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International Online Monthly Journal

ISSN 1548-7164

5 : 9 December 2009

Evangelism and Growth of the Assemblies of God Churches in Tamilnadu, India

From 1989 – 2003

A Doctoral Dissertation

Lawrence Jayapalan

**EVANGELISM AND GROWTH OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF
GOD CHURCHES IN TAMILNADU FROM 1989 – 2003**

Thesis submitted

to

Asian Institute of Theology

Bangalore

In partial fulfillment for the award of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Philosophy and Religion

by

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2006

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Lawrence Jayabalan, Ph.D.

Evangelism and Growth of the Assemblies of God Churches in Tamilnadu, India

From 1989-2003

Jayapalan

SYNOPSIS

Ph.D. Scholar

(Brief Summary)

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AIT,

Bangalore

Title: Evangelism and Growth of the A.G churches in Tamilnadu from 1989 – 2003.

Problem:

- ★ Reason for the growth of the A.G churches in Tamilnadu an assessment.
- ★ The study focuses on what contributed to the growth of the A.G churches during this period (1989 – 2003).

Objectives: There has been a tremendous growth of the A.G churches in Tamilnadu between 1989 – 2003. And it is important to:

- Analyze the growth of the A.G churches during this period.
- Study methods of evangelism, between 1983 – 2003, the patterns of church growth, success and failure, problems and achievements.
- Analyze the apprehensions and criticism made of evangelism.
- Develop optimum level of evangelism; this will help the church to grow in healthy spiritual lines.

Hypotheses: The growth of the A.G churches is due to:

- ★ Bible Centered Evangelism, ★Theological training, ★Laity involvement,
- ★House Churches, ★Cell groups and OIKOS (Household) evangelism.

Summary:

Chapter I – History of the Assemblies of God Churches: It originated in the United States of America in 1914. The name Assemblies of God came into existence in 1914 in Hot Springs USA. The A.G ministry started in 1918 in North India; 1927 in Kerala and 1948 in Tamilnadu. The A.G of Tamilnadu follows the Indian Constitution, and Cultural practices.

Chapter II – Biblical and Theological basis for Evangelism: It is based on the great commission of Jesus Christ which speaks of God's love to the people in the world. Psychology and Sociology deal with mind and human behaviour. Evangelism deals with the mind and attitude, and the total person (Body, Soul and Spirit).

Chapter III – Methods of Evangelism: Jesus Christ followed seven methods, and the 1st Century church followed various methods, and the three methods followed by A.G churches, such as House churches, Cell groups and OIKOS evangelism.

Chapter IV – Statistical analysis: (1989 – 2003) The target group of 250 (35%) churches has been chosen in stratified random sampling from the 710 A.G churches in Tamilnadu. 370 samples were collected from 129 A.G churches from 25 districts of Tamilnadu. Processing was done in the scientific way.

Chapter V – Sociological and Psychological analysis: People have joined the churches, since casteism, social oppression and inequally affected them. Coming to the church has helped them in education, economic, and social acceptance.

Chapter VI – Theological analysis: The A.G churches believe in exclusivism. The content of sermons are such as salvation, sanctification, second coming and Soulwinning. In the AG churches believers are called 'Brothers and sisters'. The A.G churches don't believe in prosperity doctrine and positive confession.

Chapter VII – Communication analysis: The A.G churches follow preaching, teaching, witnessing, singing, television, radio, love feast and counselling, are used for effective communication.

Chapter VIII – A critical analysis: The misunderstanding and constraints in evangelism. It is regarding the concepts of Christians, non Christians and fanatics. The qualitative concepts are, change of attitude, love toward God and neighbour. The analysis of high levels of evangelism is, self realization and self surrender.

Methodology:

The data has been collected through primary and secondary sources.

(Primary data: Diary, Questionnaire, Interview, Observation and experience.

Secondary data: Books, Magazines and Reports).

Findings:

People have joined the A.G churches as a result of evangelism. It has changed the lives of people.

Theological reasons: In search of reality (23.18%), peace (30.38%) and hope (23.54%) in search of quest about life, after death, fear of death and judgment (22.90%).

Sociological reasons: Healing from sickness (19.54%), deliverance from witch crafts, freedom from caste (14.50%), equality in the church (17.77%), economic boost in the family (18.91%) and education given to family members (13.01%).

Psychological reasons: Freedom from inferiority complex (19.19%), guilt (19.31%), change in inner look (21.33%), outer look (18.94%) and a sense of happiness (21.04%).

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From 1989-2003

The A.G churches have grown as a result of Bible centered evangelism, theological training, laity involvement, house churches, cell groups and OIKOS evangelism.

Bible centered evangelism: Evangelism has been done on the basis of the Bible. The content of the evangelistic message is: God loves each one more than any one else (25.31%). People are unable to experience, God's love since sin separates them from God's love (24.30%). Jesus Christ came to this world, suffered, crucified, died and rose again (24.95%). The Holy Spirit convicts and leads people to God (24.45%).

Theological training: The majority of the pastors had their training in the A.G Tamilnadu Bible College, Madurai (53.65%), Extension schools conducted by AGTBC in Tamilnadu (14.89%), SABC – Bangalore (8.15%), and MABC – Chennai (2.53%).

Laity involvement: The members of the laity are used in evangelism and church growth: Personal evangelism (19.92%), song leading (15.64%), visitation (18.97%), care cells (17.72%), house churches (17.95%), involvement in T.V ministry (9.81%), house and hospital visitation (13.85%) and distribution of tracts (10.04%).

House churches: House churches are based on New Testament pattern (21.29%). It is less expensive (20.63%), easy to maintain (20.76%), and Government permission is not needed (19.25%). It is a proven method for church establishment and growth (18.06%).

Cell groups: The cell groups or care cells are conducted in the houses (22.19%). Six months leadership training is given to leaders (16.59%). The relatives and neighbours are invited for cell group meetings (20.92%). The main items in the cell meetings are songs, testimonies, message and counseling (19.32%). Finally prayers are offered for the needy people, for their spiritual, social and psychological needs (20.99%).

O'ikos evangelism: OIKOS evangelism is centered on household gathering (14.20%). Believers who are burdened (14.68%), pray for relatives, friends and others (14.73%). They write their names on a paper (13.31%), pray for them for 21 or 30 or 40 days in fasting and prayer (14.52%). Later they are invited (14.68%) and prayers are offered (13.89%). As a result, people have yielded their lives to Jesus Christ and attend the A.G churches.

The numerical diagram indicates the growth of the A.G churches from 1989 – 2003.

Sl.No.	No. of People	In 1988	1989 - 1993	1994 – 1998	1999- 2003
1	Below 100	104	110	105	59
2	101 - 200	13	38	65	58
3	201 - 300	6	13	22	30
4	301 - 400	2	4	7	10

5	401 - 500	2	9	9	16
6	501 - 900	6	7	18	15
7	901 and above	4	6	12	37
8	Not answered	233	183	132	145
	Total	370	370	370	370

The total number of the A.G churches in Tamilnadu in 1989 was 180. It has increased to 600 churches by 1999, and in 2003, it has further increased as follows, organized churches 710, preaching points 1071, Number of Pastors 737, and members 1, 29,859 in Tamilnadu.

Recommendations and suggestions:

The researcher strongly recommends that the A.G pastors and believers to practice the following:

- ★ The pastor should preach the importance of evangelism to the congregation.
- ★ The pastor and the congregation should practice evangelism in words as well as in every day life.
- ★ The pastor must have concern for qualitative growth of the church.
- ★ Suggestions;
- ★ Respect other religions
- ★ Appreciate the good things in any religion
- ★ Have a positive approach
- ★ God alone can convince people through the Holy Spirit
- ★ It is not our methods that save people but God's grace alone.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis titled “**EVANGELISM AND GROWTH OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD CHURCHES IN TAMILNADU FROM 1989 – 2003**” has been carried out by me under the guidance and supervision of **Dr. C. ZECHARIAH, B.D. M.Th. D.MISS.**, Principal of A.G Tamilnadu Bible College, Madurai, Tamilnadu, **Dr. ABRAHAM CHRISTDHAS Ph.D.**, Dean of Post Graduate Studies and **Dr. BISHOP PAULRAJ, S.T.M., Th.D., D.Th., Ph.D.**, that this thesis has not been submitted either in whole or in part for any degree at any other place.

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CERTIFICATE

I certify that the thesis entitled “**EVANGELISM AND GROWTH OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD CHURCHES IN TAMILNADU FROM 1989 – 2003**” has been carried out by Rev. L. Jayapalan under my guidance and supervision for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Philosophy and Religion) at Asian Institute of Theology, ACTS Academy of Higher Education, Bangalore.

This thesis is his original work, and it has not been submitted either in whole or part for any degree, diploma or other similar title at any other place.

Madurai

Dr. C. Zechariah

Date:

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From 1989-2003

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The researcher is grateful to the Almighty God for His grace and guidance, which has enabled him to write this thesis.

The researcher would like to thank Dr. Ken, Ph.D., President, ACTS Academy of Higher Education, Dr. Richard Gnanakan, M.A., Ph.D., Principal, ACTS Institute, Dr. Abraham Christdhas Ph.D., Dr. Bishop Paulraj, S.T.M., Th.D., D.Th., Ph.D., for their encouragement and concern.

The researcher acknowledges his deepest appreciation and gratitude to Dr. C. Zechariah B.D., M.Th., D.Miss., Principal, A.G Tamil Nadu Bible College, Madurai, Research Director, for his valuable guidance and supervision at every stage and constant encouragement throughout the period of research.

The researcher is thankful to Dr. B. Jeyaraj, M.A., M.Th., Ph.D., Dr. Vedamani Immanuel M.A., Ph.D., Dr. Sam Daniel, M.A., M.A., Ph.D., Dr. K. Regu, M.A., Ph.D., Dr. Anne Luke M.A., Ph.D., Dr. Mary David, M.A., Ph.D., and Dr. Beulah M.A., Ph.D., for their critical comments and suggestions.

The researcher also wishes to express his thanks to Mr. D. Emmanuel Abraham Mr. Sakthivel M. Shadrach, and Mr. Paul Maduram, for typing the thesis in the computer.

Also the researcher owes much to the family members, wife and children for their concern, love and tireless devotion to his dedication to the service of the Lord.

PREFACE

The researcher has chosen the title, “Evangelism and Growth of the Assemblies of God Churches in Tamilnadu from 1989 – 2003”, for the following reasons:

- God the Father, Christ the Saviour and Holy Spirit the Counsellor, chose the researcher for ministry, when he was in his mother’s womb. His parents dedicated him for ministry after he was born, since their prayer for an eldest son had been answered. The Holy Spirit put a desire in the mind of the researcher, to tell about Jesus Christ while he was eight years old.
- The researcher’s father, the late Mr. S.I. LAWRENCE was a member in the Church of South India in Kodaikanal. He was involved in church ministries, such as Children’s Ministry, Village Evangelism and Personal Evangelism for more than fifty years. He trained the researcher, by teaching Bible stories, and enabled him to conduct Sunday classes for children. The researcher during his childhood days accompanied his father for evangelism. His father’s involvement in evangelism and training the researcher in childhood days made an impact in the researcher’s life.
- The researcher has been serving in the Assemblies of God Organization ever since 1968. He has been teaching the subject Evangelism in the Assemblies of God Bible College in Madurai. His interest in Evangelism, involvement in Personal Evangelism and ministry in the Assemblies of God Churches over the years prompted him to choose the title.
- Professors and research guides also advised the researcher to choose the title considering the researcher’s interest and involvement in God’s ministry.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AD	- Anno Domini – in the year of Lord
AG	- Assemblies of God
AGEI	- Assemblies of God East India
AGNI	- Assemblies of God North India
AGTBC	- Assemblies of God Tamilnadu Bible College
BD	- Bachelor of Divinity
B.Th	- Bachelor of Theology
CA	- Christ's Ambassadors
CHI-ALPHA	- Collegiate Ambassadors
CMS	- Church Mission and Society
CSI	- Church of South India
Dip.Th.	- Diploma in Theology
Ecc	- Ecclesiastes
Hrs	- Hours
KJV	- King James Version
KPV	- Kanakapillai Valasai
NIV	- New International Version
NKJV	- New King James Version
NT	- New Testament
PM	- Post – Meridian – after noon.
RSV	- Revised Standard Version
SIAG	- South India Assemblies of God
SPCK	- Society for promoting Christian knowledge
SPG	- Society for propagating the Gospel
USA	- United States of America

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Explanation of the Title:

Evangelism

The word “Evangelism” speaks of the “Good News” proclaimed by the Lord Jesus Christ while he was on the earth. For “Evangelism” the word “Gospel” is used by St. Mark. It means “Good News” or “Glad Tidings.”

“The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ the son of God.” Mark 1:1 (KJV). The Greek word used for “Evangelism” is “Εὐαγγελιον” (Euangelion). To the Greeks it meant proclamation of victory in the battle, the birth of the emperor, the accession of the king to the throne, the communication from the deities and deliverance from demonic powers.¹

When Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem, the angels announced his birth as follows:

“Fear not; for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.” (Luke 2:9 – 10 KJV).

At the age of thirty, Jesus was baptized in the river Jordan. The Holy Spirit came upon him as a dove. After that he was led by the spirit to the wilderness and he was tempted by the devil. Later Jesus Christ went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day where the Jews gathered for worship, reading of the scroll and prayer.

Jesus Christ read from the scroll of Isaiah:

“The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor.” (Luke 4:18 KJV).

Before the ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ he said to the disciples “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” (Mark 16:15 KJV). So the word “Gospel” or “Good News” is a prominent word in the New Testament.

Growth

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The dictionary meaning for growth is “to become enlarged by a natural process: to advance toward maturity; to increase in size: to develop; to become greater in anyway; to excel.”²

The researcher has used this term to explain the growth of the Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu numerically. Growth speaks of a continuous process that is not static.

Assemblies of God

The name, “Assemblies of God” denotes the name of a Pentecostal Organization started in the United States of America. At the beginning of the 20th Century between 1900 and 1910, pastors, leaders, missionaries and believers from different denominations received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit in USA and other countries.

Members who received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit were ridiculed. In spite of that, they wanted to promote the experience to others and proclaim the good news everywhere. They underwent certain difficulties. In December, 20, 1913 The Word and Witness magazine summoned all “Pentecostal saints and Churches of God in Christ to meet next April in Hot Springs USA. It stressed five reasons for calling such a conference.”³

So the meeting took place in December 1913 at Hotsprings in U.S.A. Leaders, pastors, evangelists and others who had received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit came together to discuss the following:

To find unity in doctrine

To maintain God’s work in the United States and other countries

To decide the right use of missionary funds

To unite all Pentecostal groups under a legal name and

To establish Bible Schools to train people for the ministry.⁴

Since the believers from different groups had joined together, in 1914 at Hot Springs, Missouri USA, the new movement was named “Assemblies of God.” It was to serve the Pentecostals in different places of USA and elsewhere. Thus the name “Assemblies of God” came into existence.

1.2 Problem:

- ↳ Reason for the growth of the Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu – an assessment.
- ↳ The study focuses on what contributed to the growth of the Assemblies of God churches during this period (1989 – 2003).

1.3 Objectives:

There has been a tremendous growth of the Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu between 1989 - 2003. And it is important to:

- ↳ Analyze the growth of the Assemblies of God churches during this period.
- ↳ Study methods of evangelism, between 1989 – 2003, the patterns of the church growth, success and failure, problems and achievements.
- ↳ Analyze the apprehensions about and criticism made of evangelism.
- ↳ Develop optimum level of evangelism; this will help the church to grow in healthy spiritual lines.

1.4 Hypotheses:

The growth of the Assemblies of God churches is due to:

Bible Centered Evangelism: Assemblies of God organization believes that the “*Bible is the inspired word of God, a revelation from God to man, an infallible rule for faith and conduct.*”⁵

Theological training: Ever since the beginning of the Assemblies of God in USA and other places it has emphasized theological training. It has enabled, graduates to establish churches in many places.

Laity Involvement: Every born again believer is called to be a witness for Christ, through proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ using every possible method.

House Churches: Houses have been used from the beginning of the Assemblies of God ministry.

Cell Groups: These are conducted in the houses of believers. Prominent believers who have leadership skill or desire for ministry are given cell group ministry.

Oikos Evangelism: Οἶκος (Oikos) in Greek language means “household.” It is centered on leading families to Christ through fasting and prayer. Names of relatives and friends are written on a paper and prayer is offered for them daily. After 40 days of fasting and prayer, they are invited for a blessing festival. Songs, testimonies, message and a feast are the main programmes. People, who are touched by the power of God, give their lives to Jesus Christ.

