upcoming collection of data in the various

homes that would be willing to share their data. The assistant had to visit the homes of all families willing to participate in the study. He had to explain to them how they would fill the questionnaire. He took time to explain the intention of the research until they understood clearly.

I also interacted with the research assistant, as he was telling me how many questionnaires have so far been filled and the plan to get the remaining also filled. After the first collection. It is worth noting that after perusing the data from the first phase of collection, and noticing that many were not adequately filled, a second phase was embarked upon to enable us get the minimum sample size.

The findings from the surveys became the basis for the proposed program for improving family spirituality in the Jabe Seventh-day Adventist church. The study starts with the first chapter as an introduction.

The second chapter examines the Biblical foundation of spirituality in family life with a view of establishing an in-depth theoretical basis for the study.

The third chapter is about the background of the Jabe Seventh-day Adventist church in its larger and immediate context. The fourth chapter presents the proposed program design as well as its implementation and evaluation. The last chapter presents the Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendations.

Definition of Terms

Family: The word “family” is defined as: “A group of individuals living under one roof and usually under one head: Household”⁷ For the purpose for this study, the definitions of “family” that are going to be used are that of Antony Lewis and Merriam Webster’s Deluxe Dictionary.

⁷ *Merriam Webster Dictionary*, “Family,” accessed March 23, 2020, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/family>.

Spirituality: The word “Spirituality” is defined as “the attitudes, beliefs, practices which animate people’s lives and help them to reach out towards super-sensible realities.”⁸ Or “the interior life or the inward person, but as much for the body as the soul, and directed to the implementation of both commandments of Christ, to love God and our neighbor.”⁹ Spirituality can mean the condition of being righteous as God is righteous or being filled with the Holy Spirit. “Spirituality can also express the state of being perfect as God is perfect or being holy as God is Holy.”¹⁰

A dictionary of Christian Spirituality by Golden S. Wakefield will be used to define the word “spirituality”. The word “spirituality” has a lot of definitions but in this research, I am going to use the word “spiritual” in the sense of Spiritual Divine.

Chapter Summary

This introductory chapter consisted on providing a background information to the dynamics of the Jabe Seventh-day Adventist Church in relation to the observed and reported spiritual weaknesses within the families that make up the church. The chapter then proceeded to state the key problem, purpose, and significance of the study. Additionally, specific limitations of the study as well as the methodology to be employed were spelled out. Finally, some key terms were defined to enable the reader to know the context in which they are used in the research.

⁸ Gordon S Wakefield, ed., *A Dictionary of Christian Spirituality* (1986), s.v “Spirituality,” 361.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 362.

¹⁰ F Antonisamy, *An Introduction to Christian Spirituality* (Mumbai, India: St Pauls BYB, 2000), 19.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Spirituality in family life is more crucial and fruitful in all aspects of life. God expects our families to be spiritual than any other thing. The mission of the church starts in the family, the church cannot grow spiritually when their church members in their families are not spiritual when they are not taking time to communicate or to relate with God, the source of the real spirituality. “Family life is important because it plays a major role in the children’s development to become the person they want to become. The goals you set for yourself in your life are very much dependent on the life you have or the perception of the life you have with your family whether good or bad.”¹

Communicate with God through his Word, prayer, praising him, and total surrender to God in the homes make the families become spiritual family. “As more people come to define and live into their relationship with God, they turn to the Bible as their major source of inspiration and knowledge. In the search they travel with other members of a praying, worshiping community of believers. Moving forward, the individual and the community move to the core of the Christian experience—life in the Spirit.”²As Christians, it is very important to do spiritual exercises in the families, it helps the families to educate their children to live in this dying world and it helps

¹ Rashid Rashad, *The Power of Family Unity* (Bloomington, IN: Xlibris Corporation, 2013), 8.

² Don E Saliers, *Worship and Spirituality* (Akron, OH: OSL Publications, 1996), 93.

also to grow spiritually. “Spiritual exercises reorders the traditional practice of lectio divina (spiritual reading) from reading, meditating, praying, and contemplating to reading, meditating, imaginative contemplating, and praying, a new order that subtly orients the prayer toward life in the world.”³

Spirituality doesn't come by accident; it is an experience with the Holy Spirit. The more the Holy Spirit controls the life of the persons, the more they become spiritual. Divine Spirituality is an identity of the Holy Spirit. Being a spiritual person or spiritual family means being under the control of the Holy Spirit. “The Christian spiritual life is grounded in a very specific image of God, namely a personal God who encounters us in love. Prayer is that personal love relationship between God and ourselves initiated by God.”⁴ Having a strong relationship with God, communicate and walking with God through prayers, reading the word of God, will help peoples to be strong spiritually.

Family life is supposed to be about forming persons-parents and children growing together, learning from each other, supporting one another, in living out a shared mission and goals-all of which has to do with spirituality. Strong families share a belief in something greater than themselves. They agree about what is right and wrong and what is really important to them. These shared values give families purpose and help them unite on goals. Spirituality is thus a powerful source of strength for the families.⁵

Families are the centers of worship or the centers of education. Spirituality in family life involves the way the families are connected to God. “For everyone, the

³ Arthur Holder, *Christian Spirituality: The Classics* (London, England: Routledge, 2009), 204,

⁴ John H Westerhoff, *Spiritual Life: The Foundation for Preaching and Teaching* (Westminster, England: John Knox Press, 1994), 8.

⁵ Prarthna Swani, “Spirituality and Family Well-Being,” *Indian Journal of Positive Psychology* 9, no 1 (March 2018): 1.

spiritual life involves the connections we make between the Divine and the human.”⁶ Spirituality in family life encourages people to stay connected to God. The way people can do it is to take time to make family worship. “Each family member is encouraged to excel and develop his or her potential, each individual must perform certain roles to contribute to the success and betterment of the family as a strong unit.”⁷ Family worship is very important because spiritual education starts in the home, not in the church. From the book of Genesis up to the book of revelation, numerous verses of the Bible talk about how a family becomes spiritual because they have a daily program for worship in their families. A family which reflects Christ character is called Christian, “Christian spirituality is always enfleshed in the totality of our daily existence.”⁸

The spiritual growth of the families is very important, but they are required to be transparent, accountable, and honest to their neighbors. “Good friendships invite, nurture, and require growing transparency. One of the most important ingredients of our couple-friendship is the growing freedom we have to be honest with each other.”⁹ The families become spiritual when they have a strong relationship with God through worship.

“If it is true that we are made spiritual because of God’s union with us, it is also true that our spiritual life is the living out of God’s union with us through

⁶ Elizabeth Dreyer, *Earth Crammed with Heaven: A Spirituality of Everyday Life* (New York: Paulist Press, 1994), 76.

⁷ Romy Baylon, *Building a Strong Christian Family Foundation* (Victoria, B.C., Canada: Trafford Publishing, 2003), 25.

⁸ Dreyer, *Earth Crammed with Heaven*, 93.

⁹ Trevor Hudson, *Friendship with God: How God’s Offer of Intimate Relationship Can Change Your Life* (Cape Town, South Africa: Struik Christian Media, 2015), 35.

contemplation and participation: the worship of God as a style of life.”¹⁰ The people experience spirituality, when they take time in reverence and take time to organize their home as center of worship. “The importance of reading and studying God's word on a consistent basis; how to develop the habit of daily reading study and meditation of God's word; the link between meditation in God's word and success and victory in every area of life.”¹¹ Their lights will shine upon their children and their neighbors. “Those who hold God in reverence and who practice His presence as way of life. Those who fail to find Christ in the scriptures will not be able to receive the power, God seeks to give each of us.”¹² There is a power when you seek the Lord every day in the Holy Scripture. “Those also come to worship who feel that they are a part of the worshipping community.”¹³ Because families have experienced His presence in worship and praising him with their neighbors, their lights will be shine. Spirituality helps people to feel like a part of a big family with the creator who is the Master of the family. The more they contemplate the presence of God, the more they become Spiritual family.

¹⁰ Robert E Webber, *The Divine Embrace: Recovering the Passionate Spiritual Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2006), 20.

¹¹ Daniel C Okpara, *How to Meditate on God's Word: Fast and Easy Ways to Practice Intentional Bible Meditation and Grow in Faith, Worship and Prayer* (Scotts Valley, CA: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2017), 55.

¹² Tompaul Wheeler, *Bible Readings: Straight Answers from God's Word* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2007), 28.

¹³ Ronald B Allen, *Worship: Rediscovering the Missing Jewel* (Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1983) , 48.

The Word “Spirituality” in Greek

The different meanings of the word “spirituality” in Greek

1. Spiritual “πνευματικός” is having a relationship to the human spirit, or rational soul as the part of man which is akin to God.

“hence, τό πνευματικόν, that which possesses the nature of the rational soul, opposed to τό ψυχικόν, 1 Cor 15:46; σῶμα πνευματικόν, the body which is animated and controlled only by the rational soul and by means of which the rational life, of life of the πνευμα, is lived; opposed to σῶμα ψυχικόν.”

2. Spiritual τά πνευματικά means depending to a spirit, or a being higher than man but inferior to God; τά πνευματικά is spiritual being creature or powers.

Τῆς πονηρίας (genitive of quality) is wicked being creature spirits (Eph 6:12). Being Spiritual means a person is filled with the Holy Spirit; “one who is filled with and governed by the Spirit of God: 1 Cor 2:15 ; Gal 6:1; οἶκος πνευματικός, of a body of Christians (1 Pet 2:5).

The word spiritual as used does not refer to innate human capacity as much as it makes human capacity it makes clear reference to the Holy Spirit as a focus for understanding what is spiritual. In other words, the content of the word spiritual is the Holy Spirit. This is a crucial feature of specifically Christian understanding of spirituality. Spiritual comes to be connected with spirituality and all of this has to do with the Holy Spirit.¹⁴

Spirituality comes when people dedicate their life to God and due to the influence of the Holy Spirit in their hearts, people become spiritual that it will impact the families. “The community must create an ethos for spiritual formation that comes directly from the spirit's participation among the people. God has given us a model for

¹⁴ Jonathan Linman, *Holy Conversation: Spirituality for Worship* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2010), 15.

what relationships ought to be like. They are characterized by self-giving love and compassionate fellowship.”¹⁵

Spirituality doesn't come by accident, it comes when people take time to communicate with God through prayers, read the word of God, and praise God for his marvelous love to humans. “Spirituality emphasizes inner connectedness with other people. Spirituality develops a close affinity with other people. It helps to relate with other people with love and compassion.”¹⁶ Spirituality has a close relationship with worship. “Fearlessness is very important. One should constantly remain in spiritual delight so that no fear is entertained. Fearlessness comes from knowing that God is with us and that we are with God.”¹⁷ A person cannot become spiritually healthy when he or she is not worshipping God, so spirituality and worship go hand in hand. It is necessary to have a strong relationship with God through worship.

Exploring the connection between spirituality and worship enriches and reinforces the understanding and experience of each. Linking spirituality with corporate worship keeps the notion of spirituality grounded, tethered to worshipping communities. Otherwise, spirituality might be reduced to individualistic practice and idiosyncratic experience. Likewise, linking spirituality and worship serves to deepen our understanding experience of worship, keeping worship lively, vital, passionate, and attentive to the spirit's transformative power working in our assemblies.¹⁸

The more we truly worship God, the more we become truly spiritual. The devil is trying to cut the network, the communication between people and God by making them too busy by causing them to fail to commune with God. The more the

¹⁵ Angela H Reed, *Quest for Spiritual Community: Reclaiming Spiritual Guidance for Contemporary Congregations* (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 155.

¹⁶ Ashok Gulla, *Creating Values in Life: Personal, Moral, Spiritual, Family and Social Values* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2010), 182.

¹⁷ Swami Rama, *The Essence of Spiritual Life: A Companion Guide for the Seeker* (Detroit, MI: Lotus Press, 2004), 26.

¹⁸ Linman, *Holy Conversation*, 14.

devil controls the life of the people, the more they became weak spiritually and the family became the instrument of the devil instead of being the instrument of God. The word “spirituality” have relationship with worship. Spirituality is an experience of worship; it is good also to know the definition of the word “worship”

The word “worship” is a part of the experience of life. “Worship is not limited to act of devotion, rites, and ceremonies. For the Christians, worship is synonymous with life. Every area of life belongs to the kingdom of God; therefore, worship is practicing the presence of God in every experience of life.”¹⁹ Family Worship brings a divine atmosphere among the families. As the family comes closer to God by sharing their testimonies, the Holy Spirit descends on them and their spirituality in the family become strong. “Worship is an active response to God whereby we declare His worth. Worship is not passive, but is participative. Worship is not simply a mood; it is a response. Worship is not just a feeling; it is a declaration.”²⁰

Worship is a way of experiencing life which God given us to communicate with Him through Holy Spirit. (John 4:25). As the Christian families take time in their home for the bible study, they worship together, and they strengthen each other, their faith will be rooted in God. “Worship is the heart of Christianity, as the response of Christians to the magnificent revelation and awful omnipresence of the transcendent God.”²¹

¹⁹ Franklin M Segler and Randall Bradley, *Christian Worship: Its Theology and Practices* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2006), 6.

²⁰ Ronald B Allen, *Worship: Rediscovering the Missing Jewel* (Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1983), 16.

²¹ Thomas F Best and Dagmar Heller, *Worship Today: Understanding, Practice, Ecumenical Implications* (Geneva, Switzerland: WCC Publication, 2004), 3.

When a person worship God, he communicates truly with God and join to the instruction to worship and serve him only as it reads in the books of Exod 20:1- 3; Josh 24: 14–15. “Daniel grew as a man of prayer not by simply having a heart after God; he developed regular and consistent prayer times.”²² With our whole lifetime (Deut 6:5; Luke 10:25; Rom 12: 1) and guided by the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:26; Phil 3:3).

Worship is to give honor, glory, and magnify the Name of the Lord above the other name. People need to celebrate the love of God in their families through worship. True worship is the channel of communication the love of God for the people who are truly converted. Worship helps the families to experience the love of God among them and among the communities. “This meeting between God and his people is not optional and peripheral, but necessary and fundamental as a token of appreciation and acknowledgment of the very fact that God reveals himself to us through God’s creation, through the Holy Bible, Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit.”²³

The conclusion of the words “spirituality and worship” is to experience God and penetrate into union with him (Josh 12:26). In other words, when a person experience God and penetrate into union with him, that person truly become spiritual. The more the families become spiritual, the more the families become worshipers of God. Spend time in bible study and prayer helps people to grow spiritually and their life will be the witness to the surrounding community. The more they study the bible, the more they memorize the verses which will help them to fight the devil and live the best life of Christianity. Worship of the families in their home, will help them to

²² David Ireland, *Raising a Child Who Prays: Teaching Your Family the Power of Prayer* (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma Media, 2016), 25.

²³ Thomas F Best and Dagmar Heller, *Worship Today: Understanding, Practice, Ecumenical Implications* (Geneva, Switzerland: WCC Publication, 2004), 3.

become the real Christian and they will also witnessing to the others what God has done in their life. “In a very real sense, then Christian spirituality talks about what we receive more than what we achieve. Our potential and activity are entirely dependent on God's prior work in our lives.”²⁴ Spirituality in family life will help the people to witness to the others, because they have totally changed their homes as God’s center of worship. Families become spiritual when the families truly worship God and the worship must be part of their life. “Spirituality and worship involve human encounter with the Divine.”²⁵

Biblical View of Spirituality in Family

The Bible is replete with discussions on family spirituality as a consistent healthy relationship between God and his human creatures. The concept has the roots in the word of God from the beginning as an example of giving reverence and honor to God or educating God’s people or families in the Old and New Testaments. For instance, spirituality in family verses in the Bible are several.

Old Testament View of Spirituality in Family

In the beginning, God himself started with family spirituality in the Garden of Eden, where the Creator of the universe took initiative to preach and educate them on how Adam and Eve could live. “Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and keep it.” (Gen 2:15 – 17) NIV.

Spirituality in family life in the Ark, where Noah led his family into the ark. “And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives with him went into the ark

²⁴ Gary Thomas, *Seeking the Face of God* (OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1999), 16.

²⁵ Linman, *Holy Conversation*, 15.

to escape the waters of the flood.” (Gen 7:7). Noah's family was spiritual that is why he accepted the call of God to make an ark where his family lived during the flood.

During the time of the flood, Noah helped his family to grow spiritually. God chose Noah and his son's families escaped the flood because they were spiritual families. God chose Abraham to teach his family to keep the commandment of the Lord because he was a spiritual man. Abraham and Sarah were spiritual family, God chose them to be the model of the families' neighbors and the surrounding community. “For I have chosen him, that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring to Abraham what he has promised him.” (Genesis 18:19). Abraham's family as a spiritual family was a friend of God, he educated his family through worship, and sacrifice to trust God in their life.

“Sarah and Abraham's tent was a shining example of the family temple. Their tent was their place of fellowship, study, and prayer. Rabbinic tradition asserts that Sarah's tent was open on all four sides, demonstrating the profound hospitality of her home.”²⁶ In the life of Abraham wherever he settled his tent, he didn't forget also to establish the tent of sacrifice, where he must meet with his God in worship and giving the sacrifices. “Wherever a family is found, it is the duty of the head of it to set up the worship of God in it. The Jews who were, as the peculiar people, immediately under the direction of God, and were favored with the instruction of his inspired prophets had their family sacrifice, (Exod 12:21). Which the Master of the house performed at home with his family.”²⁷

²⁶ John D Garr, *Family Worship: Making your Home a House of God* (Atlanta, GA: Golden Key Press, 2013), 46.

²⁷ *On Family Prayer* (Boston, MA: M Goodwin, 1826), 1.

In the book of Deuteronomy chapter six, God commended to the children of Israel to teach their children. God called the children of Israel to be spiritual families. “And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise” (Deut 6:6).

This means that the Creator of the Universe calls the parents to be a spiritually healthy families and make their homes centers of the spiritual family house in order to honor God and to educate also themselves and their children. Not Joshua alone, but all those under his authority, in his house, will serve the LORD: “And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD” (Josh 24:15).

The spiritual families are the blessing to the churches and communities and they help others to make the right choice in their life as Joshua called the children of Israel to make the choice. “In the Old Testament the head of the families can make inclusive religious commitment on behalf of the family and guide on spiritual matters, such as Joshua did in the famous proclamation found in Joshua 24:15. The family was also the source of the divine blessing (Gen 1:27, 28; 12:1, 2; Ps 127: 3-5).”²⁸

The appeal of Joshua as Man of God, fills with the Spirit of God, He was calling other families to become spiritual families, to relate or communicate with Almighty God, Joshua appealed the children of Israel to serve God in their families.

²⁸ Willie Oliver, *Adventist Families: A Pan-African Perspective* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2019), 32.

King David as a man of God not only pronounced a benediction upon the people of Israel but he gave a special benediction for his family: “And when David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts, and distributed among all the people, the whole multitude of Israel, both men and women, a cake of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins to each one. Then all the people departed, each to his house. And David returned to bless his household (2 Sam 6: 18-20).

Perhaps David had learned the importance of spiritual family life from the practice of his own parents: “If thy father at all miss me, then say, David earnestly asked leave of me that he might run to Bethlehem his city, for there is a yearly sacrifice there for all the family (1Sam 20: 6). “David remembered his primary role as the leader of his household that returned from a great corporate spiritual exercise to his family temple so he, as the priest of his home, could bless his family. David’s home, not the congregation or its establishment for religion, was his primary sanctuary of blessing and the place for his personal devotion.”²⁹ David wished his family to be the stronger spiritual family that is why He called his household to relate with God every day.

Job as spiritual man, his strong spirituality led him to consecrate his children to the LORD, and offer up sacrifices for them habitually, even when sacrifice had not yet been explicitly commanded: “And when the days of the feast had run their course, Job would send and consecrate them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said, “It may be that my children have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts.” Thus, Job did continually. (Job

²⁹ Garr, *Family Worship*, 50.

1:5). God called the head of the families to teach and trained first their household so that they be the light for the surrounding communities. Truly education starts in the family.

New Testament View of Spirituality in Family Life

The New Testament is not silent about spiritual family life. “What has attracted many people to the gospel is this mystical dimension of New Testament spirituality that emphasizes God’s presence, a mutual indwelling, and a union of light and love rather than simply moral conversion.”³⁰ A lot of biblical verses instances are observable in the subsection that follows.

Spirituality in family life was emphasized in the New Testament time, many families took time to read the word of God, sing, and fellowship together to encourage one another, to shape everyone so that they may grow spiritually. Because the church was not large, they started in their families. “The private home afforded a place of privacy, intimacy, and stability for the early Christians... the private home and specifically the dining room provided an environment that corresponded remarkably with the Christians earliest self-identification, reflecting Jesus own choice of an upper room for his last supper, his own choice of non-sacred space as the environment of his work, and his insistence on familiarities among believers.”³¹

³⁰ Philip Sheldrake, *Spirituality: A Brief History* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2013), 39.

³¹ Vincent Branick, *The House Church in the Writings of Paul* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2012), 14,15.

Spirituality in Family in the Ministry of Jesus

The spirituality in family was emphasized by Jesus Christ himself while He was here on this earth. He visited many families and encouraged them to grow spiritually, the Parent brought their children to Christ to receive his spiritual blessing as we read it in the word of God: “Now they were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them. And when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them to him, saying, “Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God.” (Luke 18: 15-16). Jesus makes an emphasis on children’s education, Christ advises the family to teach, and pray for the children so that they may grow physically and spiritually. “Our spirituality is rooted in God who he is and how he has made us. Children’s spirituality is a joyous God-given reality in which we should all revel and rejoice.”³²

Jesus Christ's mission was to help the sinner family to change their behavior and encouraged them to grow spiritually as he visited the Zacchaeus family. “But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.” Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost” (Luke 19: 8-10).

Jesus Christ visited many families like Lazarus and Peter Simon’s houses to encourage and fellowship with them in order to encourage them to increase their spiritual life as we read in the gospel of Luke: “But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, “Lord, don’t you care

³² Rebecca Nye, *Children’s Spirituality: What It Is and Why It Matters* (London, England: Canterbury Press, 2014), 2.

that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me. Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “You are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.” (Luke 10: 40-42).

Jesus Christ treated the family equally, those families which the society denied and cursed, like Simon’s family was among the families denied and cursed but Christ visited them. He encouraged the poor family and prayer for them. “While Jesus was in Bethany in the home of Simon the Leper, a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, which she poured on his head as he was reclining at the table. When the disciples saw this, they were indignant. “Why this waste?” they asked. This perfume could have been sold at a high price and the money given to the poor.” Aware of this, Jesus said to them, “Why are you bothering this woman? She has done a beautiful thing for me. The poor you will always have with you, but you will not always have me. When she poured this perfume on my body, she did it to prepare me for burial. Truly I tell you, wherever this gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her.” (Matt 26: 6-13).

The ministry of Jesus Christ was to mingle with the families, encourage them to grow spiritually, train them how they can educate spiritually their children and make their families strong spiritually. He encouraged the families to be a role model of the surrounding community by showing them love and serving them.

Spirituality in Family in the Early Church

“The development of Spirituality in the early church...from the very beginning Christian spirituality was expressed most strongly in the way of life of the community

as a whole.”³³ During the early Church, Cornelius family was an example of spiritual family, Apostle Peter helped Cornelius family to grow spiritually as He went into his house, shared with them the word of God and He baptized them. “The early Christian spirituality was communal is one of its distinctive features. As such, it included preaching and teaching.”³⁴ In the early church, spiritual families strengthened themselves and spread the good news of Jesus Christ to the others, they used all the means they have to spread the gospel to the nations. “And they said, Cornelius *the* centurion, a just man, one who fears God and has a good reputation among all the nation of the Jews, was divinely instructed by a holy angel to summon you to his house, and to hear words from you.” (Acts10:22). “So, I sent to you immediately, and you have done well to come. Now therefore, we are all present before God, to hear all the things commanded you by God” (Acts 10:33).

As the scripture testified, Cornelius house was spiritual family, he wishes to have a good relationship with God, the Creator of the universe, he desires to have a strong communication with God. Cornelius desires to see his family to be spiritual and grow spiritually at the end they will have eternal life. “The great tension in early Christian spirituality: Christian were to live in the world as citizen of Heaven.”³⁵ During the early church, spirituality in families were testimonies to the others. The spiritual families’ life influenced many families to accept the good news of Jesus Christ. “Who will tell you words by which you and all your household will be saved”

³³ Sheldrake, *Spirituality*, 40.

³⁴ Arthur Holder, *The Blackwell Companion to Christian Spirituality* (Chicester, England: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2005), 62.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 63.

(Acts 11: 14). The Apostles lived the spiritual life as Jesus lived. “The spiritual life is a life that is guided by God’s spirit the same spirit that guided the life of Jesus.”³⁶

During the Apostle Paul and Silas’ Ministry while they were in prison, the miracle happened in the prison. They helped the family of the keeper of the prison to fear the Almighty God and they baptized his family. “So they said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.” Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized. Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household” (Acts 16:31-36).

In respect to the office of bishop or Elder, Paul writing to Timothy discusses the characteristics of one who should take care of the church of God. He enumerates as a candidate or prospective elder should first of all exemplify godliness by maintaining a spiritual family life, where wife, children and guests are directed to God. In order for the elder to lead in public worship, the qualification must necessary be a spiritual family. The Apostle Paul, in his ministry, emphasizes the follow up of the new members shared God’s word from their houses. “Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who is the first fruits of Achaia to Christ” (Rom 16:5).

Apostle Paul always sent the greeting of encouragement to the family church. “Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea, and Nymphas and the church that is in his house” (Col 4:15). The Apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Ephesians, highlighted the Father’s responsibility over their children. He states, “And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord” (Eph 6:4).

³⁶ Henri J M Nouwen and John S Mogabgab, *A Spirituality of Living: The Henri Nouwen Spirituality Series* (Nashville, TN: Upper Room Books, 2012), 12.

In this epistle we find spiritual advice to parents and specifically to fathers. The challenge is to educate children of with certain positive spiritual quality. Such results would be achieved only through a family- based spiritual nurturing program supervised by the father. As can be seen in the text how the father can become the agent of the sadness in the life of children. However, his responsibility is high, namely of raising children who have either a crooked toward God or are God – ward.