METHODOLOGY: “The sources of information are generally classified as primary and secondary data.”⁶ Data will be collected through primary and secondary sources.

Primary Data: If some one is writing the concept of a leader, his writings will become the primary data; Information gathered from individuals and groups is called primary data. The researcher will use the following:

- Diary
- Questionnaire
- Interview
- Observation and experience

Secondary Data: “Works about the thought of other persons or works based on data gathered by some one else for another purpose are known as secondary data.”⁷

The following are used as secondary data:

- Books
- Magazines and
- Reports.

APPROACHES: Historical, descriptive and empirical study

Historical : “Pertaining to history; containing history, derived from history; associated with history, according to history; authentic.”⁸

Empirical study: “Resting on a trial or experiment: Known or knowing only by experience.”⁹ The questions or problems are answered by the researcher through perception and observation.

RESEARCH DESIGN: “Decisions regarding what, where, when, how much, by what means concerning an enquiry or a research study constitute a research design.”¹⁰

Descriptive: “Descriptive method deals with describing the characteristics of a particular individual or group.”¹¹

Sample Design: The target group of 250 churches from 25 sections (Districts) is chosen at stratified random sampling from the Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu. From twenty five sections (District) 10 churches from each section is chosen $25 \times 10 = 250$. The churches chosen are from South, North, Central, East and West regions of Tamilnadu. It is limited to a period of 15 years from 1989 – 2003. The sample size is to interview five hundred people ($250 \times 2 = 500$). The method of collection is through questionnaire, interview and observations. Data processing will be done in a scientific way.

The Churches are classified as

- Urban (city) Churches
- Sub urban (Semicity) Churches
- Town Churches
- Village (Rural) Churches

DATA COLLECTIONS:

Questionnaire:

Questionnaires (35 questions) are sent to the persons concerned by post. It is sent to them through the students of the Bible College, who will be visiting certain churches during the weekends.

Interview Guide:

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The researcher visited two sections of the Assemblies of God churches each month. Each section (District) contains 20 – 50 churches. In one year's time he was able to visit all the twenty five sections. He visited them during their section meeting so that he was able to meet most of them.

Pilot Study:

*“Pilot study is a preliminary study conducted on a limited scale before the original studies are carried out in order to gain some preliminary information on the basis of which the main project would be planned or formulated.”*¹²

The researcher has prepared thirty five (35) questions and the pilot study is made in all the 25 sections to understand the validity of the tools used. In each section ten churches will be selected. The area will be in South, North, Central East and West in Tamilnadu.

Data Analysis:

The researcher followed various statistical methods to analyse the data collected. The computer is used for such analysis.

Limitation:

This study is limited to Tamilnadu only. Though it underscores its history from 1948, the study is limited to a period of (15) fifteen years (1989 – 2003).

CHAPTER I

HISTORY OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD CHURCHES

In writing the history, the major source of information is the interview with some of the senior pastors in Tamilnadu. They have served in the Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu for many years.

The researcher has been serving in the Assemblies of God from 1968; hence the primary **data source will be from:**

- ↪ Researcher's experience.
- ↪ Observation over the years.
- ↪ Certain information and data from his diary from 1964 – 2003.
- ↪ Data collected through the questionnaire and interview guide.

The secondary data source will be:

- ↪ Published books, records and
- ↪ Unpublished materials

The first Chapter includes the following:

- 1:1 - The origin and development of the Assemblies of God churches in the United States of America.
- 1:2 - The arrival of the Assemblies of God in India.
- 1:3 - The arrival of the Assemblies of God in Tamilnadu and its development during 1948 – 1970.
- The ministry of the local leaders. They were used of God to build the Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu through evangelism.

It also includes the doctrines of the Assemblies of God, the practices such as wearing of white dress, and removal of ornaments in the early years. The two ordinances (Sacraments) are such as immersion baptism, and Holy Communion.

During 1971 – 2003, the role of Assemblies of God Institutions, the extension Bible school program, village church training program, organizational set up and the decade of harvest program are included.

1:4 - Indian context and Constitutional rights:

It includes how the pastors and church believers have been following the Indian culture. Especially, method of sitting in the church services, removal of foot wear, wearing of dress, clapping hands while singing, and playing Indian instruments.

The advice of the late Mahatma Gandhi to Christians and the constitutional rights of the Indian citizens are included.

CHAPTER II

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS FOR EVANGELISM

In this Chapter the following features are included:

- 2:1 - **Biblical mandate of evangelism:** It is regarding what the Bible teaches about evangelism.

- 2:2 - **Psychological and Sociological aspects of evangelism:** Psychology deals with the human mind. Evangelism deals with the mind and especially the change of attitude. Sociology deals with human behaviour. Evangelism deals with the understanding that all human beings are equal before God. Evangelism sets people free from bondages, and burdens and enables them to respect every one.

- 2:3 - **Theological basis of evangelism:** Theology deals with terms such as God, mankind, sin, Jesus Christ, faith and repentance. Evangelism also deals with terms such as God, man's separation from God, Jesus the loving saviour and forgiveness through repentance.

- 2:4 - **Missiological aspects of evangelism:** It deals with the Old Testament concept of mission and the New Testament concept of mission. It is reaching out to the people with the good news of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER III

METHODS OF EVANGELISM OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD CHURCHES IN TAMILNADU

It includes:

- 3:1 - The methods followed by Jesus Christ. He is the best model for evangelism.

- 3:2 - The first century Apostolic Church and its methods are used for evangelism.
It is a challenge to the Christian churches today.

- 3:3 - The three methods specific to the Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu are discussed.
House churches
Cell groups (Care cells) and
Oikos (Οἶκος) evangelism (Household evangelism)

- ❖ In writing the Biblical mandate of evangelism, psychological and sociological aspects of evangelism, theological basis of evangelism and missiological aspects of evangelism, various books are mainly used. It includes the researcher's unpublished B.D. Thesis (1977) M.Th. Thesis (2002) and other books given in the bibliography.

- ❖ The results of evangelism of the Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu will be given.

CHAPTER IV

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF THE GROWTH OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD CHURCHES IN TAMILNADU 1989 – 2003

The target group of 250 churches has been chosen at stratified random sampling from the Assemblies of God Churches in Tamilnadu. Those Churches are divided under twenty five sections (Districts) namely from South, North, Central East and West of Tamilnadu. The period for study limited to a period of fifteen (15) years from 1989 – 2003.

The sample size is to interview five hundred people ($250 \times 2 = 500$). In each section 10 churches will be chosen ($25 \times 10 = 250 \times 2 = 500$) and two persons will be interviewed in each church.

The method of data collection will be through questionnaire, interview guide and observation. Data processing is done in a scientific way.

- 4:1 - The growth of the Assemblies of God churches from 1989 – 1993.
- 4:2 - The growth of the Assemblies of God churches from 1994 – 1998.
- 4:3 - The growth of the Assemblies of God churches from 1999 – 2003.

CHAPTER V
SOCIOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE GROWTH OF
THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD CHURCHES IN TAMILNADU

This Chapter deals with the following:

5:1 Reason for joining the church:

Casteism: It has affected especially people who belong to the under privileged caste for generations. They have been affected mentally, physically, socially and spiritually. The good news of Christ has given them new hope.

Social oppression, inequality and untouchability: The above factors are some of the reasons for people to choose a new religion that gave them a new outlook in life. Certain classes of people were not allowed to fetch water, walk through certain streets or do certain jobs. The good news of Jesus Christ has broken such barriers.

5:2 Social changes:

Education : There was a time when only high caste people were able to study in a Gurukulam school. Christianity offered education to people from all castes. It lifted people from oppression and depression.

The Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu has educational and social institutions.

Economic: Through education given by Christian schools, and consequent job opportunities the lower classes of people got an economical boost. There was a time when the higher caste people were reluctant to study in a Christian school, whereas the depressed classes received good education. It gave them moral and spiritual values. It gave them socio economic status.

5:3 Social Acceptance and Acculturation:

People who were affected in the society had to follow what was determined for them. The good news of Jesus Christ has made them come out of their bondage. It has

made them walk in society with dignity and be worthy of respect. It has also enabled them to follow Indian culture in, such matters as eating habits, dress code, art, music and way of life.

CHAPTER VI
THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE GROWTH OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF
GOD CHURCHES IN TAMILNADU
(SPIRITUAL AND MORAL CHANGES)

6:1 Concept of Exclusivism:

Exclusivism believes that there is only one faith or one religious belief and practice for salvation. Assemblies of God believes in exclusivism. It believes neither in inclusivism, nor in syncretism.

6:2 Content of Sermons Preached in Evangelism Meetings and Church Services:

In evangelistic meetings topical sermons are preached from the Bible on topics such as salvation, healing and deliverance. For healing meetings expository messages are preached.

In the church services, Bible centered topical, textual and expository messages are preached.

6:3 Concept of Fellowship of the Converts in the Church:

Converts are encouraged to attend the church meetings regularly. They are considered as brothers and sisters in the Lord belonging to the body of Christ. They are also given chances to use their talents and potentials to ministry in church, cell groups, villages, and elsewhere.

6:4 Concept of Prosperity Doctrine:

Prosperity doctrine rejects poverty, suffering and sickness. It is an unbalanced teaching. Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu concentrate in balanced teaching.

It is God who blesses people and makes them prosper provided they follow the commandments of God carefully. Prayer is offered for people to come out of various constraints, such as poverty, suffering and sickness.

People are taught to pay tithe, have a proper budget, work-hard, save some money and believe God for miraculous support.

CHAPTER VII
**COMMUNICATION ANALYSIS OF EVANGELISM OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF
GOD CHURCHES IN TAMILNADU**

7:1 Preaching:

It is a spoken communication based on the Bible to lead the hearers toward salvation, sanctification and soul winning.

7:2 Teaching:

Teaching sessions are conducted in the Assemblies of God churches on different days such as Wednesday or Fridays. Expository method is used for teaching. It is to build the believers in sound doctrine and healthy practices.

7:3 Witnessing:

Witnessing is one person telling another person regarding the good news of Jesus Christ. This method is used in house visits, hospital visits, and while meeting people in various places.

7:4 Singing, T.V., Radio:

Singing:

Singing is a part of any church meeting. It prepares the audience to praise and worship. Musical instruments such as keyboard, guitars, and drum set are used. Meaningful singing makes people feel the presence of God and it also attracts new comers.

T.V:

Good news messages are telecast with songs. Pastors and believers participate in preaching, dialogues and singing. Assemblies of God use this method to reach the believers and others in their homes.

Radio:

This method is used to reach people who use radios. It is a media the Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu has been using for more than twenty years. Every day for fifteen minutes, a Tamil programme is broadcast by the Far East Broadcasting Association in India. The programme includes 2 songs, a short dialogue, and a six minutes message. It has been named *Paripoorana Jeevan* (Abundant life) radio programme.

7:5 Video programmes – Drama – Love Feast:

Video programmes: It is a communication method used through video tapes. Christian programmes are shown in the church among children, youth and adults. Bible characters such as Joseph, Joshua, Esther, David, Daniel and Jesus (Karunamoorthy) are shown from time to time.

Drama: Drama is staged once a year or during special occasions. The drama named, “Heaven’s gate and Hell’s fire” by an evangelistic group from Goa, has been making a great impact among Christians and others.

Love feast: Love feast enables the believers who are members of the church and the new comers to know one another while they eat and chat. Love feast is organized during Christmas or New Year. Some churches give it every month.

Counseling: Persons with problems are counseled by the pastor, church workers and believers. People come out of stress, mental agony and physical ailment, since some one cares for them, gives them Biblical advice.

CHAPTER VIII

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND RECONSTRUCTION OF EVANGELISM CONCEPTS OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD CHURCHES IN TAMILNADU

This Chapter includes the following:

8:1 – Analysis and misunderstanding and constraints in evangelism.

- It is regarding the concepts of Christians from mainline churches about the evangelism of the Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu.
- It is regarding the non Christians, what they think about the evangelism done by the Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu.
- Especially what the fanatics think about evangelism of the Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu.

8:2 – Qualitative concepts of evangelism and growth of the Church.

- People's lives have been changed as a result of evangelism.
- The change of the attitude of the mind of an individual as a result of evangelism
- The work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the people as a result of evangelism.
- It enables people to love God and love their neighbour.
- It has led toward the growth of the church, as well as nation building.
- A citizen free from drinking, drugs, and debt is an asset to the family, society and nation.

8:3 – Analysis of high levels of evangelism.

- Evangelism has moved people toward self realization and self surrender.
- Examples are given such as the Samaritan woman, and Philip a member of the laity who became an evangelist.

CONCLUSION

This Chapter will include the following:

9:1 Summary:

The gist of the eight chapters is given.

9:2 Analysis:

“A resolving or separating of a thing into its elements or component parts; a table of statement of the result of this; tracing of things to their source and to discover the general principles underlying individual phenomena.”¹³

- ❖ The analysis is based on the data which will indicate statements of factual information.
- ❖ The problem for analysis is the reason for the growth of the Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu.
- ❖ The reasons are given for the growth of the Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu during (1989 – 2003) this period of fifteen years.

9:3 Evaluations:

- ❖ Evaluation is on the basis of the history and growth of the Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu during 1989 – 2003.
- ❖ Evaluation of evangelism is how it was carried out, whether it was on the basis of the Bible and Theological Training.

9:4 Findings:

“Findings are statements of factual information based upon the data analysis.”¹⁵

- ❖ Result of evangelism: It has changed the lives of people. As a result they have joined the Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu.

- ❖ Impact of evangelism will be stated in the areas of theological, sociological and psychological aspects.
- ❖ The reasons for the growth of the Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu will be stated. They will be mainly, theological training, Bible centered evangelism, laity involvement, house churches, cell groups and Oikos evangelism.
- ❖ The concept of evangelism misunderstood by people will be clarified.

Validity of the Hypotheses:

The validity of the hypotheses is proved by applying various statistical treatments on the following variables.

The following will be based on:

- ↪ Bible centered evangelism.
- ↪ Theological training.
- ↪ Laity involvement.
- ↪ House churches.
- ↪ Cell groups.
- ↪ Oikos evangelism.

End Notes:

The end notes (Footnotes) will be found at the end of each chapter.

Bibliography:

The following books given in Bibliography are used as a guide in writing the thesis. The book names and other information will be found in alphabetical order, separately.

Appendix:

In the appendix, the questionnaire in Tamil and English will be included.

End Notes:

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CHAPTER I

HISTORY OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD CHURCHES

1:1 Origin of the Assemblies of God in USA:

At the beginning of the twentieth Century between 1900 – 1907, leaders, pastors, missionaries and believers from different denominations received the baptism of the Holy Spirit in America and other countries. This experience took place first in a Bible School in Topeka, Kansas USA. The late Charles P. Parham was the president whom God used as an instrument. He was a Holiness movement preacher from Iowa. He gave his life to Christ while attending a congregational church. He had a call for missionary work in Africa. He could not go to Africa but served in a Methodist Church in USA pastoring for some time. He was not in favour of denominationalism. “Theologically, Parham identified with the holiness movement of his day, preached faith healing, and believed in the imminent premilenial return of Christ.”¹ In 1898 Parham opened a Bethel healing home in Topeka; Kansas. In 1900 he started a Bible school in Topeka. He wanted to equip men and women to preach the good news everywhere. His desire was to proclaim the good news and to the whole world before the end of the age.² Parham believed in salvation and sanctification. Along with that he was also convinced of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. He insisted the students of his Bible school to study more on Holy Spirit. He asked the students to find out from the book of Acts, the evidence for receiving the Holy Spirit Baptism. He gave the above assignment in 1900 before he went for meetings. When he returned, he gathered from the students that speaking in tongues was the initial evidence of receiving the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.³

“Beginning with a New year’s Eve service on December 31, 1900, the revival began to shape as the students sought this experience. On January 1, the first one to receive the Baptism was Agnes Ozman.”⁴

Agnes Ozman. N. was born in Albany Wisconsin on September 15, 1870. In her early years she attended a Methodist Episcopal church. But she used to attend various meetings conducted by non – denominational groups. She was keen to understand more about to subjects such as faith healing, sanctification and the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. She was anxious to receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. She enrolled herself as a student in T.C. Horton’s Bible School in 1882 and in 1894 at A.G. Simpson’s training institute. She had a thirst for spiritual experiences and served as a missionary in Kansas City. “From there she went, in the fall of 1900 to Parham’s school in Topeka, Kansas.”⁵

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So in the Bible School of Charles Parham, she asked him to lay hands on her in order to receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. When Charles Parham laid hands on her she received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and began to speak in tongues, glorifying God. She spoke several languages. News paper reporters, linguists and visitors flocked the Bible school to investigate the above phenomenon.⁶ In 1901, Agnes Ozman returned to city for missionary work. In 1911 she got married to Philemon La Berge and both travelled in USA to hold meetings. In 1917 La Berge affiliated with Assemblies of God and had credentials and he was an evangelist. Mrs. Agnes La Berge went to be with the Lord in November 29, 1937.⁷

In the Bible school conducted by Charles Parham, the other students also desired to receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Those students were from various churches. Shortly the President of the Bethel Bible School, Charles Parham, received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. There were continuous prayer meetings held in the Bethel Bible School. News papers advertised this phenomenon in front pages. People from various places attended the prayer meetings to receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.⁸

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Los Angeles:

William J. Seymour was a Holiness movement preacher whom God used as an instrument in Los Angeles, leading people to receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. He was an African born in Centerville, Louisiana in May 2, 1870. His parents were formerly slaves. While he was young, he saw dreams and visions. He worked as a waiter in a restaurant in Indianapolis. There “he joined a local Black congregation of the Methodist Episcopal church.”⁹ He came to know about Holiness movement while he was living in Ohio. He accepted the emphasis made by Holiness movement regarding sanctification and joined the Holiness movement. The Holiness movement was also known as “evening light saints.” This movement believed in the great outpouring of the Holy Spirit before the rapture of the church. In Indiana, Seymour suffered due to small pox, and his left eye was affected. While he was worried about his sickness, he accepted the call to preach. He received licence in a short time and later he was ordained in the Holiness movement. In 1903 Seymour went to Houston in Texas and attended the Holiness church. Later when Pastor Lucy Barrow; left the church to join Charles.F. Parham (The President of Bethel Bible School) to work as a governess, Seymour was asked to be the pastor of the Holiness Church.