Following the principle of biblical headship Christenson explains that “the husband lies under the authority of Christ and is responsible to Christ for the leadership and care of the family. The wife lies under the authority of the husband, and is responsible to him for the way she orders the household and cares for the children. The children lie under the authority of both parents.”³⁷

Ellen G. White on Spirituality in Family Life

Ellen White advised and encouraged the Seventh-day Adventist church members the significance of being spiritual in family. Ellen White understood that “the system of education established in Eden centered in the family. Adam was “the son of God” (Luke 3:38), and it was from their Father that the children of the Highest received instruction. Theirs, in the truest sense, was a family school.”³⁸

True education started in the family that is why true spirituality begins in the family. The way the families may connect to God, communicate with the Lord daily, it brings the transformation in their heart. Ellen G. White recognized the place of the spiritual families when they experience to walk with God by prayer at the beginning and the end of the day. “Home religion is greatly needed, and our words in the home

³⁷ Larry Christenson, *The Christian Family* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers, 1980), 8.

³⁸ White, *The Adventist Home* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2001), 181.

should be of the right character, or our testimonies in the church will amount to nothing. Unless you manifest meekness, kindness, and courtesy in your home, your religion will be in vain. If there were more genuine home religion, there would be more power in the church.”³⁹ She equally pointed out the need for constant commune with God outside the family circle when she identified the spirituality of Enoch as having been the product of customary prayer. Ellen White encourages the families to walk and communion with God in their homes. “Brethren, pray at home, in your family, night and morning, pray earnestly in your closet, and while engaged in your daily labor, lift up the soul to God in prayer. It was thus that Enoch walked with God. The silent, fervent prayer of the soul will rise like holy incense to the throne of grace and will be as acceptable to God as if offered in the sanctuary.”⁴⁰

Spirituality in family life comes when people take time to communicate with God night and morning, pray earnestly in the families. Spirituality in family does not come randomly, it comes when people call the Holy Spirit to dwell among them.

³⁹ E G White, "*Messages to Young People*," 327, accessed May 10, 2020, <http://www.gilead.net/egw/books/misc/Messages to Young People/index.htm>.

⁴⁰ White, *The Adventist Home*, 213.

Spirituality in Family – God’s Plan

Ellen G. White emphasized on the spirituality in family as the center of the light in all society. Spirituality in family is needed in all kind of life. “Our homes need to be transformed and became spiritual home like little heaven.”⁴¹ God wishes that every home experience the love of God, the center of spiritual transformation, where families live together in harmony with the commandment of God and share that love with their neighbors.

God desires that heaven’s plan shall be carried out, and heaven’s divine order and harmony prevail, in every family, in every church, in every institution. Did this love leaven society, we should see the outworking of noble principles in Christian refinement and courtesy and in Christian charity toward the purchase of the blood of Christ. Spiritual transformation would be seen in all our families, in our institutions, in our churches. When this transformation takes place, these agencies will become instrumentalities by which God will impart heaven’s light to the world and thus, through divine discipline and training, fit men and women for the society of heaven.⁴²

Spirituality in family life is very crucial where unity, love, and all fruit of the Holy Spirit are observed. “The first work of Christians is to be united in the family. Then the work is to extend to their neighbors nigh and afar off. Those who have received light are to let the light shine forth in clear rays. Their words, fragrant with the love of Christ, are to be a savor of life unto life.”⁴³ Spirituality in a family's life is a blessing to the peoples because their word is filled with the salt and they are living in peace with others. They preach a good example to the neighbors and their children.

⁴¹ Ibid., 15.

⁴² Ibid., 535.

⁴³ Ibid., 37.

Spirituality in Family as a Center of Worship

The families who profess the love of God are called to make an altar to the Lord in their houses where the fathers and mothers need often lift up their hearts to God in humble supplication for themselves and their children also. In the family, the father is considered as a priest of the house, offer the daily sacrifice in the morning and evening, while the wife and children united in prayer and praise. The families who offer the daily sacrifice through bible study and prayer become strong spiritually. The worship through bible study, prayer, and confession of the sins in the families, God became the center of the family, and the families become strong in spirituality and they reflect that spirituality to their relatives and neighbors.

Being a spiritual family is important in the eyes of the Lord and to become a strong spiritual family who always is seating under the feet of the Master, Jesus Christ, and making a solid connection with the Lord. Establishing the center of worship in the families will make the households have strong communication with the Lord. The creator of the heavens and earth desires his people to make God the center of their houses daily. Making a strong relationship with the Lord in the families will transform and revive the households and become the center of worship where the families lift their praises to the Lord. The families who initiate the worship in their houses have the role to play to train spiritually, mentally, and socially their children and those who attend the daily house worship. During the worship, the father needs to sharpen his family and equip them so that the family becomes the instruments of the Lord. The Christians who make their houses as a center of worship, their children will grow as the servant of the Lord and their influence in the community and in the church will be seen because of their good behavior.

The parents must play their roles in the families, they must first be spiritual parents, and preach by example so that they can educate spiritually their children. In the book “*Advent Home*”, Ellen G. White said:

In view of responsibility that devolved upon parents, it should be carefully considered whether it is best to bring children into the family. Has the mother sufficient strength to care for her children? And can the father give such advantages as will nightly mold and educate the child? How little is the destiny of the child considered? The gratification of passion is the only thought, and burdens are brought upon the wife and mother which undermine her vitality and paralyze her spiritual power. In broken health and with discouraged spirits she finds herself surrounded by a little flock whom she cannot care for as she should. Lacking the instruction they should have, they grow up to dishonor God and communicate to others the evil of their own natures, and thus an army is raised up whom Satan manages as he pleases.⁴⁴

She continued to remind parents to work in harmony with their children. The parents are required together with their children and educate, train them spiritually, how they do a bible study, and pray for themselves.

Let not the mother gather herself so many cares that she cannot give time to the spiritual needs of her family. Let parents seek God for guidance in their work. On their knees before Him they will gain a true understanding of their great responsibilities, and there they can commit their children to one who will never err in counsel and instruction... The father of the family should not leave to the mother all the care of imparting spiritual instruction. A large work is to be done by fathers and mothers, and both should act their individual part in preparing their children for the grand review of the judgment.⁴⁵

The Spirituality in Families Shines Outside

Ellen G. White admired so much spirituality in family life, she stated that spiritual peoples are like the light, the salt, and fountain of life. Spiritual peoples made an evangelism without talking because of their characters. In the book of the Acts of the Apostles, Ellen G. White made this wonderful statement of being spiritual people.

From the beginning God has wrought through his people to bring blessing to the world. To the ancient Egyptian nation God made Joseph a fountain of life.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 162.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 321.

Through the integrity of Joseph the life of that whole people was preserved. Through Daniel God saved the life of all the wise men of Babylon. And these deliverances are as object lessons; they illustrate the spiritual blessings offered to the world through connection with the God whom Joseph and Daniel worshiped. Everyone in whose heart Christ abides, everyone who will show forth his love to the world, is a worker together with God for the blessing of humanity. As he receives from the Savior grace to impart to others, from his whole being flows forth the tide of spiritual life.⁴⁶

Spirituality in family life is always needed, their home is a symbol of a little heaven on the earth. They help others to experience a wonderful life in God. The spiritual peoples are the blessings to the church, and the communities at large. God intends the home to be the symbol of the home in heaven, where the parent is called to educate their children spiritually and mentally, and socially. The education received by showing a good example will enable the children to grow in the principles of true Christianity. As the church starts from the home, the leaders of the church need to encourage the church members to organize their home as a center of worship where the children will learn the truth of the bible and where they will gain a true education that will help them to shine everywhere.

Spirituality in Family Life in the Times of the End

An important role to consider is that relating to the place of spirituality in family life in the end of times. Ellen G. White saw a greater need for the spiritual family life in the end of times. She wrote, “God’s people have a responsibility to pray for a few more years of grace before end comes. There must be more spirituality, a deeper consecration to God, and a zeal in his work that has never yet been reached. Much time should be spent in prayer, that our garments of character may be washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb.”⁴⁷ The Christians know that this world is

⁴⁶ Ellen G White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2005), 13.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 275.

not their home that is why the parents have the task to train themselves spiritually before the end to come. The best time for every household to become a house of prayer and worship is now before the end of time.

At the end of the time, families, or peoples will not get time to be converted and become spiritual, we need to commune through prayer with our Lord Jesus Christ right now. People need to be revived and transformed now. Ellen G. White said:

We must be much in prayer if we would make progress in the divine life. When the message of truth was first proclaimed, how much we prayed. How often was the voice of intercession heard in the chamber, in the barn, in the orchard, or the grove? Frequently we spent hours in earnest prayer, two or three together claiming the promise; often the sound of weeping was heard and then the voice of thanksgiving and the song of praise. Now the day of God is nearer than when we first believed, and we should be more earnest, more zealous, and fervent than in those days. Our perils are greater now than then. Souls are more hardened. We need now to be imbued with the spirit of Christ, and we should not rest until we receive it.⁴⁸

This dying world needs a spiritual family who is committed to seeking the Lord with their heart in order to help others to come to the Living fountain of the blessing. God doesn't need those who pretend to be, He needs those who are ready to be transformed and revived and calling others to come to Jesus the Savior of the world who is going to come.

Spirituality does not come by sitting without seeking the Lord with our reformed and revived heart, we must look for it and live it. Family spirituality is the lived experience in Christian faith. "Christian spirituality is a self-transcending faith in which union with God in Jesus Christ through the Spirit expresses itself in service of the neighbor and participation in the realization of the reign of God in this world. For her Christian spirituality is necessarily biblical and is adequate only to the degree

⁴⁸ Ellen G White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Scotts Valley, CA: Createspace Independent Pub, 2011), 161,162.

that it is rooted in and informed by the Word of God.”⁴⁹ Spiritual families make the commitment to involve their children to follow Jesus Christ in their daily life as they meditate on His word and His righteousness. “As we meditate upon the perfections of the Savior we shall desire to be wholly transformed and renewed in the image of His purity.”⁵⁰ The word of God is the medium through which the Lord communicates with the individual’s human heart and is the real foundation of genuine spirituality.

Through the reading and meditating of the word of God, the homes of the family become spiritual. The families who seek the Lord with all the heart through earnest prayers should be full of tenderness and love in their homes. Being in the love of the Savior helps the families to be strong to the all temptation which the devil can try to bring to separate the families.

The spiritual life helps people to live in harmony with others, and it is healthy.

Ellen White said in her book, she states:

Many seem to begrudge moments spent in meditation, and the searching of the scriptures, and prayer, as though the time thus occupied was lost. I wish you could all view these things in the light God would have you for you would then make the kingdom of heaven of the first importance. To keep your heart in heaven will give vigor to all your graces, and put life into all your duties...As exercise increases the appetite, and gives strength and healthy vigor to the body, so will devotional exercises bring an increase of grace and spiritual vigor.⁵¹

Spirituality in family life talks more than the works. The life of spiritually healthy families influences others to live like them. The way they live is a longing by many families. “The Christian is a man of thought and practice. His faith fixes its

⁴⁹ Huub Welzen, “Contours of Biblical Spirituality as a Discipline,” *Acta Theologica* 31 (December 15, 2011): 47.

⁵⁰ Ellen G White, “*Steps to Christ*,” 88-89, accessed May 8, 2020, <https://m.egwwritings.org/en/book/108.332#332>.

⁵¹ Ellen G White, *God’s Amazing Grace* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2001), 295.

roots firmly in Christ. By faith and good works he keeps his spirituality strong and healthy, and his spiritual strength increases as he strives to work the works of God.”⁵²

⁵² Ellen G White, “*Welfare Ministry*” (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1952), 315.

Other Christian Authors on Spirituality in Family Life

The concept of spirituality in family life has taken up the attention of several authors. Having examined the Old Testament, New Testament, and the writings of Ellen G. White on spirituality in family life, it is suitable to examine other Christian authors and scholars on the subject.

Robert E. Webber in his book “The Divine embrace” defined spiritual life as a living into our commitment of baptism – dying to all that is sin and death, resuscitate through the new birth into the new life patterned by Jesus Christ. The spiritual life reflects the mystery of God revealed in His Son Jesus Christ and takes part in the purposes of God for humanity.”⁵³ The spirituality in family life is to stand firmly in God’s word, in obedience, in fidelity; it attends to pray earnestly, study God’s word, work for God’s glory; it is a passion to meet with God in daily life.

The spiritual life is nurtured by daily worship in praising the Almighty God, the Creator of the Heavens and Earth, in praying without ceasing as Henoah did, study the word of God, and share with others. “Spiritual practice leads the seeker towards the inner experience of Divinity that further one towards attaining the goal of life.”⁵⁴ As human beings need to eat food in order to grow physically, they also need to eat spiritual food in order to grow spiritually. “They aimed to enable and facilitate the worship of the assembly, not only their liturgical worship in the particular gathering in which they listened to the letter, but the ethical or moral worship of their everyday lives outside of the liturgical assembly.”⁵⁵ Family life worship as the center

⁵³ Webber, *The Divine Embrace*, 168.

⁵⁴ Branick, *The House Church in the Writings of Paul*, 38.

⁵⁵ John-Paul Heil, “*The Letters of Paul As Rituals of Worship*” (Havertown, UK: James Clarke Company, 2012), 1.

of nourishment of the people and children, all of them will grow maturely in God's word, and they will stand firm in their faith during in crisis.

The Christian worship as ascribing to God the glory that is properly his and delighting in encountering God. It also suggests that worship is a central characteristically human, and virtually universal activity. Worship, encountering God, for Christians is the pivotal and most important thing in human life, that which focuses and enriches the whole of life, the giving of meaning to existence, the purpose for which people were made.⁵⁶

Family becomes spiritual in their life when they take their time to study God's word, pray, and sing together. The family becomes spiritual when they reflect Jesus character to the surrounding communities, they witness what they believe.

J. H. Merle d'Aubigné, said that Family worship is the most ancient as well as the holiest of institutions. It is not an innovation against which people are readily prejudiced; it began with the world itself.⁵⁷

Family Worship yields Spiritual Growth, family worship is an indispensable instrument for instilling both old and young with a consciousness of the Lord, His Word, and our call to worship.

Clement of Alexandria (ca. 150-ca. 215), an illustrious doctor of the Church, near the beginning of the third century, advised Christian husbands and wives to make it a daily practice to pray and read the Bible together in the morning, and he added, "The mother is the glory of the children, and the wife is the glory of the husband; all are the glory of the wife, and God is the glory of them all."⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Duncan B Forrester, James Ian H McDonald, and Gian Tellini, *Encounter with God* (London, UK: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2004), 2.

⁵⁷ J H Merle d'Aubigne, *Family Worship* (Pensacola, FL: Still Waters Revival Books, 2001), 3.

⁵⁸.Ibid 5, 6

Barnes commenting on 1 Peter 3:7 points out that the spiritual family life is a must.⁵⁹ The Apostle is speaking of “dwelling with the wife” and of the right manner of treating her; and it is plainly supposed that united prayer would be one thing that would characterize their spiritual family life. Prayer in the family is a must, it helps families to continue to unite with the source of Christ.

Beverly LaHaye in her book “Spiritual Power for your Family emphasized also on spirituality of the family and encouraged families to worship and pray in their homes. Thus, family worship and prayer will come naturally.”⁶⁰

Family worship strengthens the families in their faith and it helps the families to have the experience on how to preach, to witness in soul winning. Family worship will help the families to experience God in their life, and the Holy Spirit will transform and revive the households and become the center of influence to convert the new believer.

Stephen R. Covey in his research “*The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Families*”, discussed a sub topic, “worshipping together”. He said that worshipping together is one of the major characteristics of healthy, happy families. It can create context, unit and shared understanding – much in the same way that a family mission statements does.”⁶¹

He then makes an important statement with regards to the impact of family worship. He states, “If you organize your family to spend even ten or fifteen minutes

⁵⁹ Albert Barnes, “*Barnes’ Notes*,” in Electronic Database, PC Study Bible by Bible soft, Inc 2006.

⁶⁰ Beverly LaHaye, *Spiritual Power for Your Family* (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 2005), 57.

⁶¹ Stephen R Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Families: Building a Beautiful Family Culture in a Turbulent World* (NY: Golden Books, 1998), 300.

a morning reading something that connects you with timeless principles, you will make better choices during the day – in the family, on the job, in every dimension of life.”⁶²

Wheeler and Cleveland emphasizes their point by pointing out that, “Family worship is also a good time to read from the Spirit of Prophecy. For younger children we can select passages from Conflict of Ages series, especially focusing on the narrative parts.”⁶³

Calvin writes, “And the simple meaning of the passage is, that Abraham is admitted to the counsel of God, because he would faithfully fulfill the office of a good householder, in instructing his own family.”⁶⁴

Westminster Confession of Faith states that, “God is to be worshiped everywhere, in spirit and truth; as in private families daily, and in secret, each one by himself; so more solemnly in the public assemblies, which are not carelessly or willfully to be neglected, or forsaken, when God, by His Word or providence calls there unto”⁶⁵

Jehovah is very concerned with generational covenant faithfulness. This faithfulness cannot be achieved through a mere externalism, but flows through the faithful spiritual instruction of the family. God places Abraham, and by implication all covenant heads, in the roll of a prophet. They are to teach “righteousness and justice” to their households. Covenant heads must instruct in “the righteousness which is by

⁶² Ibid, 301.

⁶³ Gerald Wheeler and Bill Cleveland, *Getting Ready to Meet Jesus: My Covenant* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1998), 20.

⁶⁴ John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Book of Genesis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1980), 481

⁶⁵ Jamin A Hubner, *The Saving Grace of God* (Charleston, SC: Book Surge LLC, 2005), 10.

faith” as well as covenant obedience to God’s law word as the fruit of saving faith. “Let God by His providence disposes of the affairs of my family, and by his grace dispose the affections of all in my family, according to his will to his own praise. Let me and mine be only, wholly, and forever His.”⁶⁶

Specialists in family therapy furnish insight into spiritual family life. Nancy Van Pelt discussing spiritual intimacy by a couple indicates that the closer the husband and wife draw to God; they will draw closer to each other also.”⁶⁷

Alexander in his book “Thoughts on family Worship”, states: “Your habitation will be safer, and its inmates more prosperous, by reason of God's answer to the petitions which you put up together. By a faithful observance of Family-Worship, you will be employing a daily mean towards the eternal salvation of your household.”⁶⁸ Spirituality in the families bring harmony among the families as they worship together God fulfills his promises to them. God lives with them in their happiness or in their sorrows. “Family-Worship has been shown to be a happy instrument for the promotion of piety in a household. A true Christian will desire that his children and dependents should be not merely safe, but eminently holy.”⁶⁹The spirituality in families helps people to experience and to use their spiritual gifts. As families having spiritual gifts will help them to grow spiritually and help others to grow spiritually as they share their testimonies. “Our spiritual life is improving when all of these

⁶⁶ Matthew Henry, “On Family Religion” in *The Complete Works of Matthew Henry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1979), 1:250.

⁶⁷ Nancy Van Pelt, *Heart to Heart* (Miami, FL: Inter-American Division Publishing Association, 1999), 120.

⁶⁸ James W Alexander, *Thoughts on Family Worship* (Morgan, PA: Soli Deo Gloria Publications, 1998), 236.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 238.

dimensions of a single fruit are present. Indeed, to have one dimension of the fruit without the others turns that fruit into a distortion.”⁷⁰

Spirituality in families is wanted in every aspect of the life. The spiritual families are the trainers of the families, the churches, and communities.

The Importance of Spirituality in Family Life

Every believing family should have daily devotional time in her house. It is amazing how some Christian families really take this seriously and practice this routinely. “It is the best guarantee to have Christian children with good moral standards that do not drift through the teen years, to have a family that has a witness for Christ in the community, and to have a family that takes the church seriously and enjoys going to all the services.”⁷¹

It is crucial to keep in mind the great command that the Almighty God gave to children of Israel.

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up (Deut. 6:4-7).

Spirituality in family life is first of all vertical and then horizontal and begins in the church family (house) and takes in the whole family (church at large). “To those who do pray, prayer is a most precious thing, for it is the channel by which priceless blessings come to them and the window through which their needs are supplied by a gracious God. To believers, prayer is the great means of soul

⁷⁰ Westerhoff, *Spiritual Life*, 9.

⁷¹ “Family Altar, Worship, Devotion, Bible Time - Christian Home and Family,” accessed March 26, 2020, <https://www.wholesomewords.org/family/famaltar.html>.

enrichment - it is the vessel that trades with heaven and comes home from the celestial country.”⁷²

Family spirituality is crucial in the communities and in the families, it improves communication, strengthens the harmonious family relationship, and promotes family intimacy by supporting family members and fostering family quality time. “Spiritual communities are valuable support for the spiritual journey...Spiritual communities provide guidance, structure, and encouragement. Many people find that being part of a spiritual community makes it easier to sustain their commitment to the spiritual journey.”⁷³ Family spirituality members expresses to the other family members by praying for them, family relationship and communication are improved. “The Masters of the families, who profess religion and the fear of God themselves, should, according to the talents they are entrusted with, maintain and keep up religion and the fear of God. In their families, as those who must give an account: and that families as such, should contribute to the support of Christian in a nation, whose honor and happiness it is to be a Christian nation.”⁷⁴

Spiritual family also emphasizes that all family members should grow together spiritually. “While parents serve as a spiritual motivator or mentor for family members, they prayed for each other and grew together.”⁷⁵ Spiritual family fosters positive thoughts and promotes an emotion of gratitude and recognizes a sense of

⁷² Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *The Power of Prayer in a Believer's Life* (Edmonds, WA: YWAM Publishing, 1993), 152.

⁷³ Robert C Atchley, *Spirituality and Aging* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 99.

⁷⁴ Matthew Henry, *A Church in the House* (Shawnee, KS: Gideon House Books, 2015), 3.

⁷⁵ Suk-sun Kim, Yeoun Soo Kim-godwin, and Harold G Koenig, “Family Spirituality and Family Health Among Korean-American Elderly Couples,” *Journal of Religion and Health* 55, no 2 (April 2016): 738.

inner peace which in turn improve family emotional well-being and satisfaction in life. “To be spiritual is to be growing in faith and love, led forward by the spirit of God. To be carnal is to be worldly and immature, ruled by self and the impulses of the flesh.”⁷⁶

Spirituality leads the family to positive reflection which promotes peace of mind. Family members can encourage each other to have a positive relationship with others, a good attitude, and changed thought into inner peace of mind. The families are called to establish their homes as an altar where the daily sacrifices of love, truth, forgiveness, holiness, and righteousness are the foundations where the presence of God and his blessing are always manifested. Spirituality helps the family to have a positive behavior, although facing a lot of challenges and troubles. It helps families to avoid bad habits and develop new healthy positive habits.

It encourages them to give up previous unhealthy style habits, such as smoking and drinking alcohol and provides for them a time to teach them healthy life choices such as eating healthy foods and exercising regularly, which leads them to better physical health. “Spiritual family experienced healing through intercessory prayers. Their personal healing experiences fostered their faith in God. Their illness experiences provided them spiritual awakening, deepening their faith and overcoming their fear to death.”⁷⁷

Spiritual family worships and honors God as a family; they study daily the word of God and internalize it in their life; they develop the faith in their families, and bring God’s confidence in the family, learn to witness to the others, and their home

⁷⁶ Andrew Murray, *The Spiritual Life: The Presence of Jesus through the Holy Spirit* (Fort Washington, PA: CLC Publications, 2008), 20.

⁷⁷ Kim, Kim-Godwin, and Koenig, “Family Spirituality and Family Health Among Korean-American Elderly Couples,” 741.

will be a little heaven where in their home will find “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and Temperance.” (Gal 5: 22 – 23)

As the spiritual family is playing an important role in their houses, churches, and communities but Satan doesn’t like them.

A spiritual family, which Satan dislike’s tight family, Satan especially dislike spiritual families, because Satan is an enemy of love, and we know that love is God Almighty, God represent unconditional love, because unconditional love is spiritual, God love is spiritual, unconditional love is power and might, the ability to get job done. So, Satan tries to disrupt the family household and destroy family values, because Satan mission is to steal, kill and destroy families’ morals, principles and values, to create havoc and destruction over families...⁷⁸

During the time of conflict, the spiritual families can be the blessing to the communities by calling them to make the right choice. “A Christian family would also choose loyalty to God in the midst of conflicting values. For instance, in the midst of a corrupt society and gross unfaithfulness, Joshua and his family chose to be loyal to God. They chose not to be swayed by the popular and common, but to be loyal to God (Josh 24:15).”⁷⁹

In conclusion, spirituality in family, parents reflect the character of Jesus Christ in their home, communities. “If the Lord is building a strong spiritual family, then the husband is like a watchman. He regularly and consistently walks the walls of his family to make sure the evil one's insidious, pernicious plans are not successful.”⁸⁰

The Biblical teaching regarding family spirituality highlights the initiative of God in establishing a relationship with humanity and provides multiple examples of how family can grow spiritually until “we all come to the unity of faith and of the

⁷⁸ Roosevelt Jackson, *Spiritual Interpretations* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2014), 198.

⁷⁹ Oliver, *Adventist Families*, 32.

⁸⁰ David Chadwick, *Eight Great Ways to Honor Your Wife* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2016), 118.

knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph 4:13). Therefore, a spiritual family is one that has been converted to God, accepting from him new life; who seeks to lie continuously in the presence of God; who is grateful for his gift; who loves truth, justice, and service; who is nurtured by spiritual disciplines; and who is humbly mindful of his/her weakness and ignorance (Mic 6:8; Matt 25:35,36). “It is not necessary to retire to be a monastery to lead a spiritual life. We can escape from our inherent longings or postpone our utmost needs. In addition to the primitive urges for food, sex, sleep, and self-presentation, there is a higher urge to merge with God. We cannot be at peace unless that inherent divine urge is fulfilled.”⁸¹

Family spirituality in terms of walking with God involves being in a relationship with God as were Enoch and Noah (Gen 5:22; 6:9).