In 1905 pastor Lucy Barrow returned with the Pentecostal experience, the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, and speaking in tongues. Her experience influenced Seymour.

In December 1905 Charles Parham moved the Bible School to Houston. Seymour enrolled as a student in the Bible School, since he was longing for Biblical training.

*“Ever hungry for biblical training, Seymour enrolled in Parham’s school, despite the prevailing system of racial segregation in the south. To satisfy southern law and mores, Seymour was permitted to sit in a hall where he could hear the classes through the doorway.”*¹⁰

Seymour was convinced that speaking in tongues was the initial sign for receiving the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. In 1906, Seymour travelled to Los Angeles to conduct a special meeting in a Holiness church. “When he arrived and began preaching, the church rejected his teaching about tongues as the evidence for the baptism in the Holy Spirit.”¹¹ He used a scripture from Acts 2:4, “And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance” KJV. He met with opposition from that church and the pastor closed the doors and “Seymour was forced to find refuge in the home of Richard Asberry on Bonnie Brac Avenue.”¹²

There were prayer meetings for several weeks in Asberry Home. Along with others Seymour the preacher too received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. People came from various places, gathered to hear the message preached by Seymour. The number of people began to increase and it became necessary to find a new place to praise and worship the Lord. On April 14, 1906, Seymour held his first service in an old building at 312, Azusa Street that had formerly been an African Methodist Episcopal Church and later used as a warehouse.”¹³ The Holy Spirit revival that started in Los Angeles began to grow. Visitors from USA and elsewhere thronged the place for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. “For three years the Azusa Street meetings continued with increasing force and influence. Meetings were held three times a day, and seven days a week.”¹⁴

People who came with sinful life repented of their sins. Believers were sanctified by the word of God and the Spirit of God. Sick persons were prayed over and many healings took place. People received visions from God.

*“Spontaneous singing, the manifestation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, praises shouted to the Lord, zeal to spread the gospel around the world, spontaneous missionary offerings, and an awareness of the soon return of Christ, marked the meetings in this two storied frame building.”*¹⁵

Missionaries from China and other countries visited the place and received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

*“An extremely important aspect of this revival is that many who received the Pentecostal baptism also felt heightened concern for world evangelization.”*¹⁶

The Pentecostal experience began to spread all over the world. Missionaries from Azusa Street went to preach the good news of Jesus Christ in different parts of the world.

*“A.G. Garr (1874 – 1944) went to India in 1907 expecting to preach to the natives in unknown tongues as taught by Parham and Seymour.”*¹⁷

In the Azusa Street revival the racial barrier was broken down to a certain extent. Under the leadership of Seymour the white and the black joined together in prayer, worship and fellowship. It was reported that, “The colour line has been washed away by the blood.”¹⁸ Seymour’s vision was to develop an interracial Pentecostal movement - to serve as a positive witness to unite the white and the black. In the Azusa Street revival the ministry of women was encouraged. Seymour the leader of the revival was meek in nature. He believed in worshipping God in spirit and truth. Azusa Street pilgrims included persons such as H.Durham and John Sinclair.

Durham, William .H. (1873 – 1912) was from Kentucky and joined the Baptist Church in 1891. Later, he gave his life to Jesus Christ. He experienced a vision of the crucified Christ in Minnesota. He became a full time minister and visited the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angelis 1906. “He received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues on March 2, 1907, at which time N.J. Seymour prophesied that wherever Durham preached, the Holy Spirit would fall upon the people.”¹⁹ Likewise God used Durham to spread the Pentecostal revival through his ministry. “Many people who later became prominent pioneers of the Pentecostal movement attended his meetings.”²⁰ He was best known for his teaching on “the finished work of Calvary.”²¹

Sinclair, John Chalmers (1863 – 1936) born in Scotland and immigrated to USA at his young age. He worked in U.S. Steel Corporation in Chicago. He accepted the Wesleyan Holiness teaching and became an ordained minister. He was the first one from Chicago, who received the Pentecostal experience. “In 1914 he was one of the three members added to the original executive presbytery of the Assemblies of God, following Christian Literature and Living www.christianliteratureandliving.com 50
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the first general council meeting in Hot Springs Arkansas, however he soon with drew.”²² Later he became an evangelist travelling to preach and he became popular in his ministry. He died in 1936.

The formation of The Assemblies of God:

The Assemblies of God of USA came into existence in 1914. Before it became an organization the Pentecostals were governed by small associations. They had leaders such as Charles Fox Parham or Florence Louise Crawford of the Apostolic Faith. They were also governed by groups such as Church of God and the Pentecostal Holiness church. These groups were largely regional.²³ As a national organization was required to serve the Pentecostals in different places of USA, a group of ministers in South West, got together for fellowship. “In the group were Howard A. Goss; W.F. Carthors, Arch P. Collins, Endorns N. Bell and Daniel opperman.”²⁴

N. Bell was a pastor in the Southern Baptist Convention for 17 years. He got his education from Stetson University, the Baptist seminary at Louis Villie and the University of Chicago. He “was selected to edit still another publication called Apostolic Faith.”²⁵

Opperman was formely the principal in Zion, Illinois school system. He was chosen to conduct scores of six week long Bible schools, in eight places such as Houston Hot spirings (Arkansas) etc. The schools were operated traditionally in Pentecostal faith style. Studies consisted chiefly of a, “verse by verse exposition of a ‘Pentecostal’ passage of scripture.”²⁶

In the Southeastern section, a Pentecostal group was organized under the leadership of H.G. Rodgers of Alabama. The name of the journal which Bell was editing changed to WORD and WITNESS. The above groups were frail and inadequate.

*To remedy the situation, it was decided to issue a call for a “General Council” in the page of the WORD and WITNESS! The December 20, 1913, issue summoned all “Pentecostal saints and Churches of God in Christ” to meet next April in Hot springs. It stressed five reasons for calling such a conference.*²⁷

Outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon different individuals became the main reason for the formation of the Assemblies of God in 1914 in Springfield in the United States of America. It arose from a meeting held in December 1913 in Hot Springs. Leaders, pastors, evangelists and others who received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit gathered for the following reasons:

- To find unity in doctrine
- To maintain God's work in the States and other countries
- To decide the right use of missionary funds
- To unite all Pentecostal groups under a legal name and
- To establish Bible Schools to train people for the ministry. ²⁸

Delegates from twenty states and several foreign countries arrived in Hot Springs. The registered delegates were one hundred and twenty. They were pastors and evangelists. ²⁹

During the time of adjournment, they made a constitutional declaration. The "General Council" consisted of local churches of God in Christ, Full Gospel Pentecostal Missions, the Assemblies from USA Canada and foreign lands.

It was to recognize scriptural methods and order of worship, unity, fellowship work and business for God, and to disapprove all unscriptural methods, doctrine and conduct and approve all scriptural truth and conduct, endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace, until we all come into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the son of God, unto a perfect man unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ and to walk accordingly, as recorded in Eph. 4:17-32. ³⁰

Thus the name "Assemblies of God" came into existence in 1914 in Hot Springs. Since various church groups were united together it was named "Assemblies of God." In 1918 the Assemblies of God relocated its executive office in Springfield, Missouri. It has maintained its head quarters there till now.

The turn of the 20th Century witnessed the beginning of what has been called, "The Third Force" in Christendom, namely the Pentecostal movement and its most prominent denominational expression, the General Council of the Assemblies of God. ³¹

1 : 2 Arrival of the Assemblies of God in India:

Pandit Ramabai had an orphanage in Pune (Bombay). She was a Brahmin born near Mangalore. She “*lost both her parents during pilgrimage in South India in 1874*”³² She was a scholar in Sanskrit and received the title “Pandit.” She married a man of lower caste and he died after two years of married life. Amidst life’s tragedy, she had a concern for widows and orphans and Ramabai spoke of female emancipation. She had the privilege of meeting Christians in Bengal and had a liking towards the Holy Scriptures (Bible).

She became a Christian in 1891 and embraced Christianity. Ramabai started the above mentioned orphanage under the name Mukti Mission in Pune in 1896. She had a desire to pray for a revival. There were prayer meetings in Mukti Mission two times everyday. “There were 550 ladies in that orphanage.”³³ Ladies in Mukti Mission received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, and spoke in unknown tongues. The revival that took place in Mukti Mission spread in other places in India. Missionaries and Pastors who were serving in Gujarat came to Mukti Mission to receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.³⁴ People in another orphanage in Bahriah near Nepal border in North India also received the Holy Spirit.³⁴ Such experiences spread in North India leading to the establishment of Pentecostal churches.

In North India:

Alfred G. Garr was the pastor of the Burning Bush Mission in Los Angeles. He received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit along with his wife Lillian at the Azusa Street in June 1906. “They were among the first and best known Pentecostals to leave for the regions beyond.”³⁵

In Mukti Mission and other places in North India missionaries and pastors who received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, united together. They felt the need to have a fellowship with a Pentecostal Organization. Missionary Rev. Shoemaker was one among others who felt the need for unity and he wanted to join with the Assemblies of God which was already recognized in the United States of America in 1914. Rev. C.H. Christian Literature and Living www.christianliteratureandliving.com 53
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Shoemaker and Rev. Herbert Cox, had fellowship with the Assemblies of God personally. Other Missionaries who served in India indigenously gathered together in Landore in order to have a fellowship. In 1918, November 1–5, the above missionaries got together in Shaharampur and made the following decisions:

- 1) The name of the fellowship was to be “India Assemblies of God.
- 2) The fundamental doctrines of the Assemblies of God in the United States of America will be the fundamental doctrines for the India Assemblies of God.³⁶

In 1920, there was a council that took place in North India in Lucknow. The above fellowship joined with the Assemblies of God of United States of America and it was called “North India District Council.”³⁷ Later, the missionaries along with the Indian pastors named the organization, “North India Assemblies of God.”³⁸ Christian Agnes Becket family came as missionaries to North India. They were appointed as Assemblies of God missionaries. They stayed in India till 1950 and served the North India Assemblies of God.

In 1925, the Assemblies of God Mission work started in Calcutta (Kolkata). Mr. Nevil Sandras, a retired Collector from customs, built a prayer house. Rev. Maynd Ketchem conducted meetings in that house. Two meetings were conducted in that house - one in English and another in Bengali language. So the house was used as a church for two different congregations. Since Mr. Samuel Sandras married an American missionary, both language groups met at the same house. Later Rev. Carl Butler took charge of the church, and conducted service in English in lower Circular Street. Rev. Don Moraco became the pastor of the English congregation and Rev. Ketchem took care of the Bengali ministries. The English church began to grow gradually. Till 1954 there were two English churches namely Glad Tidings Church and Full Gospel Church. Rev. David McGee and Rev. Don Moroco were in charge of the above two churches. There were other missionaries who also served in Calcutta during the interim period. Rev. D.B. Roy

Choudry, who was pastoring a Bengali church named Bethel Church, joined the North India Assemblies of God (Fellowship). Rev. Willard. K. conducted a great gospel crusade in 1953. As a result “Calcutta Revival Centre” was started.³⁹

Through the guidance of the Holy spirit, Rev. Mark Buntains family came to Calcutta. Rev. Mark Buntain was an evangelist and he was invited by Rev. Ketchem. Rev. Mark Buntain was a great man of God who had a passion for poor and needy. His heart was burning to harvest of souls. In 1958, a place was purchased from a Muslim, and meetings were conducted there in a tent. In 1959 on Christmas day, a church building was built and dedicated. As a part of ministerial work adjacent to the Assemblies of God church, a high school has been built which was recognized by the Government. There is a big printing press with modern facilities. There is also a hospital which serves the people of Calcutta. This also has been recognized by the Government. The Assemblies of God church in Calcutta (Kolkota) does social work along with church ministry.

Today the Kolkota church has ten pastors and eight services are conducted in eight languages. There was a Bible school in English medium under the name “West Bengal Bible School.” Later it became a Bengali medium Bible School. There is also English Medium Bible College. It is named after the late Rev. Mark Buntain and it is called Buntain Theological College.

The church in Kolkota has also a department for teaching international correspondence. The English and the Bengali church, broadcast through (FEBA) Far East Broadcasting Associates - two messages through the air. In Kolkota, the Assemblies of God church conducts Sunday school for various age groups. “The Kolkota Sunday school is the biggest Sunday school in India.”⁴⁰

South India:

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St. Thomas the disciple of Jesus Christ came to Kerala to preach the good news. He established seven churches and a chapel. He came to Madras (Tamil Nadu) to preach the good news. He was stabbed to death in Mylapore in AD.52.⁴¹ There is a Catholic church built in St. Thomas mount and it has become a place of attraction for pilgrims, tourists and others.

From Seventeenth century various minor societies came to South India to sow the seeds of the good news. Zigenbalg a Lutheran Missionary came to Trenqubar in Tamil Nadu and established the first protestant church in 1718, in Trenqbar Tanjore District. He translated the New Testament into Tamil language. God used this German missionary to translate some portions of the Old Testament as well as the New Testament.⁴²

The Roman Catholics had their ministry through education, hospitals and establishment of Roman Catholic churches, the American Mission, London Mission, The Society for Propagating the Gospel (SPG), Society for promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK) and other mission agencies from the protestant mission paved the way for the protestant churches in South India especially in Tamil Nadu.⁴³

The Pentecostal mission took its root at the beginning of the Twentieth Century. It is believed that Rev. T.P. Barret, a Pentecostal pastor from Norway visited India. He was a Methodist Pastor. He visited the United States of America to raise funds for his church building. He heard of the Los Angeles revival and he attended the meeting held at 312 Azusa Street. He received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and he preached on the subject in Norway, England and other places.⁴⁴ When Rev. T.P. Barret visited South India, he preached to the missionaries during summer holidays. The meetings were held in a summer resort in Coonor in Nilgris, Tamilnadu. It was in 1907 or 1908, that missionaries such as Miss. Bouncil and Andiyiskie received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, in his meetings. They in turn preached in South India about the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. In 1908 Rev. Berg came from the United States and preached the Pentecostal message in

South India. He chose Bangalore as the base for his ministry. During 1909 – 1910 he traveled to Kerala and conducted meetings. Many persons were renewed in spiritual life, and in 1913, three people in Kerala received Holy Spirit.

In 1913, Pastor Cook came from the United States of America and stayed in Bangalore for some time. In 1915, Mary Chapman, an Assemblies of God missionary came to Chennai (Tamil Nadu). Later she went to Kerala and stayed there for ministry. She ministered there along with the late Rev. Samuel (former Assemblies of God Superintendent in Kerala) and Pastor K.C. Abraham (Indian Pentecostal church Founder).

⁴⁵ Rev. Burges, an Assemblies of God missionary came to Kerala from the United States of America. He started the first Pentecostal Bible School in Kerala in 1927. ⁴⁶ Thus the Assemblies of God ministry started in North India and South India.