Conversing with him, believing in and actively seeking his companionship in all the valleys, mountains and plateaus of life. We do not have to go anywhere special or do anything exceptional to seek God. He is seeking us through His Holy Spirit, and we are responding to His low continuously drawing us. We respond to Him in faith (Heb.11:6), by talking with Him as a friend (John 15:15) in formal and informal prayer, reading and meditating on His word as did David (Ps 119:97), confessing our sins and accepting His cleansing (Ps 51), praising Him (Ps 146:2), and assembling with His people (Matt 18:20; Heb 10:25); and serving God with His humanity (Jas 1:27; 2 Pet 2:11, 12; John 3:16-19).⁸²

Spirituality in the family life comes when families implore the Holy Spirit to lead them in their daily life, renounce their selfishness, repent their sins, take time to read and meditate on God’s word and pray earnestly. Spirituality in family life requires total surrender to God for the families.

⁸¹ Rama, *The Essence of Spiritual Life*, 13.

⁸² Andrews University “A Statement on Biblical Spirituality” ,accessed May 8, 2020, https://www.andrews.edu/sem/sdats_bibspir.pdf.

Chapter Summary

The chapter first endeavored to establish from Scriptures the central of the spirituality in the Christian home. Both the Old and New Testaments were carefully survey to bring out not only the biblical insistence but also the consistence on the subject matter. Additionally, several sections of literature were surveyed to examine the dynamics of the understanding of family spirituality throughout the post-apostolic centuries to date.

The review of literature then narrowed down to the Seventh-day Adventist Church by examining more closely what the Spirit of Prophecy (i.e., the writings of Ellen G. White) advocates and counsels on the family's spiritual growth. The overall analysis of the literature coupled with the fundamental principles as gleaned from the Bible served as the basis for the formulation of the field research survey questionnaire.

CHAPTER 3

DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL SETTING

Description of the Republic of Burundi

Known as the heart of Africa, Burundi is a landlocked country in East-Central Africa. Formerly known as Urundi, it had, for many years, been a part of German East Africa, then after World War I, part of the Belgian protectorate called Rwanda – Urundi. The East-Central African Republic, independent since July 1st, 1962. In 1966 the Kingdom was overflown by the republic of Burundi. It has two capital cities politically and economically, Gitega is a political city while Bujumbura is an economical city. The ruling king at the time the independence was granted was King Mwambutsa IV. Two official languages are used Kirundi and French, the diplomatic language.

Burundi is mountainous, and agriculture is the major occupation of the people. Burundi is divided into 18 provinces (the provinces are named after their capital): Bubanza, Bujumbura Mairie (City of Bujumbura), Bujumbura Rural, Bururi, Cankuzo, Cibitoke, Gitega, Karuzi, Kayanza, Kirundo, Makamba, Muramvya, Muyinga, Mwaro, Ngozi, Rumonge, Rutana, and Ruyigi.

Geographical Situation

Burundi has been referred to as the heart of Africa for two fundamental reasons. On the one hand, its geographical map looks more or less like a human heart. On the other hand, taking into consideration the distances separating Burundi and four African ports this designation is reasonably vindicated. There are 3800 km from

Burundi to the Northern port of Alexandria in Egypt, 3500 km from Burundi to the Southern port of Cape, 2200 km from Burundi to the Western port of Matadi in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and 1200 km from Burundi to the Eastern port of Dar-es-Salam in Tanzania. As a result of its smallness, landlockedness, and absence of abundant natural resources, Burundi was not very attractive to European explorers, missionaries, and colonialists.

However, its geographical situation, having the great Belgian Congo in the West and Tanganyika in both the East and the South compelled Europeans to enter this small land at the heart of Africa whose celebrity abroad derived mainly from its political leaders and Lake Tanganyika whose immensity and famousness attracted the first explorers who entered Central Africa. “The neighboring Rwanda, which lies in the North of Burundi, is often well - respected as its twin brother.”¹ Burundi and Rwanda have some similarities, like the tribes which composing those countries, all of them have three tribes (Tutsi, Hutu, and Twa) which are the same. Their languages are Kirundi and Kinyarwanda which also are almost the same, they don't need translation when the citizen is talking to each other. Their cultures are almost the same also.

“Burundi, a tropical country located at the South of the equator and situated between 2°30 and 4°28 of South latitude and between 28°50 and 30°54 of East longitude is dominated by three geographical subdivisions. First of all, Imbo, the lowest region (about 1100 m) of the country comprising the Rusizi plain and a corridor of small plains on the Eastern part of Lake Tanganyika. Then, a chain of mountains from the North to the South with an altitude above 2000 meters, mount

¹ This is due to the fact that Burundi and Rwanda are nearly equal in size, Burundi being bigger only with a difference of nearly 1500 square kilometers, their inhabitants speak the same language, and they have both three ethnic groups namely Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa.

Heha being the highest peak with 2670 meters. Next, a region of plateaus whose altitude varies between 1500 and 2000 meters dominate central Burundi. Finally, the more someone moves toward the East, the altitude decreases until reaching the huge depressions of the East and the North-east.”²

Economic Situation

The mainstay of the economy of Burundi country is agriculture, with industrial activities accounting for less than one fourth of gross domestic product. Burundi country depends on coffee production which is the principal export crop and source of foreign exchange. Cash crops of lesser importance include cotton and tea. “By the late 1993s, more than three-fifths of the country’s population were living in poverty, a result of civil strife and the ravages of war, the predominance of traditional subsistence agriculture, the persistence of low-income levels, chronic deficits in the balance of trade, and heavy dependence on foreign aid.”³

Approximately half of Burundi’s land area is considered cultivable land, and about one-third is suitable for pasture. Staple food crops include beans, corn (maize), cassava (manioc), and sorghum. Arabica coffee traditionally has been a major commodity for Burundi. “The production of coffee dropped by about half in the 1993s because of civil strife but has since rebounded. Tea and sugar are also major export crops. Large areas of cotton are cultivated, mainly in the Imbo valley; however, cotton output has decreased to less than half the production levels of the early 1993s.”⁴

²Gaetan Feltz, “Gahama (Joseph): Le Burundi sous administration belge,” *Outre-Mers Revue d’histoire* 73, no 271 (1986): 13.

³Encyclopedia Britannica, “Burundi | History, Geography, & Culture,” accessed May 24, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Burundi>.

⁴Ibid.

Although the density of livestock results in overgrazing, the commercial value of livestock production is virtually nil. By the early 21st century, Burundi's forested area had shrunk to less than 3 percent of the total land area in spite of reforestation efforts. Lake Tanganyika and the smaller lakes and rivers of the interior are rich sources of tilapia and other fish. "Burundi faces several underlying weaknesses – low governmental capacity, corruption, a high poverty rate, poor educational levels, a weak legal system, a poor transportation network, and overburdened utilities – that have prevented the implementation of planned economic reforms. The purchasing power of most Burundians has decreased as wage increases have not kept pace with inflation, which reached approximately 18% in 2017."⁵

Country Population

Burundi country is a very densely populated country with 12,044,164 peoples."⁶ Burundi is largest populated country in Sub-Sahara countries. "The country is a landlocked nation in East-central Africa between Rwanda and Tanzania, and covers 10,747 square miles (27,834 square kilometers), giving it a population density of 1076.6 people per square mile (41.6 people per square kilometer), which ranks 14th in the world."⁷In Burundi, only 14% of the population live in urban areas, and with such a small percentage it makes sense that there aren't many large cities in the country. The largest by far is the capital city of Bujumbura with a population of roughly 1,092,859 with a density of 8,506/km² (22,030/sq mi). The city is located on

⁵ "Burundi Economy Profile 2019," 1, accessed May 24, 2020, https://www.indexmundi.com/burundi/economy_profile.html.

⁶ "SR247.Pdf," n.d., 5, accessed May 24, 2020, <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/SR247/SR247.pdf>.

⁷ "Burundi Population 2020 (Demographics, Maps, Graphs)," 2, accessed May 24, 2020, <https://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/burundi-population/>.

the eastern shore of the country and serves as Burundi's largest port. The next largest city is Gitega with a population of just over 900,000 with a density of 510/km² (1,300/sq mi). Official languages are Kirundi and French but the Swahili language is used as a commercial language because of the neighborhood of the Republic of Democratic of Congo and Tanzania.

Religion

Before the arrival of European missionaries in Burundi during the second half of the 19th century, all Burundians adhered to a common system of religious belief. In fact, they held a belief in a God called “Imana” whom they considered to be creator and provider in addition to many other attributes such as his goodness and power, among others. This belief permeated all aspects of life as it can be observed in the names that they gave to their children. It is unmistakably that missionaries realized similarities between this “Burundian God” and the Christian God that they maintained the name Imana for God after unsuccessfully trying to introduce “Mungu”, a Swahili word for God, in Burundi.⁸

As early as 1879 the White Fathers attempted to establish their mission stations in Burundi. It is reported that four attempts failed in 1879, 1884, 1891, and 1896, respectively, before launching a successful mission at Mugeru on May 25, 1898.⁹

Roman Catholic mission had problems with the German colonial rule since the latter favored Protestant missions. However, a great change took place in 1916 with the arrival of Belgians in Burundi who favored Roman Catholics. Combined

⁸ Donald Hohensee, *Church Growth in Burundi* (South Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1977), 27–35.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 36- 37.

with other factors, “the membership of the Roman Catholic Church in Burundi grew from 6922 in 1916 to 1,517,817 in 1962 when Burundi became independent.”¹⁰

“It was in 1911 that German Protestant missionaries entered Burundi. However, their mission was cut short by the First World War which pushed Germans out of Burundi in 1916. Towards the late 1920s and early 1930s, Protestants established mission stations on the sites of former German missionaries at Kibimba, Musema, and Muyebe.”¹¹

Seventh-day Adventists were the first protestant missionaries to enter Burundi after the First World War. At this time, there were traditional believers, Roman Catholics who were about 20,379 and Muslims who were less than 5,000.”¹²

In conclusion, the King of Burundi divided the country to the Missionaries like this: North-West was given to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, South: Anglican and Pentecostal Churches, Central: Catholic Church and East: Methodist Church.

The motives behind that subdivision were because kings, being animists they didn't want to compromise their kingly practices that were centered on animism and fetishism, so he found the Roman Catholics easy to accommodate their practices. But officially they explained that they wanted missionaries to civilize each corner of the country and not to concentrate in one common area. And the kings were from Central, they had their capital residence there.

¹⁰ David Newbury, “Review of *Le Burundi Sous Administration Belge, L'Abre-Mémoire: Traditions Orales Du Burundi*,” *Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue Canadienne des Études Africaines* 21, no 1 (1987): 57–60.

¹¹ Donald Hohensee, *Church Growth in Burundi* (South Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1977), 37.

¹² Joseph Gahama, *Le Burundi*, 219-39.

Normally the regions that were given to the Seventh-Day Adventist Church were highly populated with wild animals and they were endemic in malaria and scabies, just to name but a few.

Description of Seventh-day Adventist Church in Burundi

Through the work of the missionary named David Delhove, Seventh-day Adventist pioneer entered the territory of Burundi in 1925. It was the first protestant mission to enter this country after the First World War although Roman Catholic missionaries had been there since the late 19th century. “When the Congo-Rwanda-Burundi union was divided into two unions, after Congo independence on June, 30th 1960. Rwanda and Burundi remained one entity, then Congo had its own union located at Lubumbashi, while the headquarters of the Central Africa Union Mission were in Bujumbura, Burundi, that was Rwanda and Burundi together under the leadership of a missionary of the name of Roy Vail, who was after sometime replaced by Philip Werner. Ndora Station, which later on became officially a field, had been inaugurated in 1960, was split into two. One remained there at Ndora (West Burundi Field) while the other was located in Gitega (East Burundi Field).”¹³

Burundi Seventh-day Adventist Association belonged to Trans-Africa Division till 1980 when it shifted to West Africa Indian Ocean Division. “Three years later, in 1983, Burundi and Rwanda became two different entities due to the threat of the Government of the second republic of Burundi to the church from 1982. However, Rwanda remained a Union and Burundi held a name of Burundi Seventh-day Adventist Association with two fields, with the headquarters at Ndora, and another

¹³ David Barute and Uzziel Baranyizigiye, Retirees of North-West Burundi Field, interview by the author, Bujumbura, 18 July 2018.

headquarters in Gitega.”¹⁴ In 2000, Burundi Association of Seventh-day Adventist Church shifted from West Africa Indian Ocean Division to East Central Africa Division with Headquarter Nairobi – Kenya. Burundi Union Mission organized in March 3rd, 2012 as Union Mission by East Central Africa Division, and it has four fields: North-West Burundi Field located at Buganda-Cibitoke, South – West Burundi Field located in Economical capital city of Bujumbura, North Burundi Field located in Ngozi, and East Burundi Field located in Gitega, political capital city of Burundi.

This time, Seventh-day Adventist church is almost present and know in all territory of Burundi through the tremendous work of the Radio Agakiza, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), and through evangelistically campaign for total member’s involvement. According to the statistics report for 2018, “the Seventh – day Adventist church claims to have a membership that is estimated to be around 185,896”¹⁵ baptized believers through the whole territory of Burundi with four organized fields; which gives a ratio of 1/65.