The spread of Assemblies of God in North India and South India:

North India Assemblies of God:

In 1949, the North India Assemblies of God was divided into 4 Districts,

- 1) West United District
- 2) Oat Thit Cut District
- 3) Chota Nagpur District
- 4) Bengal District. ⁴⁷

Later in 1951, after Pakistan had become a separate nation the four Districts were divided into two districts. (1) Pakistan Districts (2) North Indian Districts, the North Indian Assemblies of God was again divided into two districts.

- (1) AGNI – Assemblies of God (of) North India
- (2) AGEI – Assemblies of God (of) East India

Today the North India Assemblies of God functions in following places:

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- 1) Eastern District :Sikkim, North Bengal, West Bengal, South Bihar, Orissa and other places. It has 232 churches and 56 Branch churches.
- 2) North Central District : Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Chattisghar. It has 80 churches and 65 branch churches.
- 3) North District Council: Uttar pradesh, Punjab, Jammu Kashmir, Uttrangal and North Bihar. There are 80 churches.
- 4) North West Council : Delhi, Rajasthan, Hariyana and Himachal Pradesh. There are 35 churches and 53 branch churches.

Rev. P.C. Samuel has been the Superintendent for North India during the past several years. ⁴⁸

Assemblies of God – East India:

The Assemblies of God Ministry in East India started in 1963. Rev. Solomon Wasker, Rev. T.N. Lotha, Rev. Kuma and Rev. T.R. Angami were notable leaders who served for the growth of the Assemblies of God churches. Rev. T.N. Lotha and Rev. Kuma were senior students of Southern Asia Bible College (1964 – 1968). Rev. T.N. Lotha used to translate the Bible in his tribal language while he was studying. The late Rev. Mark Buntain ministered in Nagaland in 1966 and it brought great level of church growth. East India is divided into seven districts.

- 1) Assam : 60 churches and 36 branch churches
- 2) Arunachal Pradesh : 22 churches and 40 branch churches
- 3) Manipur : 60 churches and 10 branch churches
- 4) Megalaya : 36 churches and 27 branch churches
- 5) Mizoram : 38 churches and 8 branch churches

- 6) Nagaland : 54 churches and 35 branch churches
7) Tiripura : 36 churches and 20 branch churches.⁴⁹

South India Assemblies of God:

The South India Assemblies of God was part of North India Assemblies of God, in the initial period. In 1934, the late Rev. Carl. D. Holloman came to help the Ministry. He was a man of prayer. He used to play piano accordion in meetings. He was a man with great passion for people. He used to visit homes and hospitals to counsel and to pray for their needs. He served in Southern Asia Bible College in Bangalore as Principal during 1967 – 68. He used to have prayer meetings in his house on Tuesdays.

Rev. Charles Anderson and Jim Anderson were brothers and came from the United States of America. Rev. Jim Anderson had a very powerful testimony. He had lost one hand in an accident and had become unconscious. He died of the injury and his sister prayed earnestly for his soul. The Lord gave him life and he gave his life to God and became a missionary. Many people were touched by his testimony. Rev. P.S. Rajamoni, the Superintendent of the Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu, formerly an Engineer offered his life for ministry in his meetings.

The Tamil District (Pradesh):

The Assemblies of God ministry was started in 1937. Missionaries such as Miss. Constance; S. Eady; Good Family; Oliver Foth; Lowri family and Edwards family were the pioneers of the Assemblies of God ministry in Tamilnadu.

Malayalam District:

The Ministry in Kerala was started by Mary Chapman. Later Rev. Burges played a key role in Assemblies of God ministry. In the former years the district included the

Southern district, and it was called South West district. In 1982, Southern district became a separate one and Kerala district has been called, 'Malayalam district'.

The South India Assemblies of God is divided into 8 districts:

- 1) Central district : Karnataka and Goa. 228 churches and 368 Branch churches.
- 2) Andhra Pradesh district : 135 churches.
- 3) Malayalam (Kerala) district : 464 churches and 357 branch churches.
- 4) Malabar district (Kerala) : 192 churches.
- 5) Southern district : 124 churches and 156 branch churches.
(Kanniyakumari district)
- 6) Maharastra District : 38 Marathi churches and 36 branch churches. 41 Malayalam churches and 33 branch churches.⁵⁰

Though the leadership of the late Rev. Kunjumman, Rev. (Dr.) Y. Jeyaraj and Rev. (Dr.) T.C. George the SOUTH INDIA ASSEMBLIES OF GOD has been growing steady manner.

Assemblies of God – Kerala:

In 1914, the Assemblies of God ministry started in Kerala.⁵¹ In 1909, Pastor T.B.Barrat from Norway visited India. He conducted a convention in Coonor-Nilgris Hills, Tamil Nadu. Two missionaries, Bovincil and Andivinkle received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. They returned to Travancore and proclaimed the Pentecostal message to people in Kerala.

Rev. George Berges came to Bangalore in 1908-1909 and ministered. He was an American missionary, who attended the Los Angeles revival and his main theme of preaching was Holy Spirit. Later he went to Travancore in 1913; he preached in

Kottarakara, Adoor and other places. Many people received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit in his meetings.⁵²

In 1915, the Assemblies of God General Council of America sent Mrs. Mary Chapman, a lady missionary to India. She reached India on 1st January 1916. She proclaimed the good news in Chennai and Kerala.

In 1925, “Pentecostal Trumpet” a magazine was printed on behalf of the Assemblies of God of Kerala. Now it is called “Assemblies of God Messenger.”⁵³

In 1927, “The Bethel Bible School” was started by Rev. Berges in Punalur, Kerala. The Assemblies of God ministry in Kerala began to grow rapidly. The Assemblies of God ministry in Kerala has been divided into 4 sections:

- (1) Malabar,
- (2) Middle Travancore,
- (3) Trivandrum, and
- (4) South Travancore.⁵⁴

Efforts taken by the missionaries such as Miss. Ginn and Graner, Rev. E.A. Sorbo and the Nationals in Kerala made an exponential growth of Assemblies of God churches. In 1950, the late Rev. A.C. Samuel became the superintendent. When he experienced the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, and joined the Pentecostal faith, he had to give up his family and wealth. He had to live by faith, expecting God to provide his needs. Later the Lord blessed him and his children are well-placed in various parts of the world.

In 1950, the late Rev. E.A. Sorbo, a missionary from the United States of America came to Kerala. He was an administrator, preacher, teacher and pioneer in the field of Bible teaching. Both he and his wife served the Lord, and could speak Malayalam. His Bible teaching made tremendous impact on Kerala people.

In 1966, the Assemblies of God administrative committee was expanded with a total of five members in the committee. The late Rev. Kunjumann, and evangelist P.D. Johnson were the leaders in the committee.

Today in Kerala there are three Bible Colleges in the vernacular language. There are more than 500 Assemblies of God churches in Kerala.⁵⁵

Assemblies of God – Karnataka:

Karnataka state was known as Mysore state. Bangalore a part of Karnataka was part of Tamil Nadu in those days. The missionaries who stayed in Bangalore ministered among the English, Tamil and Malayalam speaking people.

In 1908, Rev. Burges came to Bangalore and Rev. Cook came there in 1913. In 1937, Miss. C.S. Eady came to Bangalore. In Bangalore, due to the inspiring work of these three missionaries Assemblies of God ministry took its root.

In 1945, the late Rev. Lamech started working among Tamilians in Austin Town, Bangalore. In 1948, a building named Union Hall was rented and meetings were conducted in English and Tamil. In 1951, a place with a building was purchased for the Southern Asia Bible Institute. Bible classes were conducted in the premise and meetings in English were conducted in the hall.⁵⁶

The Tamil church was transferred to a house at No. 82 in St. John's Church street in 1953. The Bible School became Southern Asia Bible College in 1966. Students from Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra, North India, Nagaland, Manipur and foreign countries such as Singapore, Fiji Island, and Srilanka have graduated from this Bible College. They have been serving the Lord, as pastors, the Bible College professors and church leaders at National level. Bible College lecturers and students pioneered in the Assemblies of God Churches.

Churches were built in Byphnahalli (Tamil), Sevanagar (Malayalam), BHEL (Tamil) and Hebbal (Malayalam). There was cottage meeting in Austin Town (English), Sunday school and house meeting in Pottery Town (Telugu). In 1967, a work was started among the Kannada speaking people in the city. The late pastor David, graduated from Southern Asia Bible College pastored the church. The late Rev. Dillingham was the pastor of the English church which was in Bible College campus.

There was a Correspondence Institute to teach students and others through postal studies. The late Rev. Weigel, a missionary from the United States of America, was in charge of it. Courses were offered in English, Tamil, Malayalam and Telugu.⁵⁷

In 1958, the late Rev. C.D. Hollaman, an American Missionary who pioneered the work in Pune, became pastor of the English church. He was also the Principal of the Southern Asia Bible Institute. Rev. C.D. Hollaman made Assemblies of God ministry in Mysore district. Now there is a Kannada Bible School in Bangalore to train students to serve among the Kannada speaking people.

The Karnataka District included the Assemblies of God ministry in Andhra pradesh and Goa. Through the leadership of Dr. T.C. George, now there are 228 churches and 368 Branch churches.⁵⁸

Southern District:

Southern District was part of Kerala Assemblies of God till 1982. Later it became a District by itself, and it is called “Southern District” (Kanniyakumari district). In this region people speak Tamil and the churches have Tamil service. The people do speak or understand Malayalam.

Through missionary Chapman and the late pastor C. Manoseh, nine Assemblies of God churches were established. Pastor Manoseh was born in 1897 and he was from a non Christian family. After accepting Christ, he joined the London Mission Society and

became an evangelist. Along with his wife, pastor Manoseh fasted for seven days in order to receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Both of them received the baptism of the Holy Spirit on the seventh day. Later he became a full gospel preacher. The founder of the Indian Pentecostal church the late K.A. Abraham received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit through the prayer of pastor Manoseh. Pastor Manoseh joined the Assemblies of God in 1938. Southern District became a separate District ever since 1981. Rev. I. Moses was the first recognized leader. Southern District has 124 recognized churches and has 156 preaching points.⁵⁹

Rev. Devadason a graduate of Assemblies of God Tamil Nadu Bible College served as Superintend. Now Rev. C. Simon a graduate of Assemblies of God Tamil Nadu Bible College and Southern Asia Bible College is the Superintendent at present in Kanniyakumari District.

Southern District has a Bible College in Kalluvillai in Kanniyakumari District, under the name 'Southern Bible College'. Lessons are taught in Tamil by trained lecturers and local Assemblies of God pastors. Students who complete the requirements receive the Diploma Certificate in Theology and Bachelor of Theology degree. The graduates are pioneering and pastoring Assemblies of God churches in Kanniyakumari District and other places.

1:3 The Arrival of the Assemblies of God in Tamil Nadu (1948 – 70):

In South India, the first American Assemblies of God Missionary Rev. Burges came in 1908. He chose Bangalore as the base for his ministry. At that time Bangalore was part of Tamil Nadu (Chennai Pattinam). During 1909 – 10, he went to Kerala and conducted revival meetings when many people were renewed in spiritual life. And in 1913 three people in Kerala received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Rev. Burges was responsible for beginning the first Assemblies of God Bible School in Kerala in 1927.

Miss. Constance S. Eady a missionary from the British Assemblies of God came to North India in 1918. She came to Bangalore in 1921. Rev. Lamech was her helper in Tamil Ministries. “She developed churches in Tamil speaking areas near Bangalore.”⁶⁰

*Miss. Eady had rented a building in which revival meetings were conducted. As a result of these revival meetings in January 1948, seven people were saved, including men and women. This started the nucleus which became the Assemblies of God church.*⁶¹

Bro. Jacob, an Indian worker, used his house in Madras for worship and Sunday school.

In Tamil Nadu, the Assemblies of God ministry was started in a spectacular way through, dedicated missionaries and Indian Nationals. Rev. Oliver Foth came from USA to Kerala and went to Conoor to study Tamil. In 1947 January 1, Rev. Edward’s family came to India and spent 18 months studying the Tamil language in Kodaikanal. They also traveled to Conoor and Bangalore. Missionaries Foth and Edwards had a burden for Tamil speaking people and the vision to go to Shencottah which was part of Travancore. Rev. Foth had a burden for Madurai. There was a debate among the other missionaries whether to send Rev. Foth and Edwards to Tamil Nadu. Rev. Robert Cummings the first field secretary of the Assemblies of God to India in 1947, recommended to send the above missionaries to Tamil Nadu. As a result, in June 1948, Rev. Edwards came to Shencottah. In 1948, Rev. Foth met a Tamil pastor, Benjamin in Conoor, a powerful convention preacher and prayer warrior, and expressed his burden to start a Bible School in Madurai. Rev. Foth was very happy and told pastor Benjamin that God showed Madurai to him on the map of Tamil Nadu.⁶² So in 1948, Rev. Foth started an Assemblies of God Bible School in Madurai at No.2, Mothilal street. There were eleven students who enrolled for Bible School training in Madurai. The Assemblies of God Tamil Bible Institute played an important role in training pastors who in turn established Pentecostal churches in Tamil Nadu and else where.

The following persons were used by God for Evangelism and growth of the Assemblies of God Churches in Tamil Nadu.

Missionaries:

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Rev. Edwards and Mrs. Doris Edwards:

Mrs. Doris Edwards was a Bible school graduate from the United States of America. She came to Bombay with her husband Rev. Charles Maloney. The voyage took 52 days. Rev. Burges who was a missionary in Kerala went to the harbour to meet them. He invited them to Kerala since the Edwards family had a burden for South India. So the Maloney couple came to Mavelikarai, Kerala. There they learned Malayalam. While they were in Kerala, they felt the burden to start a ministry among the Tamil speaking people in Tamil Nadu. The Maloney family went back to USA in 1943. There on the 4th of August 1943, Rev. Maloney went to be with the Lord. Mrs. Maloney was just 34 years old and was left alone with one son. She went to different places for preaching but the burden for India did not leave her mind.

One day she was invited to preach in North Carolina where Rev. Edwards was the pastor. He was in the valley of tears since his wife had passed away. To add his sorrow his thirteen year old daughter was drowned. Rev. Edwards was a man who had a great burden and vision to serve the Lord in India. When Mrs. Edwards and Rev. Mrs. Doris shared their experiences, especially their vision for India, they felt that it was God's will for them to be man and wife and they got married on 35th November 1946.⁶³

They came to Thanuskodi harbour of Tamil Nadu and later went to Kodaikanal and Bangalore. They learnt Tamil in nine months and came to Shencottah in 1948. Pastor Pannikar Pappachan and Pastor M.D. John came along with them from Kerala. The Edwards family stayed in a forest bungalow. The two Indian pastors found a suitable house for the missionary family in Kanakapillai village, 2 miles (3 km) from Shencottah. The house belonged to the late Thangasamy, a lawyer of Tenkasi. Missionary Edwards was asked to meet him in his chamber in the court, regarding the house. Mr. Thangasamy was willing to give the house without any rent. The lawyer explained that his mother had prayed for days for some one to preach the good news in Kanakapillai village. The

lawyer said, “As an answer to the prayer of my mother, God has brought you here. You need not pay any rent. I will also help you in your ministry in the village.”⁶⁴

They preached the good news in Jeevanallur, Ilathur, Neduvail, Achanpudur, Panmoli and Kattalai Kudiyirupu. Later pastor M.D. John had his Bible school training in Tamil Bible Institute and returned to Kanakapillai Valasai in 1951. The ministry was extended in Puliengudi, Iyapuram, Vasudevanallur and Ramalingapuram. Today in most of the above places have Assemblies of God churches.⁶⁵

Rev. Edwards used to preach in English and his wife used to interpret in colloquial Tamil. They also conducted meetings in the house in Kanakapillai Valasai. In 1949, they purchased a place and the first Assemblies of God church was built in that place in July 3, 1949. Rev. Edwards used to take believers in his car for good news meetings, conducted in the open air. They also had Adult Education, First Aid Programme and other ministries. The late Rev. C.T. David from Kerala who knew Tamil joined the Edwards’s family in Kanakapillai Valasai.

*Rev. Edwards used to travel by train from Shencottah to Madurai to teach the Bible. He and his wife faithfully ministered, developing the churches in all areas of Tamil language people.*⁶⁶

One of the boys who attended the Sunday school committed suicide in his home because of poverty. That incident really challenged the hearts of the Edwards’s family. They had a burden to start an Industrial school for boys, which was a channel for evangelism and building of the Assemblies of God churches. In 1952 December an Industrial school was started in Kanakapillai Valasai. Starting with nine boys it has grown to be a big school over the years. Rev. Edwards was a good preacher. He built churches in many places such as Madurai Assemblies of God church in AGTBC campus, and Kodaikanal missionary chapel in Hartwel compound. He served as missionary Chairman and Superintendent of the Assemblies of God in Tamil Nadu. He lived with

Mrs. Edwards for 15 years and died in July 14, 1961 in the United States of America. On his tomb the following words are written: “If I had another life to live, I would give it to India.”⁶⁷

His death affected Mrs. Edwards but she did not forget the vision and burden she had for India. She came to Tamil Nadu with her young son and began to minister among people. She took leadership and helped in many ways for the growth of the Assemblies of God churches in Tamil Nadu. She was able to speak Tamil fluently. The Assemblies of God in USA uses “Quarterly” for different ages for Sunday school purpose. Mrs. Edwards used Indian pastors to translate the “Adult Quarterly” into Tamil. It was used in the Assemblies of God churches to teach the Sunday class for adults.⁶⁸ She had a desire to see a total of one thousand souls in India as the fruit of their ministry. But to her astonishment and joy, she saw two hundred Assemblies of God churches in Tamil Nadu while she was alive, some churches having more than one thousand believers.⁶⁹ Mrs. Edwards stayed in Kanakapillai Valasai till her death. She became ill after a fall and though she had a bone surgery, it was not successful. Though she was in great pain till her death, she encouraged pastors, supported the ministry financially and spent much time in prayer. She went to be with the Lord in 1991 and her body is buried in Kanakapillai Valasai near the Industrial school staff quarters. She was a lady missionary from USA, who encouraged the Assemblies of God church pastors to have faith in God to meet their financial needs. She appreciated the pastors who refused to take medicine.

Missionary David E. Stewart and his family:

Rev. David E. Stewart came from America in 1965. The whole family traveled by a ship and it took many days to reach Bombay. Rev. Stewart was in his thirties and his children were small, when God called him for ministry in India. Though he was discouraged by missionaries who had served in India in the past years, he wanted to do ministry only in India. The whole family stayed in Kanakapillai Valasai in the mission Christian Literature and Living www.christianliteratureandliving.com 68
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bungalow. In 1965, he preached in Southern Asia Bible College. He introduced a chorus “I’ll live for Jesus day after day.” He also preached under the title “The will of God.” His children studied in Kodaikanal International School.

Rev. David E. Stewart a good singer used to sing in special meetings. He preached in the Assemblies of God churches and he was a blessing to many. He was responsible for starting the youth camp in Madurai in 1967. God enabled him to begin a ministry among the College students. He was the principal of Tamil Bible Institute in Madurai during 1974 – 75. It was through his guidance that Rev. Mohan a graduate from secular and Theological College pioneered a church in Chennai. The church was started in C.I.T. Nagar in house premises, under a tin shed behind the house. Today the church has its own place, having more than 20,000 people who attend the church on Sundays in various services.

One of his sons Rev. David Stewart junior obeyed the call of God. He serves the Lord as an evangelist. He is a very good singer and he sings in Tamil in the evangelistic meetings.

The daughter of Rev. David E. Stewart (Senior) is married to an American missionary who was born in Africa. She is also a good singer and she sings in Tamil in evangelistic meetings.

Rev. D David E. Stewart (Senior) has been used by God for the growth of the Assemblies of God ministry in Tamil Nadu. His family members are being used by God even now among the Assemblies of God churches in Tamil Nadu and other places.

Lady Missionaries:

Miss. Colleen Guinn and Fern Ogle:

Colleen Guinn and Fern Ogle were lady missionaries who came from United States of America in the '60s. They both were unmarried and were registered nurses by profession. God gave them burden for missionary work in India. They both helped in Kanakapillai Valasai in the Industrial School among the students as well as in church ministry. They were prayer warriors and had a great longing for ministry among children. After five years of service in Kanakapillai Valasai they were appointed in the Tamil Bible Institute in Madurai. Sister Guinn was the principal and Miss. Ogle was the Bursar. They maintained the Bible Institute, by raising funds for it. They also taught in the Bible Institute. During the weekends they used to visit the Assemblies of God churches in Tamil Nadu for conducting revival meetings. God used Colleen Guinn, Fern Ogle and Sister Pierson to purchase a property for the First Assemblies of God church situated opposite to the AG Tamil Nadu Bible College. Formerly the church was in the Bible Institute campus.

Guinn used to say, "If I am given permission from the Government, I would conduct Sunday school for the children in every street of Madurai." They used to visit patients in the hospitals as well as conduct meetings in the houses of the believers.

After retirement from missionary service in India they both went to America. During 1993 –94 at the invitation of Rev. Y. Jeyaraj and the SIAG committee to help the Women's Bible school, Guinn came to Kanakapillai Valasai. She sold her bungalow in America and gave the money to buy a land for the Women's Bible school in Kanakapillai Valasai.

Guinn taught in the Women's Bible school for some time. Guinn said, "I sold every thing and followed the call of the "Commander in Chief." I purchased land and

later the land was cleared and the buildings are going up.”⁷⁰ Today there is a well-built Bible school in Kanakapillai Valasai where many ladies are being trained for the ministry.

Missionaries such as Rev. Alan, Rev. Jim Lowell and many others also came to Tamil Nadu and helped in the growth of the Assemblies of God ministry.

INDIAN CITIZENS IN EVANGELISM AND GROWTH OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD CHURCHES IN TAMILNADU

God used American and European missionaries to preach the good news among the Tamil speaking people. At the same time the Almighty God called young and old people from the Indian soil to proclaim the good news. They were used to achieve the following:

- Proclaiming good news
- Preparing, pastors and evangelists.
- Pioneering church ministry.
- Participating in leadership
- Providing the younger generation with leadership skills.

Rev. M. Benjamin:

He was the Superintendent of the Assemblies of God of Tamil Nadu during 1949 to 1951.⁷¹ In 1945, Eady used the pastor Lamech to minister among the Tamil speaking people in Bangalore. A preacher named Duraisamy from Tiruvannamalai was asked to preach in the convention. Through his ministry Gopal Daniel was led to Christ. In turn Mr. Gopal Daniel was responsible for leading pastor M. Benjamin to Pentecostal faith. Pastor M. Benjamin was a convention preacher. He was called, “the Lion of preachers” in Tamil Nadu. Rev. Lowry, an American missionary with the help of Pastor Benjamin started the Tamil Bible School in Madurai. Pastor Benjamin was a man of prayer. He

used to weep while praying and would wet the pillow with his tears. He used to ask Rev. Adam Durai who was a student during that time to pray along with him. He encouraged and moulded young lives who were being prepared for the ministry in Tamil Nadu. He was strict in his Pentecostal faith. He would not take medicine. He also refused to give communion to believers who took medicine. He was against wearing ornaments. He wanted the missionaries to remove their wedding ring. Later he left Assemblies of God of Tamil Nadu as he was against missionaries wearing the wedding ring. He started the Church of God ministry in Tamil Nadu.⁷²

Dr. Y. Jeyaraj:

Dr. Y. Jeyaraj has been a prominent leader in the Assemblies of God of Tamil Nadu for many years; the Lord had a great plan for him ever since he was a junior. He was born in a Christian home and his parents belonged to SPG church (Society Propagating the Gospel). His father an ardent member in his church became sick and he was admitted in a Government hospital. He suffered due to tuberculosis and he was in a terminal stage. Some of the Ceylon Pentecostals prayed for him, expecting a miracle from God. He was healed of Tuberculosis and he began to follow the Pentecostal faith. Right from his childhood Rev. Y. Jeyaraj was brought up in Christian faith and discipline. His father was a traveling catechist in the Bible society.⁷³ His mother too was a spiritual person and she was a prayer warrior. She used to pray three hours every day. As a Pentecostal lady, she removed her ornaments and she was deserted by her relatives.

Rev. Y. Jeyaraj saw a vision of Christ when he was eight years old. As a result he gave his life to Jesus Christ. He received the baptism of the Holy Spirit when he was eleven years old. The teachers and the students ridiculed him since he spoke in tongues. In the early years, Christians from fundamental churches ridiculed the experience of speaking in tongues.

Rev. Y. Jeyaraj went to see the late Rev. Philip after finishing his high school. Rev. Philip was an Assemblies of God pastor and leader. He was the Superintendent of Assemblies of God of Tamil Nadu in 1957-58. He was a powerful preacher who used to preach in conventions. He ministered in Nazareth in Tirunelveli District where Rev. Y. Jeyaraj stayed in his childhood days. He wanted to go to North India for an interview for the appointment as an accountant. But,

There God spoke to him, "You crossed 75 miles from Nazareth to serve God. The Edwards family flew over 10,000 miles to reach this place." Then I realized that the Lord God had already descended from the heavenly realm down the earth. This realization was one of the reasons that led me to stay in the service of God for five decades. ⁷⁴

Indian pastors Rev. Philip and Pastor C.T. David advised Jeyaraj to serve the Lord in the capacity of an interpreter for Rev. Edwards. However he was reluctant to accept the offer. One particular night Rev. Y. Jeyaraj could not sleep since he was not able to arrive at a decision. A scripture he learnt in childhood came to his mind, "And Jesus said unto him, no one, having put hand to the plough, and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God" Luke 9:62 (KJV). Young Jeyaraj decided to serve the Lord and told pastor C.T. David regarding his decision to be an interpreter for Rev. Edwards. Pastor C.T. David was happy.

On 4th July, Rev. Y. Jeyaraj entered the ministry and stayed with the missionary Edwards and helped him in the ministry. At the same time Rev. Y. Jeyaraj enrolled as a student in the Tamil Bible Institute. It has been the policy of the Assemblies of God that every worker should have at least 3 years Bible school training. Rev. Y. Jeyaraj, along with his studies, became the interpreter for missionary Edwards in the Bible School. Rev. Y. Jeyaraj took immersion baptism through missionary Edwards in Kanakapillai Valasai and he got married in 1952. Rev. Y. Jeyaraj pastored the church in Kanakapillai Valasai during 1949 – 1953. The Assemblies of God church in Kanakapillai Valasai was built through open-air evangelism. Rev. Y. Jeyaraj traveled to many villages on a bicycle

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with someone sitting at the back seat; a petromax light hanging on the left side of the bicycle handle bar and another bag with tracts on the right side.

He has served in the Assemblies of God of Tamil Nadu, South India and all India Assemblies of God in the following capacities:

- ❖ Secretary of the Tamil Council of the South India Assemblies of God for one year.
- ❖ Superintendent of the Tamil District Council of the Assemblies of God for 38 years.
- ❖ Superintendent of the South India Assemblies of God for 12 years.
- ❖ Superintendent of the All India Assemblies of God for 7 years.

The Southern Asia Bible College of the Assemblies of God Bangalore offered him an Honorary Doctorate.

Dr. Y. Jeyaraj has been a pastor, interpreter, parliamentarian and a leader. He always greets a young pastor before the latter greets him. He is a father of four sons and one daughter. All of them are in the ministry and two of them in leadership. Dr. Y. Jeyaraj is an example for the youngsters to follow.⁷⁵

Rev. K.C. Andrews:

Pastor K.C. Andrews, a senior pastor, has been serving in the Assemblies of God of Tamil Nadu ever since 1949. He was born in Kerala in 1924 and he surrendered his life to Jesus Christ at the age of twenty-one. He was working in the fire service department before he joined the ministry. He resigned the job in 1947. He walked from Punalur (Kerala) to Shencottah when he was 25 years old. He got married in 1943 and his wife died in 1948 after 5 years of married life.

He enrolled as a student in the Tamil Bible Institute in Madurai in 1947. His ministry was in Krishnagiri for 1½ years. He walked to different places to meet people and distributed pamphlets containing the message of salvation. Later he was transferred

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to Thiruvannamalai for ministry. There he went through another sorrowful incident in his family life. His second wife died and he was left alone with two small children. The Lord comforted him through Psalms 39:9.

“I am dumb, I opened not my mouth: because thou didst it.” (KJV)

He also pastored in Vikrama Singapuram, Sethu near Rajapalayam and Kanakapillai Valasai, where the first Assemblies of God church has been built in 1949. He became the pastor in the Assemblies of God church in Tuticorin in 1962. He has been serving there for the past 41 years. He was the treasurer for the Tamil District Council of the South India Assemblies of God for 23 years. He was appointed as the presbyter for the Assemblies of God churches in Tuticorin Section (District).

There were 20-25 members when he took charge of the Assemblies of God church in Tuticorin. Initially the church did not grow for about six years. He began to preach in open air meetings, and participated in dawn preaching. He visited the houses of people using a Tuticorin map. Today his church has grown to the extent, that it has 800 people who attend the church. He has established many branch churches around Tuticorin.

His church has sent more than 50 students to Assemblies of God Tamil Nadu Bible College in Madurai and Southern Asia Bible College, in Bangalore, and Trinity Women’s Bible School in Kanakapillai Valasai. Notably, Rev. D. Mohan was a believer from his church and now pastoring the biggest Assemblies of God church with a congregation of more than 20,000 believers attending every Sunday Service.⁷⁶

Rev. K.C. Andrew’s eldest son Rev. Abraham Thomas has been the secretary for the Tamil District Council of the South India Assemblies of God for several years. His children are also in the ministry.

Rev. Adam Durai:

Rev. Adam Durai was born on November 29, 1929 in Tirunelveli District. He belonged to the CMS (Church Mission Society) church. His father was a devout Christian. He practised native medicine and he was a martial art fighter. Young Adam Durai also mastered those arts through his father.

In 1948, Rev. K.C. Andrews went to Nazareth in Tirunelveli District. He had 12 people along with him and had a meeting in Rev. Y. Jeyaraj's house. Later Rev. K.C. Andrews had a meeting in Pastor Adam Durai's house. At that time young Adam Durai didn't have born again experience. He attended the meeting held in his house.

Missionary Edwards used to conduct meeting in Adam Durai's house. He was accepted by the family though he was a Pentecostal missionary. The Late Rev. C.T. David who pastored an Assemblies of God church in Mangalapuram near Kanakapillai Valasai led Adam Durai to Christ. Adam Durai was baptized by Edwards on December 18, 1949.

Adam Durai received the call of God and he joined the Tamil Bible Institute of Madurai in July 1950. His parents were not happy regarding Adam Durai's decision. Young Adam Durai used to pray with the Bible School Teacher, pastor Benjamin between 10:00 – 12:00P.M. He was asked by Pastor Benjamin to stay in his house since Adam Durai was a prayer warrior. Adam Durai received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit in the Tamil Bible Institute at Madurai during his student days. Adam Durai had a great burden for souls. It made him participate in street meeting, children's ministry and pastoral ministry in the church.

In 1953 March, Adam Durai graduated from Tamil Bible Institute. In 1953 July, he got married to Glory, the sister of Dr. Y. Jeyaraj. After that he started the ministry in

Puliengudi, Tirunelveli District. “Pastor Adam’s mother wept bitterly, seeing his son, a prominent figure in his village and a martial art fighter, now joined the Pentecostal organization.”⁷⁷

In the early days the Pentecostal churches were looked down upon by Protestant and Catholic Church members. It was owing to different practices followed in the Pentecostal churches. A pastor’s wife was not allowed to wear a marriage chain. Even a believer had to remove the chain after joining the Assemblies of God church. So the ladies received a nickname, “Thali Aruthan Kuttam” (Group which removed the marriage chain). The Assemblies of God churches were in remote places and the service was held in rented houses. People used to sit on mats. A side drum and a tambourine were used while singing. The denominational Christians ridiculed the above practices.

Pastor Adam Durai went through struggle and starvation in his early ministry. “His monthly salary was rupees 30 and three rupees were deducted from the Tamil district as tithes.”⁷⁸ Pastor Adam Durai pastored the Assemblies of God church in Kanakapillai Valasai for 3 years. He used to prepare his message with prayer and he preached even to a very limited number of people as if he was preaching to one hundred people.

Pastor Adam Durai received the ordination in 1959 and he was transferred to Koilpatty. Those who attended the service were five men and a few ladies. The A.G church was twenty five feet long and fourteen feet wide. Rev. Adam Durai a well-versed person in the Bible, expounded the word during Wednesday’s Bible study. It brought the Christians and non Christians to the church. People began to attend the church regularly. The church began to grow in a steady manner, since the Holy Spirit used Rev. Adam Durai to preach the word to the educated and the uneducated without any reservation. In 1967, the church was extended, 40 feet long and 15 feet wide. In 1965, a land (75 cents) was purchased. The missionaries contributed rupees fourteen thousand and the rest was given by believers. The Doris Edwards and the Rev. Hollaman dedicated the church in

1971. Again the church was extended to 55 feet length and 27 feet width in 1986. Since the church began to grow it was extended four times.