Background of Jabe Seventh-day Adventist Church

Jabe Seventh-day Adventist Church is locating in the Bwiza commune of Bujumbura Capital City. As the SDA Church started in Burundi in 1925 by a Missionary named David Delhove at Buganda in Cibitoke. Adventist message came to Bujumbura in 1959 by the Rwandan families who fled from Rwanda. “When those families who fled from Rwanda reached to Bujumbura Capital, they found no Seventh-day Adventist Church around the Capital. Many of them who fled Rwanda

¹⁴ Uzziel Habingabwa and Samuel Ngendahimana, Retirees of South-West Burundi Field, interview by the author, Bujumbura, 20 July, 2018.

¹⁵ “Adventist Statistics - East-Central Africa Division,” accessed May 24, 2020, http://www.adventiststatistics.org/view_Summary.asp?FieldID=D_ECD.

country were stayed at Ngagara ward, among them who fled were the members of Seventh-day Adventist Church and they started to worship from their homes.”¹⁶

Every Sabbath, those families gathered together and invited their neighbors to come to worship with them. After that, they started to think to buy a plot where they can build their own church. After one year, they asked permission to the local government to congregate in one of the buildings of the commune calls “Permanence” where they were not comfortable because that office was used for other purposes, local leaders gave those families few hours for worship from there.

Those families didn’t know that even the local church was unknown in Bujumbura city but the headquarters of the Seventh-day Adventist Church which it served for Burundi, and Rwanda was there in Bujumbura, at Kiriri Ward. Those families went to meet the leaders of the church, and after the meeting, the leaders requested them to come to every Sabbath to worship from the headquarters of the church. As they were worshipping from there, the church grew up, and the numbers of the church members could not fit in that small room where they used for worship, they thought to buy a plot and found the plot at Jabe quarter. They collected the funds for the church building and building finished in 1961 and started worship from their own Church building. Jabe Seventh-day Adventist Church is the first Church in the Capital city among the protestant churches.

The church members continued to preach the three Angels messages and they opened other churches in Kamenge quarter in 1962. Today, in Bujumbura Capital city, Seventh-day Adventist Church has more than 20 Churches.

¹⁶ Ephraim Gasamunyika, Retiree in Kigali Rwanda, interview by the researcher, Kigali, 28 June 2020.

Survey on Spirituality in family life in the Jabe Seventh-day Adventist Church

Research Approach

As it was mentioned earlier, this section of research employed a quantitative approach using a survey; the instrument that was used for this research consisted of two major sections, namely biographic information and research questions. Research questions were 16 and mainly intended to collect data about the dynamics of spirituality in the family with particular references to the family (morning and evening) devotions, bible study, Sabbath school, personal daily prayer, and witnessing.

Research Population and Sample Size

The population for this research was the family members of the Jabe Seventh-day Adventist church who are baptized and at least 18 years old. As at the time of data collection, the current records of the Church contained 500 baptized members, including those in transit (members to be removed or added to the register). Among all those members, only a few were below 18 years of age. The study determined to use 100 church members of age 18 and older, representing at least 20% of the population.

Sampling Techniques

The technique that was used to collect data is known as Convenience Sampling, which is “a type of nonprobability or nonrandom sampling where members of the target population that meet certain practical criteria, such as easy accessibility,

geographical proximity, availability at a given time, or the willingness to participate are included for the purpose of the study”¹⁷

Data Collection Procedure

Due to the circumstances beyond my control, I could not be on the ground to participate in data collection. Notwithstanding that challenge, after designing the survey questionnaire and clearly describing the procedure for data collection, I selected a research assistant by the name of Celestin Ngarukiwenayo as to help me administer the questionnaire.

Prior to data collection, I had several discussions with him to be ensure that he understood the procedure. Data collection procedure that I wanted to use and this was the procedure to be used for the data collection and during the procedure. Having sought official permission from Church leaders, an announcement was made in the Church at Sabbath worship concerning the upcoming collection of data in the various homes that would be willing to share their data. The assistant had to visit the homes of all families willing to participate in the study. He had to explain to them how they would fill the questionnaire. He took time to explain the intention of the research until they understood clearly.

I also interacted with the research assistant, as he was telling me how many questionnaires have so far been filled and the plan to get the remaining also filled. After the first collection. It is worth noting that after perusing the data from the first phase of collection, and noticing that many were not adequately filled, a second phase was embarked upon to enable us get the minimum sample size.

¹⁷ Ilker Etikan, I et al., *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 1

Highlights on the Dataset and Demographic Findings

The size of the sample for this study was 100 baptized individuals aged 18 and above. Female and male respondents represented 33.7% and 66.3% of the sample, respectively. Out of the one hundred questionnaires distributed, 83 were found useful, as the rest were not adequately filled out.

Multiple imputation¹⁸ was used to analyze the pattern of the missing values in the dataset. This revealed that out of the 3403 data expected from the 83 questionnaires, 2,759 (i.e., 81.08%) were adequately provided by the respondents. The pattern analysis showed that over 80% of the missing values related to demographic variables, while about 10% related to one research variable, namely, hindrances to mid-week prayer attendance. In the whole dataset, this variable displayed the least number of responses.

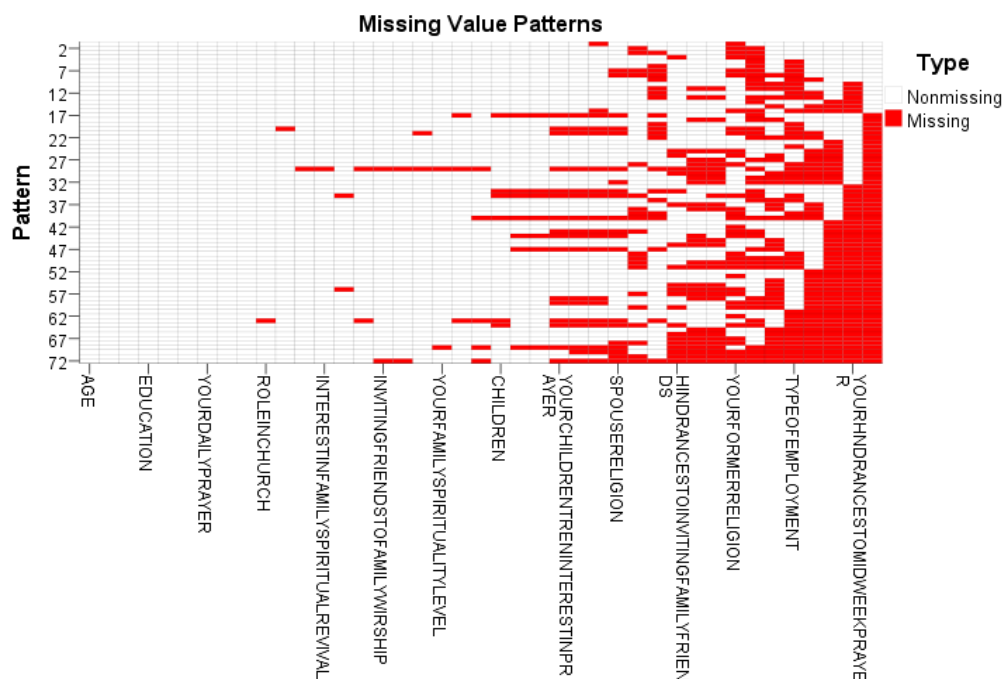


Figure 1. Missing Value Patterns

¹⁸ Statistics solutions, "Multiple Imputations for Missing Data," accessed May 12, 2021, <https://www.statisticssolutions.com/multiple-imputation-for-missing-data/>

As shown in tables 1, the Jabe SDA Church is quite a learned congregation with over 70% having, at least, completed secondary school. This may not be surprising, because the Church is situated in the heart of the capital city where education is not only most available but also most valued, as compared to the typical rural areas of the country where literacy rate would be much lower.

Table 1. Educational Background of the Respondents

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Elementary	21	25.3
Secondary	26	31.3
Tertiary	36	43.4
Total	83	100.0

Occupation wise as shown in table 2, the Church seems to be dominated by traders (32.5%) and employees (32.5%). And this is arguably in tandem with the educational background described earlier. But there are also farmers in the church who are most involved in vegetable and poultry production which are easily carried out within or in the peripheries of the City.

Table 2. Occupational Background of the Respondents

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Farmer	13	15.7
Trader	27	32.5
Employee	27	32.5
None	16	19.3
Total	83	100.0

The information in table 3 reveals that over 50% of the families in the sample have between 1 and 4 children. However, it is worth noting that as many as 21.7% of the families have between 5 and 8 children. Such families would arguably constitute sizable Bible study groups which can easily grow into “home churches,” especially if spiritual revival is successfully carried out in the church.

Table 3. Family Size of the Respondents

	Frequency	Valid Percent
No Children	13	16.9
1-2 Children	20	26.0
3-4 Children	25	32.5
5-6 Children	15	3.9
7-8 Children	3	1.3
9 or more Children	1	100.0
Total	77	

It was also observed (see table 4 below) that as many as 74.1% of the respondents (obviously mostly parents) have been baptized at least 11 years ago. This is quite interesting in that such a ‘grown’ church would be expected to know better and consequently cherish the importance of family spirituality, which grows through regular involvement in religious and spiritual exercises.

Table 4. Baptismal Age of the Respondents

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Less than 5 years	6	7.4
5-10 years	15	18.5
11-15 years	11	13.6
16-20 years	20	24.7
Over 20 years	29	35.8
Total	81	100.0

The congregation also seemed, as shown in table 5 below, to be made of the same number of people born in the church (47.0%) and those converted to the Church (53.0%). Majority (57.8%) of the converts came from the Catholic Church, 17.8% from the Protestant Church, 11.1% from Pentecostal Churches, 6.7% from the Methodist Church, while the remaining 6.6% came (2.2%) from the charismatic Church, Islam, and ATR. The large percentage (45.8%) displayed in the table as *Missing System* is most likely implying that those respondents were actually born in the SDA Church and, therefore have no former religious background.

Table 5. Former Religious Background of the Respondents

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Catholic	26	31.3
Protestant	8	9.6
Methodist	3	3.6
Charismatic	1	1.2
Pentecostal	5	6.0
Muslim	1	1.2
ATR	1	1.2
Missing System*	38	45.8
Total	83	100.0

*Missing system here means that the respondents were born in SDA Church.

It is finally worth noting that majority (95.2%) of respondent had their spouses being members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Pertinent Observations Related to Family Spirituality

While over 90.3% of the families held evening devotion, only 9.7% held morning devotion. Concerning personal daily prayer, 68.3% said they pray three to four times a day. With regard to the study of the Sabbath School lesson, 44.1% affirmed that their hindrance to studying was that they had no interest in it. A large

number (47.1%) of respondents reported family problems as the main hindrance to their children's interest in family prayer meetings. The same hindrance was reported (59.3%) on other people living in the family concerning their interest in family prayer meetings.

Family problems were also reported as the number-one hindrance to not only sharing the family's spiritual plans with fellow believers (42.9%), but also sharing faith with neighbors (24.5%). Though many (51.2%) respondents subscribed to undefined hindrances to their not studying the Spirit of Prophecy books, 22.0% mentioned the lack of the said books as the main hindrance, while 17.1% mentioned their work as the main hindrance. Finally, it is worth noting that most (98.8%) of the respondents were eager and looking forward for a revival program toward their families' spirituality.

Significant Bivariate Correlations Relevant to Family Spirituality

In order to better understand the relationships between the various variables understudy, bivariate correlation was conducted and the Pearson r values carefully examined. Below are the correlations that were found significant and relevant for the understanding of the spiritual dynamics of the Jabe Seventh-day Adventist Church families.

It was interesting to note that the number of years in church after baptism (Q_{yb}) correlated negatively with the hindrances to sharing their faith with neighbors ($r = -.529^{**}$), family prayer schedule ($r = -.250^*$), and the other people in the family getting interest family prayer ($r = -.311^{**}$). This could mean that the more the members grow old in the Church, the more irregular their family prayer pattern, and the less the impact of the hindrances to sharing their faith.

It was also observed that the hindrances to sharing of faith positively significantly correlated with Children's participation in Church activities ($r = .369^*$), children's participation in church activities ($r = .472^{**}$) personal daily prayer ($r = .469^{**}$), children's interest in family prayer meeting ($r = .472^{**}$), and other people in the family getting interest in family prayer meeting ($r = .395^{**}$). Family prayer schedule was also found positively significantly correlated with children's participation in church activities ($r = .320^{**}$), personal daily prayer ($r = -.437^{**}$), children's interest in family prayer meetings ($r = .380^{**}$), interest in family prayer meetings by other people living with the family ($r = .679^{**}$), and attendance of mid-week prayer ($r = .230^{**}$).

Table 6. Pearson's Correlation Coefficients for Significantly Related Variables

	Q _{yb}	Q _{fs}	Q _{ps}	Q _{cp}	Q _{pp}	Q _{ci}	Q _{op}	Q _{mw}
Q _{yb}	--							
Q _{fs}	-.529**							
Q _{ps}	-.250*	.369*						
Q _{cp}	-.230	.472**	.320**					
Q _{pp}	-.137	.469**	.437**	.336**				
Q _{ci}	-.230	.472**	.380**	.773**	.336**			
Q _{op}	-.311**	.395**	.679**	.555**	.426**	.555**		
Q _{mw}	-.084	.173	.230*	.350**	.251*	.350**	.344**	--

Notes:

Q_{yb}: number of years in church after baptism; Q_{fs}: hindrances to sharing of faith; Q_{ps}: family prayer schedule; Q_{cp}: children's participation in church activities; Q_{pp}: personal daily prayer; Q_{ci}: children's interest in family prayer meetings; Q_{op}: other people in the family getting interest in family prayer meeting; Q_{mw}: attendance to mid-week prayer meetings;

*: correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tail)

** : correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

This shows that there is a direct and positive relationship between the strength of the family spiritual exercises and its witnessing endeavors. In the same way, children's participation in church activities was found positively significantly correlated with personal daily prayer ($r = .336^{**}$), children's interest in family prayer

meetings ($r = .773^{**}$), interest in family prayer meetings by other people living with the family ($r = .555^{**}$), and attendance of mid-week prayer ($r = -.350^{**}$). Personal daily prayer was further found positively significantly correlated with children's interest in family prayer meetings ($r = .336^{**}$), interest in family prayer meetings by other people living with the family ($r = .426^{**}$), and attendance of mid-week prayer meetings ($r = .251^*$).

Children's interest in family prayer meetings was further found positively significantly correlated with the interest in family meetings by other people living with the family ($r = .555^{**}$) and attendance to prayer meetings ($r = .350^{**}$). Finally, attendance to prayer meetings was found to be positively significantly correlated with interest in family prayer meetings by other people living with the family ($r = .344^{**}$).

Looking carefully at the various correlations as described above, it is very obvious that the prayer (or worship) schedule for the family is central to all other factors that contribute to the spirituality of the family. Apparently, there is the likelihood that if family endeavor to work out a prayer schedule and ensure to implement it consistently, a lot of challenges observed in the spirituality of the family will be overcome. This is why the proposed intervention program as described in the ensuing section centers on helping families to get themselves organized for regular and consistent spiritual meetings at home.

In conclusion, the third chapter talks about the background of the Jabe Seventh-day Adventist church in its larger and immediate context.

Chapter Summary

This chapter aimed at collecting, analyzing and interpreting data on the Jabe SDA Church. The first set of data was gathered through literature review on the geographical location, economic activities, country population dynamics, religious

groups, and on the history of the SDA Church in the country, as well as the history of the Jabe SDA church.

Specific data on the Jabe SDA church families were gathered through a survey. Precisely, convenient sampling was used to determine the sample. The population for the study consisted of all Church members aged 18 and older. Convenience sampling technique was used to get the sample. Respondents were gathered in the Jabe church building for data collection. Multiple imputation technique in SPSS was used to examine the missing data thereby evaluating the adequacy of the data collected.

Descriptive statistics (frequencies) were used to present the data collected. Bivariate-correlations technique was used to analyze the relationships between the variables were presumed to have significant impact on family spirituality.

Findings from the research revealed the key challenges to family spirituality, most especially family problems, lack of family prayer schedule, lack of interest in Bible study, and poor attendance to mid-week prayer meetings. These constituted the backbone of the intervention program that was designed to help the Jabe SDA church families to improve their spirituality.

CHAPTER 4

INTERVENTION PROGRAM: PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

True and effective spirituality is first evidenced and experienced in the home before it can radiate to the Church family and finally to the larger community. Whenever spirituality is weak in the family, the church as well as the community are proportionally and negatively affected. The main observations reported from the findings of the recent study show that spirituality in the families of the Jabe Seventh-day Adventist Church is challenged with several weaknesses including inadequate frequency and poor timing of spiritual meetings, poor attendance to church prayer meetings, inadequate spiritual fellowship and readiness to share faith, and inadequate study. In order to initiate improvement in family spirituality, certain key elements were considered in designing a befitting program. They include program design, preparation, implementation, and evaluation.

Program Design

An intervention program design was built on four main sections, namely (1) meeting with entire Church to share the findings of the research, (2) presentation of Bible lectures and interactive sessions for a week-long revival program centered on family spirituality, (3) organize a forum for testimonies on the impact of the intervention program on family spirituality, and (4) follow-up on families that expressed the need for special assistance.

During the interactive sessions of the week of spiritual revival, each family was encouraged to discuss how they could embark on total surrender to Jesus through regular morning and evening devotions, the study of the Sabbath school lessons, family and personal prayer schedules, family members going together to attend Wednesday prayer meetings, and reading the Spirit of Prophecy Books.

In the course of the weeks, families that either requested visits or were found in great need of assistance were visited to ensure that they regularly attended the program and benefited from it. Prayer sessions were also held immediately after the seminar presentations in order to attend to individual and family challenges that were reported to be hindering them from enjoying spiritual growth in their homes. The main prayer points revolved around (a) unity, (b) mutual respect, (c) healthy communication, (d) transparency, (e) time management, and (f) family witnessing plan.

Program Preparation, Scheduling, and Implementation

Based on the above program design, the leadership of the Church was contacted and presented with the proposed date, daily topics and related materials (presentations), and implementation as well as follow-up schedule that detailed the specific involvement of the main speaker, the visitation teams, as well as the families attending the program. Church leaders approved October 31 to November 7, 2020 as the date for the program. The following were the specific topics for the weeklong program that were also presented to the church leaders for perusal and approval:

1. Steps to family spiritual revival (Josh. 24: 15)
2. The Family Rooted in the Lord (Eph. 3: 16)
3. God hear, forgives, and heals (2 Chr. 7: 14)

4. The characteristics of a spiritually healthy family (Gal. 5: 22-24)
5. Faith makes us humble (Luke 7: 1-10)
6. Prayer life (Daniel 6: 10)
7. Abiding in Jesus Christ (John 15: 4)
8. The visitation of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1: 4-2:1)

As it can be deduced from the topics, the revival program intentionally aimed at leading the families to realizing their spiritual condition, deciding to make God first, and carry out their decision through regular and well-planned daily spiritual exercises. From the very first day of the presentation, the speaker—the same person who administered the questionnaire to the families—called upon family leaders to embrace the spirit of Joshua by enlisting their respective families into the ranks of true worshipers of God.

Building on Joshua 24: 15, the speaker carefully led the congregation through the *Steps to family revival*. He argued that once the family leaders are awakened to leading their own lives and those of their family members to the true worship of God, families most likely follow their leaders. This argument is based general observations about followers' prompt tendency to embrace their leaders' guidelines.

Blackaby and Blackaby have expressed this by saying: “More than anything else, people are looking for spiritual leaders who clearly demonstrate God’s presence in their lives. There is no greater source of influence for spiritual leaders than the manifest presence of God.”¹

The presence of God in the family helps them to experience the spirituality in the daily life. Joshua called the children of Israel to experience the presence of God in

¹ Henry T Blackaby and Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership: Moving People on to God’s Agenda*, rev & expanded (Nashville, TN: B & H Pub Group, 2011), 157.

their lives. In the same vein, the speaker for the revival week at the Jabe Church also called the families to experience the presence of God in their homes. Where there is no the presence of God, there is no spirituality that leads to holiness.

The revival program emphasized that poor spirituality in families is, as the research findings have revealed, connected with challenges that are facing the families, namely lack of interest in Bible study, poor attendance to prayer meetings, family problems, poor involvement in family and personal ministries activities, etc. The solution of all such family challenges is rebaptism by the Holy Spirit daily as Jesus Christ did. “Morning by morning he communicated with his Father in heaven, receiving from him daily a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit.”²

After the divine service of the first Sabbath, the preacher invited all the families to return in the afternoon for training on how to improve the spiritual health of the family through well-planned and regularly implemented spiritual exercises. During the week, the program started 16:00 and ended 17:30. After every presentation, the program leader and visitations teams visited different families, especially those who requested assistance in their homes. During the visitation, the program leader, the district Pastor, and other church officers leading the teams reminded the families the indispensability of God’s presence for a spiritually-healthy and well-established family.

The visitations teams hammered on the fact that God established the family as the place where people would have a consistent connection with their Creator through prayer, worship, bible study, and fellowship. It is only in a spiritually-healthy family

² Ellen G White, *Signs of the Times*, November 21, 1895, 3.

that the early childhood education which takes place at home would effectively plant the seeds of discipleship that will eventually bear fruit as the children grow.

On the last Sabbath of the week of the spiritual revival, the assistant researcher concluded the seminar by showing the blessings the families will receive if they continue to be spiritual healthy. As God blessed spiritual families like Abraham's, Moses', Joshua's, and Cornelius', these people became the blessings to others. It can rightly be argued that the families of Jabe Seventh-day Adventist church will be blessings to their neighbors. Such spiritually-healthy families will experience the bountiful blessings of God who will "grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love..." (Eph 3:16-21, NKJV).

Program Evaluation

During program implementation, the church members were very happy and interested to follow the program for the whole week. The daily attendance during the week was between 80% and 90% of the membership on record. The program was evaluated in order to see whether it reached its goals and objectives.

During the program, the research assistant together with the District Pastor, Elders, and deacons organized themselves into eight visitation groups in order to help the families to reactivate and restructure their spiritual exercises. Each group visited 2 families per day, and during the week the eight groups visited 112 families.

After the program implementation, the families that were visited testified that they gained a lot during the week of family revival and they confirmed that they increased their spirituality in their family.

Table 7. Perceptions on the Impact of the Revival Program on Family Spirituality

	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor
How would you describe the impact of the revival program on Family Spirituality?	30	55	27	0	0
Percentage of respondents	27	49	24	0	0

The table shows that spirituality in the family life of Jabe Seventh-day Adventist church has improved significantly. This is based on the fact that during the initial data collection before the implementation of the program, the participants' perceptions on their family spirituality were quite negative as shown in the table below.

Table 8. Perceptions on the Impact of the Revival Program on Family Spirituality

	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor
How would you describe the level of Family Spirituality?	12	15	52	0	0
Percentage of respondents	11	13	46	0	0

Comparing the data in tables 2 and 3, we notice that the percentage of *very-good* category has increased from 11% to 27%, the *good* from 13% to 49% of good, while the *average* category has decreased from 46% to 24%. The research intervention program seemed to have positively impacted the church. This is further confirmed by the fact that the number of respondents who had initially reported their family spirituality to be poor dropped from 22% to 0%, while those who reported very poor also dropped from 8% to 0%.

Some Additional Immediate impacts of the program on Family spirituality

Impact on Personal Revival

In respect to the respondents' perceptions regarding the spirituality in the family life promotion after the implementation of the program in the local church of Jabe, 70% the families visited strongly agreed that their spirituality was highly revived through the program. The elders and church members who attended the program were very happy; they pledged that they shall continue to maintain high their family spirituality. Many acknowledged that they had hitherto been wasting time of unprofitable things that ended up negatively affecting their families' spiritual growth.

Impact on Mid-Week Prayer Meetings

During the week of spiritual emphasis, the deacons ensured to counting the church members who attended daily. At the end of the program, they found that the attendance was quite good, varying between 80 – 90%. In Jabe church, church members are estimated to 1056. During the implementation of the program, an average of 905 church members attended daily. Moreover, it is worth noting that before the implementation of the program, the data collected showed that the average attendance at the mid-week prayer meetings was 42%; but this average has risen to 86%.

Impact on Family Worship and Bible Study Promotion

During the program implementation, the family worship and bible study were highly promoted in the afternoon sessions and family visitation. Eight of the visitation groups reached out to different families to launch family worship and bible study schedules in their homes. The visited families committed themselves to a more regular and well scheduled worship/prayer time, while the percentage of the

commitment to regular Bible study increased from 44.6% to 75%. Family worship and Bible study were implemented and adopted fully in the family during the week. The families covenanted that they will continue worship and Bible study daily in their homes.

Impact on Daily Prayer Promotion

Emphasis on regular prayer in the family was the key element during the program implementation. The church members of Jabe were reminded that prayer is the key to heaven's store. The presenter urged the church members to always communicate with the Creator before they sleep, when they wake up, during the day; that they walk with Jesus like Enock. He reminded them that prayer helps Christian to improve spiritual practice, enhances the relationship with God, brings to us divine help in spiritual practice, reduces the stress in our life, protects us from evils spirits, leads us to the throne of grace for forgiveness of sins, and nurtures new life in Jesus Christ.

Throughout the week-long program, participants testified to the biddings of the Holy Spirit for them to re-examine their spiritual and sincere confession, people are fully filling the Holy Spirit by the baptism of the Holy Spirit which enables them to be spiritual people or spiritual family. "It seems that the Holy Spirit largely plays a minor role, if at all, in the daily lives of many Adventists and in church life. And yet this is the foundation for a joyful, attractive and fruit-bearing life in Christ."³

According to the testimonies received during the program implementation and during family visits, 80% of the families promised that they will continue to be prayer-warriors in their daily life. They have seen that their life will be changed if

³ Garrie F Williams, *How to Be Filled With the Holy Spirit and Know It* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1991).

they continue as prayerful families, and the resulting way of life will bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit, which will make them promote spirituality in their family life, in the church where they worship, and in the community. Bearing the fruit of the Holy Spirit as a family will impact their neighbors and the church will grow stronger and enlarger.