Its present length is 90 feet and width is 55 feet. The church has more than 400 families and over 1200 people attend the church services every week. “Koilpatty Assemblies of God church had six pastors during 1951-1958. In 1959, it had fifteen people, in 1969 one hundred people and in 1999, one thousand and two hundred people.”⁷⁹ In 1969, there was an evangelistic meeting conducted at the church premise for one week. Evangelists Jeevanandam, P.D. Johnson, Sister Sarah Navaraji, Sister Papa Sankar and Brother Peter Natesan were the guest speakers. Rev. Adam Durai has been baptizing people by immersion, every week ever since 1969.

Rev. Adam Durai has served the Lord in the Assemblies of God more than 53 years. He celebrated the golden jubilee in 1999. There are assistant pastors who have graduated from AGTBC, serving him. He has branch churches around Koilpatty. “His church sends rupees eighty thousand (Rs. 80,000/-) to the Decade of Harvest of Tamil Nadu Assemblies of God for Home Mission work in Tamil Nadu. His church also supports seven Assemblies of God churches in North India sending them rupees fifteen thousand (Rs. 15,000) every month.”⁸⁰

Rev. Adam Durai was the assistant Superintendent for 25 years in the Tamil District Council of the South India Assemblies of God. He held the position as Superintendent for one year and treasurer for a few years. He has been one of the Radio speakers in the Assemblies of God Radio ministry. He wrote articles for the abundant life Tamil magazine for more than 35 years. The Good News publishers printed his books for distribution.

He has been pastoring the same church in Koilpatty for more than forty years. His sermons and Bible study messages are fresh and the congregation has enjoyed his messages. He has been a pastor, teacher, evangelist, writer and leader. He never studied in a secular college except for his primary and high school education. God has used this humble pastor over the years to be a blessing to the church comers and others. He has a heart to support youngsters who prepare for the ministry.

Rev. Adam Durai's two sons are serving in the Assemblies of God churches in pastoral ministry. Rev. Adam Durai has contributed very much for the growth of the Assemblies of God, using all his God-given talents.

Mrs. Lily Victor and her husband Pastor Victor:

In the ministry of the Assemblies of God of Tamil Nadu, apart from American lady missionaries, Indian ladies were also used to build the church. God used Lily Victor to minister and take care of the church after her husband's demise. Lily Victor was from a very rich family. She was born in Tuticorin. She was from an established church and did not like the Pentecostal church. Her father allowed the Pentecostals to conduct meetings in his house.

She had a great liking for ornaments and luxurious life. The Almighty God touched her life and she surrendered her life to Jesus Christ. She also received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and spoke in unknown tongues. As a young lady, she went to Kerala, attended the Pentecostal meetings and gave her testimony. Later she went to Kerala and ministered to people working on plantations.

She got married to a pastor from Kerala after her return from Srilanka. She went with her husband pastor Victor to Tirupur in '50s. They both stayed in a rented house and began the ministry. That house had neither water connection nor toilet facilities. It

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was very difficult for Lily Victor to adjust to such conditions since she came from a rich family.

Rev. Victor was a mighty man of God. He used to go for house visits and to witness to individuals. It was his every day schedule. He would come home as late 11.00 p.m. During his absence, Lily Victor used to kneel down and pray for her husband. A child was born to them when they were in Tirupur. Since the Lord chose the child to be a vessel for God in the womb of his mother, they named him Charles Aaron.

Pastor Victor's family came to Koilpatty to do the ministry in 1955. At that time their son Charles Aaron was one year old. Both husband and wife were involved in ministry in Koilpatty. Lily Victor conducted Sunday classes for the children. She also visited their parents and they were led to Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Rev. Victor and Lily Victor established an Assemblies of God church at Koilpatty. They built a building which could hold seventy five people. In those days the Pentecostals had only tambourine and a side drum to use in the church service, whereas Rev. Victor's family had a piano which was an asset in their ministry.⁸¹

They dedicated their son for God's work and brought him up in discipline and in the fear of God. He used to play the piano as well as the accordion in the church meetings. He became a great musician and the cine people offered him a chance to play the instruments for cine songs. As a youth when he was in the secular college Charles Aaron was enticed by the worldly amusements. But the Lord convicted him of his call and his parents dedication.

In 1961, Rev. Victor the pastor of the Assemblies of God church in Tuticorin went to be with the Lord. Lily Victor became the pastor of the Assemblies of God church in Tuticorin. It was Rev. Y. Jeyaraj who asked Lily Victor to pastor that church. God enabled Lily Victor to compose Tamil Lyrics and she used to sing and preach in the church services. People were blessed through her ministry.

Bro. Charles Aaron used to play the piano accordion for evangelist Jeevanandam in good news meetings. Later he went to Southern Asia Bible College for theological training. After graduation, he did evangelism for some time. Then he became the pastor of the Assemblies of God church in Kodambakkam which had about 50 people. The church building was purchased from a cinema director in 1969. Pastor Charles Aaron through prayer and powerful preaching and singing has made the church grow more and more. He purchased the building next to the existing church and extended the church building.

Today at about 6000 people attend the Rose of Sharon Assemblies of God church at Kodambakkam. His son Rufus Charles is a musician and assistant pastor and his two daughters are married to pastors. They serve the Lord in different places.

Doctrinal beliefs of the Assemblies of God Churches in Tamilnadu:

There are sixteen doctrines or articles of faith which come under the title, “statement of Fundamental truths of the South India Assemblies of God”, written in the constitution and By – Laws of the **South India Assemblies of God.**⁸²

The doctrines of the Assemblies of God Churches in Tamilnadu are from the theological basis for the organization and building of the Assemblies of God churches come under the following titles (topics):

- ❧ The scriptures
- ❧ The one true God.

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- ☞ The deity of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- ☞ The fall of man.
- ☞ The salvation of man.
- ☞ The ordinances of the church.
- ☞ The Baptism in the Holy Ghost.
- ☞ The initial physical evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Ghost.
- ☞ Sanctification.
- ☞ The church and its missions.
- ☞ The ministry.
- ☞ Divine healing.
- ☞ The blessed hope.
- ☞ The millennial reign of Christ.
- ☞ The final judgment and
- ☞ The new heavens and the new earth.

The Scriptures inspired:

“The scriptures both the old and new testaments are verbally inspired of God to man, the infallible authoritative rule of faith and conduct.” (2 Tim 3:15-17; 1 Thess 2:13; 1Pet 1:21).⁸³

The one true God:

The one true God has revealed Himself as the eternally self-existent “**I am**” the Creator of heaven and earth and the Redeemer of mankind. He has further revealed Himself as embodying principles of relationship and association as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. (Deut 6:4; Isa 43:10-11; Matt 28:19; Luke 3:22).⁸⁴

The Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ:

The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. The scriptures declare His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, substitutionary work on the cross, and bodily resurrection from the dead and His exaltation to the right hand of God.

The fall of man:

Man was created good and upright, for God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” (Genesis 1:26-27). However man by voluntary transgression fell and thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death, which is separation from God. (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:17; 3:6; Romans 5:12-19).

The Salvation of man:

“Man’s only hope of redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God.”⁸⁵

☞ **Conditions of Salvation:** Repentance, faith, washing of regeneration and justification by grace through faith (Luke 24:47; John 3:3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 2:8; Titus 2:11, 3:5-7).

☞ **The evidences of Salvation:**

The inward evidence : direct witness of the Spirit (Romans 8:16).

The outward evidence: a life of righteousness and true holiness
(Ephesians 4:24; Titus 2:12).

The ordinances of the Church:

☞ Baptism in water – by immersion, in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47-48; Romans 6:4).

☞ Holy Communion – Bread and the fruit of the vine. The elements are a symbol of expressing Jesus’ divine nature, suffering and death, and a prophecy of His Second coming.

The Baptism in the Holy Ghost:

“All believers are entitled to and should already expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father the Baptism in the Holy Ghost and fire according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ.”⁸⁶ (Acts 1:4, 8; Luke 24:2, 49; 1 Cor12:1-31).

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The initial physical evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Ghost:

The Baptism of believers in the Holy Ghost is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the spirit of God gives them utterance (Acts 2:4). The speaking in tongues in this instance is the same in essence as the gift of tongues (1 Cor 12:4-10, 28) but different in purpose and use.⁸⁷

Sanctification:

“Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil and of dedication unto God.”⁸⁸ (Rom 12:1, 2; I Thess 5:23; Heb 13:12).

The Church and its missions:

“The church is the body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, the divine appointments for the fulfillment of her great commission.”⁸⁹ Since God’s purpose concerning man is to seek and save that which is lost, to be worshipped by man and to build a body of believers in the image of His son, the priority reason – for – being of the Assemblies of God, as part of the church is:

- ☞ To be an agency of God for evangelizing the world. (Acts 1:8; Matt 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15-16).
- ☞ To be a corporate body in which man may worship God. (I Cor 12:12).
- ☞ To be a channel of God’s purpose to build a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son.⁹⁰ (Eph 4:11-16; I Cor 12:28; 14:12).

The ministry:

The divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the threefold purpose of leading the church in

- ☞ Evangelization of the world. (Mark 16:15-20)
- ☞ Worship of God. (John 4:23, 24) and

☞ Building a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son. (Eph 4:11, 16).

Divine healing:

“Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel. Deliverance from sickness is provided for in the atonement and in the privilege of all believers”⁹¹ (Isa 53:4, 5; Matt 8:16, 17; Jas 5:14-16).

The blessed hope:

The resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ and their translation together with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of Lord is the imminent and blessed hope of the church. (I Thess 4:16, 17; Rom 8:23; Tit 2:13; 1 Cor 15:51, 2).

The millennial reign of Christ:

The second coming of Christ includes the rapture of the saints, which is our blessed hope, and followed by the visible return of the Christ with the saints to reign on the earth for one thousand years, (Zech 14:5; Matt 24:27,35; Rev 1:6; 19:11-14; 20:1-6).

The final judgment:

There will be a final judgement in which the wicked dead will be raised and judged according to their works....” Whosoever is not found written in the book of life.... will be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake, which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” (Matt 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; Rev 19:20; 20:11-15; 24:2, 8).

The new heaven and the new earth:

“We according to His promise, look for a new heavens and a new earth wherein righteousness dwelleth.”⁹² (2 Pet 3:13; Rev 21:22).

Practices of the Assemblies of God Churches (1948 – 1971):

The Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu churches had different practices in the following areas:

☞ Pastor and his family

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- ☞ Pastor's faith life
- ☞ Church and pastor's house
- ☞ Church services
- ☞ Musical instruments and songs
- ☞ Conventions
- ☞ Child dedication
- ☞ Marriage
- ☞ Sickness
- ☞ Death

Pastor and his family:

In the early years pastors used to wear a white Jippa and Dhoti (White cloth) instead of trousers. His wife had to wear white dress. Pastors who wore coloured trousers were advised to wear white shirt, during preaching. The pastor's wife and children were not allowed to wear any jewellery. It was not a doctrine but a Pentecostal practice. The pastors would not keep a mustache.

Pastor's faith life:

An A.G church pastor received a small amount of help (Rupees thirty each month in the 60's) from the general council. The A.G Missionaries, raised funds from USA to support the pastors. Tithes were collected from each pastor or it was deducted from the financial support (Rupees 30 a month) given by General Council. When a pastor was ordained, the small amount of help would be stopped. Believers were encouraged to pay tithes and offerings. It was to take care of pastor's family, church needs such as house rent, electricity, and water bill.

Most of the pioneers, especially the nationals went through, poverty, suffering and financial crisis. Some of them would not even tell their needs to anyone. They trusted God to meet their needs miraculously.

Church and Pastor's house:

There were a few churches built by the Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu, which could hold 75 – 100 people. Most of the churches were in rented houses. Which had a small hall, a bed room and a kitchen. The small hall was used to conduct church services

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for 20 – 35 people. Some houses had only one room and a kitchen. Once the service was over, the room was used as a study room or bed room. This was the ministry of the early pastors.

Church Services:

Sunday classes were conducted for various groups beginning from beginners to adults. It was conducted first and later church services were started. The church service had the following order: prayer, singing, testimonies, and special songs, offerings, message, prayer and benediction. In the evening gospel service was conducted for new comers. Bible studies were conducted on Wednesdays. Topics such as, tabernacle, rapture, second coming and other such topics were taught. Prayer meetings were held on Friday evening, and fasting and prayer were conducted on Saturday morning. In the Assembly of God churches messages were preached on, such as Salvation, divine healing, baptism of the Holy Spirit, sanctification, rapture, and second coming (1000 year reign, the new earth and new heaven).

Musical instruments and songs:

In the 60's musical instruments such as Tambourine and side drum were used while singing in the churches. Some churches had a harmonium (hand organ) which was an asset. Later churches began to use Key board, Guitar and drum set. Between 1950 – 1960 some of the Tamil songs were composed in cine tunes. Certain pastors and believers composed songs which were also sung during the services. Some times a chorus of a song or particular stanza was repeatedly sung. Believers were led to worship God with loud voices and speaking in tongues. Songs composed by Sister Sarah Navaraji were very much used during 1965 – 1980.

Conventions:

Church conventions were conducted once or twice in a year. Missionaries from abroad, local preachers or Bible school teachers used to be the speakers. Convention or Good News meetings or divine healing meetings made an impact through which new souls were added to the church. In 1967 three students from Southern Asia Bible College, Rev. P.S. Rajamoni, (now the superintendent of Assemblies of God Tamilnadu) the late Stephen Manickam, (Pastor of Neively Assemblies of God church) and L. Jayapalan visited different Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu such as KP Valasai, Achanputhur, Neduvayal, Mangalapuram, Puliengudi, Sankaran Koil and Idayankulam for Good News meetings. There was also a member of the laity named D. Samuel, nicknamed in Tamil as “Pattukara Samuel” (Samuel who sings). P.S. Rajamoni composed Tamil songs in popular tunes and played theabela instrument. Jayapalan

played the harmonium (hand organ), Stephen Manickam played the tambourine and sang with D. Samuel. In the special meetings there were songs, testimonies and preaching of the word. Rev. Y. Jeyaraj and Rev. Adamdurai preached in a number of places.

Child dedication:

The pastor of the local AG church used to visit the hospital or home to pray for the new born child of a believer. Later the child was brought to the church. The pastor used to carry the child in his hands and name the child as per the parents' choice. The child was dedicated to God in the Name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. A prayer was offered for the child as well as for the parents. Child baptism was not practised in the Assemblies of God churches.

Marriage:

Most of the marriages were arranged by parents. Pastors and leaders played a role in arranging marriages. In the early years (1935-50) pastors were discouraged to marry some one close to the family, e.g. uncle's daughter. Inter marriages took place. There were also pastors and believers who were particular about choosing wives from their own castes.

At the time of marriage in the church, neither a wedding ring nor a chain (Thali) was used. The officiating pastor would take the right hand of the bride and give it to the right hand of the bridegroom. After that the pastor and the visiting pastors would lay hands on them and pray for them.

Sickness:

Prayer has been offered on behalf of a sick person. There was a time when neither the pastors nor the believers would take medicine. They would not even go to the hospitals. It was not a doctrine. The missionaries and the leaders did not condemn taking medicine and left the choice with individuals or families. Faith healing was practiced in the services especially in evangelistic meetings. God used evangelists, pastors and believers who had the gift of healing and working of miracles to pray for faith healing. There were also pastors and believers who took medicine, while standing on prayer and faith.

Death:

Pastors or believers who died in the Lord, their bodies were kept in the church or homes. There was a time when neither candle was burnt nor scent used. Family people along with the believers used to sing songs about heaven. Later the body would be taken to the church for funeral service. A few songs would be sung especially the favourite songs of the demised person. There would be a memorial meeting in the house or in a hall on the 30th or 40th day.

Ministry through various training programmes (1971-2003):

The Assemblies of God ministry had its root in Tamilnadu in 1948. During the years 1948 – 1970 it had been said that it was the period of preparing the field and sowing the seed of the Gospel. Later from 1971 – 2003 it has been the period of harvesting of souls.

This period is known for the theological training programmes which played a great role in the growth of the Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu. Rev. (Dr.) Y. Jeyaraj, Superintendent of All India Assemblies of God said that the Tamil Bible School played a prominent role. It has prepared, pastors, evangelists and leaders who were responsible for preaching the good news and establishing churches. As a result there are Assemblies of God churches and other Pentecostal churches in Tamilnadu and elsewhere.

Bible College (A.G Tamilnadu Bible College):

The Assemblies of God Churches in Tamilnadu began to grow, since the Bible School was started in 1948 in Madurai, from the beginning of the Assemblies of God ministry in Tamilnadu. Its main objective has been to train pastors, evangelists and leaders for evangelism and church planting. When other Pentecostal faiths discouraged Bible School training the missionaries and local leaders emphasized the Assemblies of God churches to insist Bible School Training. Later students from independent Pentecostal churches joined the Bible School. In the early years students were provided food, lodging and tuition free of cost and they were also given travel fare so that they would not refuse to come back when they went home for holidays. The students were discouraged by their families and relatives from joining the ministry, since pastoring in the Assemblies of God church meant suffering and starvation.

The faculty of the Bible School consisted of missionaries and local professors who were committed leaders. They believed in the power of Bible and were mission oriented and evangelistic. The curriculum was based on the Bible, church planting, evangelism and leadership. The missionaries such as Guinn and Ogle who served here from 1967-1976, were full of zeal for evangelism, church growth and social work. They

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went to the Assemblies of God churches during weekends to preach along with the Indian teachers, such as Dr. C. Zechariah, Rev. L. Jayapalan and Rev. P.S. Rajamoni and others. Teachers from India helped them in interpreting and singing. The local faculty in the Bible School pastored in various churches along with teaching.

In the year 1948 the school was called Tamil Bible School. In 1963 the name was changed to Tamil Bible Institute and later in 1982 it was renamed as “AG Tamilnadu Bible College.” During the years from 1948 – 1999 there have been sixteen Principals, and among them were nine Missionaries (seven men and two women) five Indians (four men and one woman).

At present the total number of faculty is twelve including the principal and teachers and part time pastors. Students who study here have a three year program to receive Bachelor of Theology degree and Diploma in Theology certificate. (Accredited by Asia Theological Association in 1992). Students who join the institution must have a born again experience with a call for ministry.

List of Faculty members of the AG Tamilnadu Bible College in Madurai:

- ☞ Dr. C. Zechariah, G.Th. B.D. M.Th. D.Miss (Principal) 1964.
- ☞ Rev. L. Jayapalan, G.Th. B.D. M.A. M.Th. (Bursar) 1968.
- ☞ Dr. R. Samuel Raj, M.A. B.D. M.Th. D.Min. (Academic Dean) 1982.
- ☞ Rev. D. Koilraj, M.A. B.Th. M.Div. P.G.D.
(Director of Communication) 1995.
- ☞ Rev. Edward Jayajothi, M.Com. M.Div. (Registrar) 1996.
- ☞ Rev. A.M.V. Joseph, B.Sc. M.A. M.Div (Librarian) 1993.
- ☞ Rev. P. Prabakar, B.Th. M.Div. (Dean) 1995.
- ☞ Rev. K. Paul, B.A. B.D. (Part time lecturer) 1998.
- ☞ Rev. Stanley Manickaraj, BA.BL. M.Div. (Evangelism Director) 2001.
- ☞ Rev. Jeyaprakash, M.A. M.Div. (Registrar Extension Schools) 2002.
- ☞ Rev. Charles, MA. M.Div. M.Th. (Chaplain) 2003.
- ☞ Pastor Suresh Kumar, M.Div. (Part Time Lecturer) 2003.

Curriculum for B.Th and Dip.Th

Pre Theology courses:

- ☞ Systematic Bible reading and Inductive Bible study – 2 Hrs.
- ☞ Bible Characters and Christian life and growth – 3 Hrs.
- ☞ High lights in Jesus life – 3 Hrs.
- ☞ What we believe – 2 Hrs.

Department of Biblical Studies:

❖ Old Testament:

O.T. History – 3 Hrs; Bible Geography – 2 Hrs; Pentateuch – 3 Hrs;
Historical Books – 2 Hrs; Poetical Books – 3 Hrs; Major Prophets – 3 Hrs;
Minor Prophets – 3 Hrs. O.T. Theology – 2 Hrs; Biblical Criticism – 2 Hrs;
Hermeneutics – 2 Hrs.

❖ New Testament:

Introduction to (New Testament) Books – 3 Hrs; Synoptic – 3 Hrs; John – 3 Hrs;
General Epistles and Hebrews – 3 Hrs; Revelation (Daniel) – 3 Hrs;
N.T. Theology III – 3 Hrs; Christian Ethics – 2 Hrs; Christian Thought in
India – 2 Hrs; Apologetics – 2 Hrs.

Department of Christian Theology and Ethics:

Theology I – 3 Hrs; Theology II – 3 Hrs; Theology III – 3 Hrs; Christian
Ethics – 2 Hrs; Christian Thought in India – 2 Hrs; Apologetics – 2 Hrs.

Department of Religion and Society:

Introduction to Indian Religions – 3 Hrs; Hinduism – 2 Hrs; Islam – 2 Hrs;
Modern Religions and Secular Movements – 2 Hrs; Cultural Anthropology – 2 Hrs.

Department of History of Christianity:

History of Pentecostal Movement – 2 Hrs; Church History I – 3 Hrs; Church
History II – 3 Hrs; Church in India – 2 Hrs; Ecumenics – 2 Hrs.

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Department of Christian Ministries:

Evangelism – 3 Hrs; Missions – 3 Hrs; Church Strategy – 2 Hrs; Principals of Preaching and Public Worship I & II – 4 Hrs; Pastoral Theology I & II – 4 Hrs; Pastoral Care and Counseling – 2 Hrs; Church Management & Finance – 2 Hrs; Music – 1 Hr; Leadership – 1 Hr; Christian Education – 2 Hrs; Practical Ministries 12 Hrs.

Department of Education:

English I – 2 Hrs; English II – 2 Hrs; Research Method I – 1 Hr; Introduction to Psychology – 2 Hrs; Health & Hygiene – 1 Hr; Communication Techniques – 2 Hrs; Hindi – 2 Hrs.⁹³

Every weekend, students are sent out for open air evangelism, Sunday school ministry, teaching Bible stories to children and moral lessons to make them a better Christian and a good citizen. Some students go to their respective churches or places on request to help the local pastor for evangelistic activities. During the summer holidays, some students are sent to North India as missionaries for exposure for a period of one month. Student's fees and pocket money are paid by the local pastor or parents.

Two hundred and thirty one students graduated from the Bible Institute during 1948 – 1970. Six hundred and fifteen students have graduated from AG Tamilnadu Bible College between 1971 – 1999. Majority of them are serving as pastors in the Assemblies of God churches and some of them are in leaders and evangelists in Tamilnadu. A few pastors are serving in other countries namely United States of America, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Indonesia.⁹⁴

Decade of Harvest and Extension Schools:

The Tamil District Council of the (SIAG) South India Assemblies of God with leaders (presbyters) met in the A.G Bible College premises on October 13, to discuss matters regarding the Decade of Harvest program (means harvest of new souls in ten years time). The committee decided to start extension schools to train more pastors to meet the increasing needs of the Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu. There were already 180 churches and the goal of Decade of Harvest was to have 500 new churches to accommodate people who seek peace, deliverance and hope. The committee appointed the following persons to help in the Decade of Harvest.

- ❖ **Rev. D. Mohan** – Chairman (prayer) – to promote individual and collective prayer among pastors and church believers.

- ❖ **Rev. P.S. Rajamoni** – Evangelism and Church Planting. To promote pastors and laity toward evangelism and church planting.
- ❖ **Dr. C. Zechariah** – Training Centers. To promote training centers to conduct extension Bible Schools to train the laity for full time ministry.

According to the recommendation of the Tamil District Assemblies God Committee in 1989, extension schools were started in 25 places and the evening classes were conducted in church premises. Its main purpose was to start new churches after 2 years of training. The students who joined the extension schools were laity, mostly married and employed in different professions. They have been helping the pastors in the meetings conducted at houses or branch churches.

Each extension school was under the leadership of a section presbyter and classes have been conducted by experienced Assemblies of God pastors and Bible College lecturers. The decade of Harvest Program has helped to establish more than 400 churches in 10 years.

Trinity Bible School for Women:

A prayer meeting was held in the prayer room of Rev. (Dr.) Y. Jeyaraj in Kanakapillai Valasai. It was held on Monday between 10.00 AM – 2.00 PM. Tenkasi section (District) pastors gathered there to pray. “In 1990 January while there was prayer on Monday morning, the spirit of the Lord guided the people to pray for women ministry.”⁹⁵ The prayer partners felt the need to have a Bible School for women. The late Mrs. Rajamma Jeyaraj and missionary Dorris Edwards prayed, asking for God’s grace to establish a Bible School. As a result the Bible School for women was started in November 1993. Eleven students enrolled for a 2 year diploma programme. Colleen Guinn, former principal of AGTBC Madurai, sold her house in USA to purchase one acre land for the Trinity Bible School. Rev. (Dr.) Y. Jeyaraj served as the principal for some time. In February 2001, Rev. Steve Jeyaraj, Presbyter of Shencottai Section was appointed as principal. The Bible School had 11 teachers and 4 administrative staff. By 2002, Ninety six students have graduated from the Bible School.⁹⁶ Some of them are married to pastors and serve the Lord in different fields in Tamilnadu and other places in India.

Madras Assemblies of God Bible College (M.A.B.C):

God laid a burden in the heart of Rev. D. Mohan who is pastoring New life Assembly of God church in Little Mount, Chennai. It has a congregation of more than 20,000 people who attend the church services each Sunday. Rev. D. Mohan felt the need to train graduates and others who are in profession so that the laity could participate in the ministry at various capacities such as pastors, missionaries, and evangelists. In 1998 the Bible College was started in the church premises. The first graduation took place on 1.4.2000. Thirteen students received Diploma in Theology and they are serving in Chennai area, and one graduate serves in Maharashtra as a missionary. In 2001, thirty eight persons graduated. 17 persons received Masters Degree in Christian Missions, 18 persons received B.Th. degree and 13 students had their Diploma. Seven churches began to exist as a result of student's ministry. 37 Care cells were started and the graduates serve in 67 Care cells.⁹⁷ Rev. Sam Daniel is the principal. At the beginning the library had 1500 books and today it has more than 10,000 books.⁹⁸

Training programme for village ministry:

In 2000 the Tamil District Council of the South India Assemblies of God, Committee and the presbyters fasted and prayed for three days in Rock Hall (C.S.I) in Courtallam. Rev. P.S. Rajamoni, Dr. C. Zechariah, Rev. Mohan and Rev. L. Jayapalan prayed together as a group. At that time the burden to establish churches in villages was given through the Holy Spirit to reach the villages. God heard their prayer and the District Committee approved the village training programme. It was started under the leadership of Rev. P.S. Rajamoni the Superintendent of Tamilnadu Assemblies of God. A six month training programme was started in AG church premises in different places. Through the leadership of Rev. P.S. Rajamoni and Rev. Dr. Samuel Raj, text books were prepared on various subjects such as the Old Testament books, New Testament books, Evangelism, Church History, Homiletics, Pastoral Theology and other subjects. Lecturers from AG Tamilnadu Bible College, presbyters and experienced pastors were used to prepare the other text books. So far 1200 laymen have received training and six hundred persons go to villages to conduct church services and meetings. These trained persons are a great asset to the local pastor. They are also used in care cell meetings conducted at villages.

Administration of the Assemblies of God Churches in Tamilnadu:

The Assemblies of God churches have similarities with the congregational and Presbyterian churches in policy. "The General Council is the legislative and policy making body having the highest constitutional authority."⁹⁹ They take care of the following:

- ☞ General Council
- ☞ Presbyters

- ☞ Credentials and ordination
- ☞ Annual conference
- ☞ Finance
- ☞ Local church pastor
- ☞ Transfer
- ☞ Buildings

Administration of the Assemblies of God Churches in Tamilnadu:

General Council:

The Tamil District Council of the South India Assemblies of God has a committee. The committee includes Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Secretary, Treasurer and a committee member. The above officers are elected in the Annual Council meeting. The pastors of the Assemblies of God churches recognized by the general council are eligible to choose the officers by a secret ballot. Each recognized church is allowed to bring one delegate to choose the officers. Duration of service of each committee is one year. Each committee members is assigned certain responsibilities. The committee gathers once in two months to discuss and decide various matters, such as appointment of pastors in new churches, transfer of pastors, financial support to pastors and other needs.

Presbyters:

The committee appoints presbyters in each section (District). The entire Tamilnadu state is divided into 25 sections. For each section one senior (experienced) pastor is appointed as presbyter. Each presbyter will have 20 – 50 churches under him. He is responsible to hold a section meeting once in two months or once a month. The section pastors would gather for prayer, fellowship and to discuss various other church matters.

Credentials and Ordination:

After one or two years the general council would give a pastor Christian worker's credential. After two years or so a pastor would get Lisenciate minister's credential. This would allow a pastor to give communion and to baptize born again people. After five years, a pastor would be ordained by the Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu, in any

one of the five offices. His ordination makes him eligible to be elected to serve in the general council.

Annual Conference:

Every year annual conference is conducted in Madurai. The general council (Committee), presbyters, pastors, and delegates would gather and fast for a day. Later the conference will take place, which last for 2 to 3 days. Each conference will have the followings.

- ☞ Fasting and prayer
- ☞ Devotion, praise, worship and message.
- ☞ Preaching
- ☞ Reports (Superintendent, Secretary, Treasurer)
- ☞ Theological Schools, Presbyters, Missions, Radio programme, Christ's Ambassadors, Students for Christ, Sunday School, Decade of Harvest etc.
- ☞ Election of officers
- ☞ Resolutions
- ☞ Ordination Service
- ☞ Communion
- ☞ Vote of thanks
- ☞ Prayer and Benediction

Finance:

The General Council of the Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu is supported by the pastors through their tithes and offerings. The treasurer sends designated amounts to Home Missions (Salem and Dharmapuri), Missions (North India ministry), Decade of Harvest, Radio ministry, Bible College and other needs. When a pastor dies, an offering is collected, which will be not less than 50,000 and given to his bereaved family.

Local Church Pastor:

Local church pastors are appointed by the Committee (General council of the SIAG) of Tamilnadu. A pastor should have the following qualifications.

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- ☞ Born again experience
- ☞ Immersion baptism in water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- ☞ Baptism of the Holy Spirit with speaking in tongues
- ☞ A definite call for full time ministry
- ☞ At least two to three years theological training.
- ☞ A person with a testimony.

Transfer:

The general council of the SIAG of Tamilnadu transfer pastors for the following reasons:

- ☞ Pastor's health problem.
- ☞ A particular pastor is needed for a big church.
- ☞ If the church does not grow owing to pastor's inability.
- ☞ If the pastor has problems in the church.

Building:

In the early years missionaries were the ones who purchased the building sites and gave money for construction of buildings. Now the General Council members and donars from A.G churches contribute to build the church buildings. The foreign missions department of the Assemblies of God of USA has been helping toward the function of the theological Institution. The Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu had a humble beginning. In 1949 the first church was built in Kanaka Pillai Valasai Tamilnadu.

Various Ministries:

The Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu has been involved in various ministries. In the early years ministry was based on visitation, witnessing, preaching, teaching and child evangelism. Later various other ministries were adopted.

Christ's Ambassadors:

The Lord gave a burden for youth camp to missionary David Stewart (Senior) and Dr. C. Zechariah former professor of AG Tamilnadu Bible College. Guinn (Principal) and Fern Ogle (Bursar) gave financial assistance for the youth Camp. In 1968, April 16-17, a youth camp was arranged for 2 days. Two hundred youths attended the youth meeting. Food and lodging were provided in the Bible College premise. Evangelist Homer Jones from Madras was invited as the guest speaker. He preached in the morning and evening. Experienced pastors and Bible Institute lecturers were used to speak on different subjects such as evangelism, leadership, Bible and science, and children ministry. AG church youths from Koilpatty, Neively, Tuticorin, K.P.Valasai and other places attended the camp. The spirit of God moved in the hearts of the youngsters. They surrendered their lives to God, since they were convicted of their sins. A number of youths received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Some of them have decided to serve the Lord in full time ministry. This was the first youth camp ever conducted among the Pentecostals in Tamilnadu.

Christ's Ambassador Ministry became an established one. Rev.C.Zechariah was appointed as director (1968), Rev. L.Jayapalan as treasurer (1968), and Rev.P.S.Rajamoni as secretary (1969). They served in the above capacities for seven years. Pastors were encouraged to start youth meeting in their respective churches. Young people were used to conduct the youth meeting in their churches, where they conduct prayers and songs before testimonies and sermon. Role plays were also used in youth meetings. Many guest speakers spoke on various themes.