Conclusion

The program development, implementation, and evaluation were done in collaboration with the district pastor, elders and deacons, and family members of the Jabe SDA Church. The implementation of the program was successful mostly because we worked together as a team. Interactions with the leaders of the Jabe Church revealed that the program actually came at the right time when the spirituality of their church members was nearing an alarming stage.

During the implementation of the program, church members were fully involved as they discussed and discovered their specific weaknesses, and, thereafter confessed their wrongdoings and surrendered all to Jesus. Eighty per cent of the families of the Jabe Church pledged that they will continue to implement the program recommendations in their homes. They took the decision for themselves that they want to change their life and become spiritually-healthy families. They promised to ensure that their homes become worship centers to win souls from their neighborhood as well as the non-Adventist members of their extended relations living with them.

Chapter Summary

This chapter aimed primarily at taking into account the findings from both the literature review and field research to design, implement, and evaluate an intervention program that would address the challenges that were identified as the main hindrances

to family spirituality. Accordingly, a weeklong revival program was designed with topics related to the key hindrances to family Spirituality in the Jabe SDA Church. The District pastor and Jabe church elders joined with the research team in the implementation of the program. Specifically, there were part of the visitation/counseling teams that were constituted to visit families every day, in order to attend to specific needs.

The Program presentations were made in the evening, while visitations were done during the day. Daily assessment was done orally and informally through conversation with participants. But at the end of the program, a short questionnaire administered for participant to rate the impact of the program on their family spirituality in light of their perceptions prior to the program. The findings from the evaluation showed the program had had significant positive impact on the participants, especially with regard to family prayer schedule, Bible study, personal prayer, and attendance to mid-week prayer meetings.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This research aimed at examining the spiritual conditions of families in the Jabe Seventh-day Adventist church and proposing an intervention program to improve spirituality in the day-to-day life of the families. The research first endeavored to establish from Scriptures the central of spirituality of in the Christian home. Both the Old and New Testaments were carefully survey to bring out not only the biblical insistence but also the consistence on the subject matter. Additionally, several sections of literature were surveyed to examine the dynamics of the understanding of family spirituality throughout the post-apostolic centuries to date.

The review of literature then narrowed down to the Seventh-day Adventist Church by examining more closely what the Spirit of Prophecy (i.e., the writings of Ellen G. White) advocates and counsels on the family's spiritual growth. The overall analysis literature coupled with the fundamental principles as gleaned from the Bible served as the basis for the formulation of the research survey questionnaire.

The field-research section of the study mainly used a quantitative approach through a survey whereby church members shared their views by filling a questionnaire on spirituality in their family. The instrument that was used for this research consisted of two major sections, namely biographic information and research questions. Research questions were 16 and mainly intended to collect data about the dynamics of spirituality in the family with particular references to the family

(morning and evening) devotions, bible study, Sabbath school, personal daily prayer, and witnessing.

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The technique that was used to collect data is known as Convenience Sampling, which is “a type of nonprobability or nonrandom sampling where members of the target population that meet certain practical criteria, such as easy accessibility, geographical proximity, availability at a given time, or the willingness to participate are included for the purpose of the study”¹

Due to the circumstances beyond my control, I could not be on the ground to participate in data collection. Notwithstanding that challenge, after designing the survey questionnaire and clearly describing the procedure for data collection, I selected a research assistant by the name of Celestin Ngarukiwenayo as to help me administer the questionnaire.

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¹ Etikan, I et al., 1.

Church at Sabbath worship concerning the upcoming collection of data in the various homes that would be willing to share their data. The assistant had to visit the homes of all families willing to participate in the study. He had to explain to them how they would fill the questionnaire. He took time to explain the intention of the research until they understood clearly.

I also interacted with the research assistant, as he was telling me how many questionnaires have so far been filled and the plan to get the remaining also filled. After the first collection. It is worth noting that after perusing the data from the first phase of collection, and noticing that many were not adequately filled, a second phase was embarked upon to enable us get the minimum sample size.

The findings from the survey were very revealing, as several spiritual shortcomings emerged as affecting families' spiritual growth and maturity. The study then used the information from the survey to design a weeklong revival program in attempt to assist the families toward improving their spiritual life. The program was implemented through a series of lecture presentations, interactive sessions, and planned visits to families in greater needs. A cursory evaluation through interviews, short questionnaire, and testimonies showed that the program, if carried out regularly, would significantly help families grow and mature in their spiritual life.

Conclusion

God created a man and a woman in His own image and anchored their blessed relationship within the family structure that is itself kept alive by the spiritual bonds of their Creator. Neglecting spirituality in the family is tantamount to destroying the family and its indispensable dependence on the Creator God. Families ought therefore to invest all their being in well-planned, relevant, regular and frequent spiritual

exercises so as to remain under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and there grow toward becoming what the Creator intended them to be.

Divine presence is indispensable for the development and sustenance of true Christian family life. True Christian family life is a life that is spent in wholistic worship before God to enable every earthly family member to grow toward becoming a member of the heavenly family. God transforms the spirit and the soul of the people when they are spiritually encountered with God through true worship. Worship brings a good atmosphere where the Holy Spirit moves people from the lower level to the upward level. With the power of the Holy Spirit, drawing people to be healed all kinds of sickness and restore their souls and he brings in them the joy wherein their lips offer their praises to the Almighty God in song, and God sets up His home in their place.

The only way the families of Jabe Seventh-day Adventist church can hope to enjoy Christian family life is to be assisted in planning family spiritual exercises and encourage them to strive toward reaching that holy goal of abiding in Jesus Christ, their Savior, author and finisher of their faith, and soon-return Messiah. Both the families and Church leadership are challenged to wake up to the challenge, even in preparation for greater missionary exploits that God has assigned them (Matt. 28: 18-20).

Recommendations

Having observed the importance of spirituality in family life and how it can be a powerful tool in the church growth in Jabe Seventh-day Adventist church, the present research recommends the following:

- a. Spirituality in family life should be promoted at church gathering as often as possible to ensure that families do not fall back into their former state.

- b. Family ministries department of the Jabe SDA Church should endeavor to assist families in designing their spiritual plans based on their peculiar situation such as related to family size, occupation, age of children, etc.
- c. The church pastors and elders should have a well-defined the follow-up plan to improve their visits to families and encourage them to stick to their spiritual plans for sustained growth and maturity.
- d. The Sabbath school department should ensure that sufficient information about lesson study at home is gathered during Sabbath School lesson review on Sabbath morning. This will help in planning counseling session for families that are unable to study the lesson in the course of the week.
- e. Church leaders should ensure to find ways and means of providing financially-less-privileged families with the basic Spirit of Prophecy Books, especially Adventist Home, Steps to Christ, and Desire of Ages. Additionally, all those who have smart phones should be strongly urged to download and read the Spirit of prophecy books.
- f. Church leader should endeavor to improve the quality of church programs and give regular orientation to program leaders so as to increase the interest of Church members in attending programs, especially mid-week prayer meetings.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY OF AFRICA
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
MA PASTORAL THEOLOGY PROGRAM
Research on Spirituality in Family Life in the Jabe SDA Church

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear friend in Christ, the present questionnaire is designed to collect information and perceptions for an ongoing research on spirituality in family life among the members of the Jabe SDA Church. The information and perceptions collected are intended to help the researcher to design a program that would assist the members of the Church in improving their spiritual life within their families, thereby improving relationships both in the home, the church, and even in the community around each home.

You are therefore kindly solicited for your perceptions and information as indicated in each question. Your answers will be handled with maximum confidentiality and will be appropriately disposed off after the research.

Please note:

- DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME anywhere on the questionnaire.
- Kindly answer all the questions where applicable
- Where answer options have been provided, please just underline the option of your choice
- Where you need to write a number, a word or a text, please do well to write readably.

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this research.

I. Demographic Information:

1. Your Age Group (years): 18–30; 31–40; 41–50; 50–60; 61–70; 71+
2. Gender: M / F
3. Marital Status: Single; Married; Widow; Divorced
4. Level of Education: Primary; Secondary; University

5. Occupation: Farmer; Trader; Employee
(specify).....
6. How many children do you have?
7. How many of your children are baptized?
8. In which year did you get baptize?
9. Were you born in an SDA family? Yes / No
10. Is your spouse a baptized member of the SDA Church? Yes / No
11. Before you became SDA member, which church did you attend?
12. How many people live in your home?
13. How many of the people living with you are baptized SDA members?

II. Spiritual Life and Religious Activities:

1. Do you have any role(s) in church activities? **Yes / No**
If yes, state at most three of them:
a; b.....; c.
2. Do you have a program of worship in the family? **Yes / No**
3. At what time does your family meet for worship?
4. Are your children actively involved in Church activities? **Yes / No**
If yes, give three examples: a.; b..... c.
5. Do you like to pray during the day? **Yes; Somehow; No**
6. On the average, how many times do you pray in a day?
7. Do you read the spirit of prophecy books? **Yes; Sometimes; No**
If no, why?
8. Do you regularly attend weekly Church programs? **Yes / No**
If no, why?
9. Does your family study the Sabbath school lesson every day? **Yes / No**
If no, why?
10. Are your children regularly involved in family worship? **Yes / No**
If no, why?
11. Are the people living with you regularly involved in family worship?
Yes / No If no, why?

12. Have you ever shared or inquired from your church members how to organize family worship?
- a) I have never been used to doing this
 - b) I do it regularly
 - c) I do not know what to share
 - d) Other (indicate please)
13. How often do you invite your neighbor to your family worship?
- a) Once per month
 - b) Every week
 - c) Never
 - d) Other
- indicate.....
14. How do you share your beliefs with no SDA in your neighborhood?
- Yes / No**
- If no, why?
15. Would you like to participate in programs that teach how to improve family spirituality? **Yes / No**
- If yes, how soon would you want the program to be organized?
- Very Soon; Soon; Every month; Twice a year; Once a year; anytime**
16. How would you rate the quality of your family spirituality? **Very Good; Good; Average; Poor; Very Poor**

APPENDIX B

LETTERS

LETTER OF REQUEST TO CONDUCT THE RESEARCH

IRAKOZE Paul
Université Adventiste de l'Afrique
Maitrise en Divinité

Le 28 / 5 / 2020

Objet : Demande d'une Autorisation
de Recherche Académique

A Madame la Trésorière de la Mission
du Sud-
Ouest du Burundi

A
Bujumbura

Madame la Trésorière,

J'ai l'honneur de venir auprès de votre autorité pour vous demander l'autorisation d'accomplir mon travail de recherche dans l'Eglise Adventiste du Septième Jour de Jabe dans la Mission du Sud-Ouest du Burundi dont vous êtes responsable.

En effet Madame la Trésorière, le sujet de mon mémoire est intitulé : « *A Program to promote Spirituality in family life in Jabe SDA Church in Bujumbura district* » raison pour laquelle, je vous demande cette autorisation de conduire cette recherche dans ladite église qui est dans votre Mission Sud-Ouest du Burundi, précisément dans le district évangélique de Bujumbura.

Espérant une suite favorable à ma requête, veuillez agréer madame la Trésorière, l'expression de mes sentiments les plus distingués.

IRAKOZE Paul

T.C.P.I



- Pasteur de District Evangélique de Bujumbura
- Les anciens de l'Eglise Adventiste du Septième Jour de Jabe (Tous)

AUTHORIZATION FOR DATA COLLECTION

**Eglise Adventiste du Septième Jour
Union Mission du Burundi
Mission du Sud-Ouest du Burundi
Secrétariat Exécutif**

B.P. 6428 Bujumbura-Burundi



Bujumbura, le 31 Mai 2020

Objet : Réponse à votre lettre
du 28 Mai 2020

Au Pasteur IRAKOZE Paul
Etudiant à l'Université Adventiste
d'Afrique
A
Nairobi-Kenya

Pasteur,

En me référant à votre lettre du 28 Mai 2020 de demande d'autorisation d'accomplir un travail de recherche intitulé « Program to promote Spirituality in family life in Jabe SDA Church in Bujumbura District » dans la Mission du Sud ouest du Burundi (MISOB) dont je suis la Trésorière, j'ai l'honneur de vous informer que votre demande a eu une suite favorable.

Du reste, je vous encourage et vous souhaite bon succès dans votre projet de recherche.

Que le Seigneur vous bénisse.

T.C.P.I

- Pasteur Président de la MISOB
- Pasteur de District Evangélique de Bujumbura
- Les anciens de l'Eglise Adventiste du 7^{ème} Jour
de Jabe (Tous)

Mme NDIKUMANA Candide

Trésorière de la MISOB



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VITA

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II. EDUCATION

2020-2022: Africa Nazarene University: Master of Arts in Monitoring and Evaluation candidate

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2007-2010: Bugema University of Uganda: Bachelor of theology

1996 -1999: High School of Bubanza: Diploma of General Humanities and State Diploma.

1992 -1995: High School of Bubanza: Certificate of the Common Core

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III. WORK EXPERIENCE

From December 18, 2020 – To now: Missionary at Djibouti Adventist Health Center

From September 1st, 2015 – December 17, 2020: Executive Secretary for Burundi Union Mission

From January 2nd, 2011 – 2014: Executive Secretary for East Burundi Field, Gitega

From January 2nd, 2010 – 2011: District Pastor of Gitega, East Burundi Field.

From August 27, 2007 – 2010: Student at Bugema University in Uganda

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