Some of the themes were, "Shining for God", "Second Coming", "Soul winning" etc. When AG churches were established in many parts of Tamilnadu, the number of youths participated in annual camps increased. So Zonal Camps were conducted for 200 – 350 youths in respective places. Once in a year, the annual youth camp was conducted in Madurai. Varieties of programmes were included apart from preaching and Bible Study. Some of them were Bible quiz, singing contest, and drama. During the youth camps, students were encouraged to help the needy pastors. At the last day of the camp, bicycles, T.V.S 50, were given to pastors who needed for the ministry. The motor bikes and bicycles were purchased from the money contributed by youths, pastors and other leaders. Now every year three thousand youths from the AG churches of Tamilnadu attend the annual camp.

The Tamil District Council of the South India Assemblies of God appoints the Christ's Ambassador Committee and it serves for two years.

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Collegiate Ambassadors:

In the sixties (1960) political parties were using college students for achieving their goal. Student riots such as Hindi agitation, boycotting of classes, stopping the trains, and stoning the buses affected normal life. The education of the students was affected. There was no one to help them spiritually and mentally. Rev.David Stewart felt as follows:

“It was partly as a result of this aching heart that I began to pray that God would help us to at least be able to minister to the emotional spiritual need of the students of India.”¹⁰⁰

In 1972 the Almighty God enabled missionary David Stewart (Senior) to start a ministry among the College students. The vision came in his mind soon after his return to India from furlough (USA).

The new students who joined such Colleges were ridiculed by senior students. They were misled by various people. It made them to watch bad movies, drink, smoke, taking of drugs and indulge in immoral life. Where ever a youth prayer group existed in a College, students who joined them escaped such problems. It gave them protection students who involved in bad habits were a head ache to the College authorities and parents. They demanded money from poor parents, who gave them money borrowing either from others or mortgaging the ornaments of their relatives. Parents were in high expectation of their children to come home with a degree so that parents would be free from financial stress. When parents came to know that their sons were living an addicted life it broke their heart. But on the other hand they were amazed to see their sons lives were changed as a result of youth ministry. Rev.David Stewart’s vision was really from God to change the lives of young students who in turn were a great blessing to many people.

In 1972, he recruited Mr.C.Victor to help the student’s ministry. Bro. Victor was a member of AG church in Tuticorin. He helped Rev.K.C.Andrews in the youth ministry Rev.David Stewart named the youth ministry as “Collegiate Ambassadors.” In USA it was called “Chi-ALPHA” ministry using the Greek Alphabets.

The youth ministry in Tamilnadu was supported by the Tamil District Council of the SIAG. A small house was rented in Palayamkottai to accommodate Bro. Victor. The

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students in the College were met by one by one. Everyday students were prayed for and were given spiritual and moral guidance. Later students began to gather for prayer, Bible study and fellowship in that rented house. Since the lives of students were changed, parents were happy and they too were interested in spiritual things though they were Christians by name. Youth ministry enabled to raise a congregation in Palayamkottai.

Later youth ministry was branched out in to different places such as Nagercoil and Madurai. Leaders were trained and appointed in College, to hold meetings among the students. Training camps were conducted for the leaders. Camps and retreats were conducted for students. In the retreats students surrendered their lives to God, made decisions to give up the old habits such as smoking, drinking and watching bad movies.

In Palayamkottai there was a gang of five students. They were a terror to the people in that area. They used to go to the cemetery at night and inject drugs in their bodies. Bro. Victor and his associates were threatened by this gang. They warned the CA leaders to stop the ministry among students. The gang did not want the students to come out of their old lives. They threatened to kill Bro. Victor and others. Prayer was offered for the conversion of the gangsters. The Holy Spirit of God convicted them. "One by one, they began to get delivered from demonic influence and set free by our dear Lord Jesus Christ."¹⁰² Later they became believers and were very useful in the ministry among the college students. One of the gang members Bro. Ajex Paul had a call for the ministry. He enrolled in AG Tamilnadu Bible College. After his studies, he served the Lord among students and tribal people in the hills.

Rev. E.A.Sorbo, AG missionary in Kerala sent Bro.T.J.Rajan to Rev. David E. Stewart, to attend the training programme. After the training period, Bro.T.J.Rajan started the youth ministry among the college students in Kerala. The late Rev.Mark Buntain, AG Missionary in Calcutta, sent one of his Tamil Congregation associates Bro.Sam Masilamoni to get trained in order to serve the college students in Calcutta. Bro. Ezekiel, a graduate of Southern Asia Bible College, had a burden to go to Nepal to work among the college students. He was willing to face any difficulty. He enrolled as a student in the University of Nepal, and started ministering to the students. During the 80's, Collegiate Ambassadors' ministry began to expand in many places in India. Rev. D. Mohan a secular college graduate, after the theological training at SABC in Bangalore, was serving the Lord in Sevanagar, at Bangalore. Rev. David E. Stewart requested him to begin a ministry among the college students in Chennai.¹⁰² Rev.D.Mohan started the ministry behind a rented house where he stayed in C.I.T. Nagar, Chennai. A few people (6-8) attended the meetings. Today he has a largest AG Church in Sydapet, Chinnamalai.

The church services are attended by more than 20,000 people. Recently he has purchased 25 areas of land, to build a church to hold 50,000 people.

The collegiate Ambassador ministry was started in Samadanapuram, Palayamkottai, in a small rented house. Later an Assembly of God church was built, where 2000 people attend the church services. So the collegiate Ambassador ministry resulted in changing the spiritual and moral lives of students in the colleges. Those students have been a blessing to the college, family, friends, and the society.

Students for Christ:

“Students For Christ” ministry was started in 1990.¹⁰³ The aim was to reach high school students to teach them spiritual and moral values in life. The ministry was mainly among the Christian students which attracted other students who were seeking peace and answer for their problems. Students from the secular colleges were also reached out through this ministry.

Rev. John Vincely, a graduate from secular college and Theological College (AGTBC) has been the co-ordinator working among the students. He has been pastoring an AG church in Anupanadi, Madurai. Professor Charles and a few others have been a great blessing in this ministry.

One day retreats and three days camps have been conducted in many parts of Tamilnadu. A few recognized pastors had the privilege of speaking to the students in retreats and camps, conducted in Madurai, Trichy, and Nagercoil in the past years. The High School and College students were given chance to sing, testify even to preach in the camps. Prayers have been offered by the co-ordinator and other leaders especially during the time of examination, students were given personal attention by the leaders during counseling and prayer.

“The Student for Christ” has ministries in all the Twenty five sections (Districts) where AG has churches. In 1999 there was a student camp held in Danishpet (Salem). Two thousand students gathered there for a few days and Rev.P.S.Rajamoni, Rev. Thomas Abraham, Rev. David Steward (Jr.) were the speakers. It was a time of joy and relaxation for them. Several students gave their lives to God; many received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, and others rededicated their lives to God. Some of the SFC leaders along with students went to Karnataka for good news ministry. In October 2001 the SFC

conducted meetings among the students in Rajasthan. “The Students for Christ” ministry is growing day by day and it is an asset to the Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu.

Children’s Ministry:

Ever since the beginning of the Assemblies of God ministry in Tamilnadu, importance was given to ministry among the children, with in churches as well as outside churches. Sunday classes have been conducted under the trees, in the homes of Christians as well as in Assemblies of God churches. Students who studied in the AG Bible College were taught to conduct Sunday classes for children. They were also sent to various places in Madurai area to conduct Sunday classes on Sundays. The graduates who became pastors, taught the church believers to teach children on Sundays.

The children ministry made a great impact in the hearts of even non Christian parents. Non-Christian parents were happy to see that the children have come out of school with good moral standards. Parents were happy to see the children having faith in God and living an obedient and disciplined life after attending Sunday classes. Children who used to speak vulgar words and fight with one another changed their behaviour. In the Sunday school catchy choruses, and action songs were taught. Moral stories from the Bible were taught through flannel board pictures. In the Sunday classes, children were taught how to pray in simple words. Prayers were offered for their parent’s health, financial needs, children’s education and other things. Children began to pray in the morning and also before going to sleep. In a particular place, a Sunday school teacher was asked to teach guitar to his daughter who was eight years old. Her mother began to listen to the Christian chorus taught through the guitar. The name of the chorus was “There in no sorrow there in my Father’s house. There is Joy, Joy Joy.” The mother told her daughter that she got peace in her mind while the chorus was being sung.

In 1969, a student from AG Tamilnadu Bible College was conducting Sunday class in Samayanallur, Madurai. Prayer was offered for rain, since there was no rainfall for a long period. Children closed their eyes in reverance and they too prayed along with the teacher. That night they could witness a heavy down pour in that area. At once the children remembered the prayer offered by the Sunday school teacher. They told their parents that it was an answer to their prayer.

St. Francis Xavier, a Roman Catholic missionary, came to India for proclaiming the good news of Christ. He believed in training the children and taught them Catechism, the Lord’s Prayer and the ten commandments. He believed that teaching small children

aged between one and seven would make them firm in their faith. He used to say, “Give me a child from one to seven and he will ever be a Catholic.”¹⁰⁴

Oswald Sanders cites Torrey’s words concerning children’s ministry. “No other form of Christian work brings such immediate, such large and such lasting results as work for the conversion of children.”¹⁰⁵

Today children live in an age of computer, internet and television. The minds of the children are filled with filth while they watch unwanted things. So the children’s ministry helps them to correct their ways ever since child hood. A boy from a Christian home attended the C.S.I. Sunday school, the Lutheran Sunday school and his father’s Sunday school. He had a desire to draw closer to God when he was sixteen. He surrendered his life to Christ at the age of eighteen. He entered the ministry since his parents dedicated him while he was in the womb of his mother. They also told him often that he has to serve God. One day he obeyed and went to the Bible College. When he studied the Bible incidents, he at once remembered his father teaching him the stories during his childhood. Hence the children ministry has been a great possible support to the parents, the society and the nation.

Home Mission:

In 1967 there were not any Assemblies of God established churches between Trichy and Bangalore. There was some ministry done by the pastors like the Rev. Lamech, Pastor. K.C. Andrews and others in Hosur and Krishnagiri. Therefore Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu declared, Dharmapuri and Salem District as mission area. Graduates of the AG Tamilnadu Bible College and Southern Asia Bible College were sent to places such as Erode, Salem, Hosur and other places. In 1982 there was an Australian missionary, working in Salem. In 1984 a minister’s meeting was held in his house.¹⁰⁶ That time there was an AG church in Karur. Rev.Robert Singh the present presbyter in Salem District was in Krishnagiri pastoring an Independent Pentecostal church. Rev. Devanesan the former presbyter for Dharmapuri District came to Hosur in 1984. Rev.Clarence (Lecturer at Southern Asia Bible College) was the presbyter in this section. Later the late Rev.Thomas Walker pastor of Elim church, Kudalnagar, and Madurai became the presbyter. Rev. Thomas Walker was an Anglican, joined the Assemblies of God church in Kalavasal Madurai. He was a layman who helped the late pastor Stephen at Narimedu. He had a great thirst for ministry. He lived a very simple life though he was a Railway officer. Later he resigned the Railway job, and became a full time pastor. He sold his house and built the Elim Church at Kudalnagar. Rev.Thomas Walker along with his church ministry was appointed presbyter for Salem and Dharmapuri District. He went there, preached in meetings encouraging the

pioneering pastors. As a result many churches were built through the tireless ministry of the presbyters and pioneering pastors.

1:4 Indian context and constitutional rights:

The Assemblies of God Churches, pastors and believers follow Indian cultural practices. People who attend the church services, remove their slippers or shoes before entering into the church. In a big church where thousands of people attend, are given a token and their slippers will be kept according to the token number. Men sit on left side and the ladies on right side. Most of them sit on the mat spread on the floor. Old people or sick people sit on a bench or chairs. Men wear dhoti and shirt or trouser and shirt. Ladies wear sarees and the youngsters; come in sudidhar.

The church services are conducted in Tamil language. People clap hands while singing and musical instruments such as key board, guitar and drums are used. In the early years, Harmonium, tambourine and side drums were used. The songs are composed in Indian tunes, such as Karnatic, Adhithalam, Nahathalam and other tunes.

The constitutional Rights:

The following articles speak of, the right of any Indian citizen in India:

- **Right to Equality:** “Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste sex or place of birth – the state shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds, only on religion, race, caste, sex, and place of birth or any of them.”¹⁰⁷
- **Right to Freedom of Religion:** “Freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of Religion – subject to public order, morality and health and to the other provisions of this part, all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practice and propagate religion.”¹⁰⁸

Of Offenses Relating to Religion:

Injuring or defiling place of worship with intent to insult the religion of any class – whoever destroys damages or defiles any place of worship, or any object held sacred by any class of persons with the intention of there by insulting the religion of any class of persons or with the knowledge that any class of persons is likely to consider with such destruction, damage or defilement as an insult to their religion, shall be punishable with

*imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years or with time or with both.*¹⁰⁹

The above articles give insight to every Indian citizen the right to believe and practice one's religion and the right to proclaim one's faith. At the same time no Indian has any right to attack any religion of India, directly or indirectly in words or in writing.

Jesus is the best model for approaching the hearers in a positive manner. In the time of Jesus, the Jews were under the rule of the Roman Empire. There were Greeks and slaves whom Jesus came across. He never attacked any one of them. The Greeks believed in fourteen gods such as Zeus, Apollo, Hera, Pluto and so forth. The Romans worshipped more than twelve gods including celestial beings such as Jupiter, Neptune, Mercury, Venus and so forth.¹¹⁰ Jesus never attacked their belief, or practices but he touched on the basic issue of that time. Jesus said, "Truly, Truly I say unto you, every one who commits sin is a slave to sin... so if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed." (John 8:34, 36 RSV). The Father of our Nation, the late Mahatma Gandhi had great respect for Jesus Christ and his teachings especially the Sermon on the Mount. He liked the Christian hymns such as "Rock of Ages cleft for me", "When I survey the wondrous cross", and "Abide with me."¹¹¹ He accepted "Jesus as a martyr, an embodiment of sacrifice, and a divine teacher." He pointed that "His death on the cross was a great example to the world."¹¹²

Gandhi gave the following advice to Christians to the remaking of India:

- All of you Christians... must begin to live more like Jesus Christ.
- Practice your religion without adulterating it or toning it down. Practice it as it is.
- Emphasize love and make it your working force, for love is central in Christianity.
- Study the non Christian faiths more sympathetically to find a more sympathetic approach to the people.¹¹³

So the Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu follow the Indian culture even in church services. India is a democratic country, and every Indian has the right to speak and the right to choose any religion. It has made the A.G churches to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ in Tamilnadu and as a result church growth has occurred.

The Assemblies of God denomination was originated in the United States of America. In a place named Topeka in Kansas City, a Bible school student, received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit on January 1, 1901. This experience was the cornerstone for the beginning of the Pentecostal experience in the USA. Later in Los Angeles city, William J. Seymour a coloured preacher received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. He was used as an instrument to lead people in USA and around the world to receive this experience. The name Assemblies of God came into existence in 1914 in Hot Springs, USA. Its purpose was, to find unity in doctrine, to maintain God's work in the states and other countries, to decide the right use of funds, to unite all Pentecostal groups under a legal name and to establish Bible schools to train people for the ministry.

In India several ladies received the baptism of the Holy Spirit in Mukti Mission orphanage started by Pandit Ramabai. Rev. Shoemaker and other missionaries who had such experience, were responsible for the beginning of the A.G ministry in North India in 1918. In 1908, Rev. Berges, an Assemblies of God missionary, came to Kerala and started the first Pentecostal Bible college in 1927. In the course of time the A.G ministry began to spread in North India, South India, East India and other places. The ministry in Kerala was started by a lady missionary, Mary Chapman. In 1950, the late Rev. A.C. Samuel, became the superintendent of A.G Assemblies of God in Kerala. Three missionaries from USA were responsible for the A.G ministry in Karnataka. An A.G Bible institute was started in Bangalore in 1951.

Miss. Constance S. Eady was a missionary from England. Through the National the late Rev. Lamech, she started a ministry in Tamilnadu. Rev. Oliver Forth an American missionary was responsible for starting an A.G Bible institute in Madurai in 1948. It was to train pastors, evangelists and lay workers who could start A.G ministry in several parts of Tamilnadu. Rev. Edwards family from USA came to Tamilnadu in 1940's. They started the A.G industrial school in K.P. Valasai in Trinevely Dist. They

built the first A.G church in K.P. Valasai in 1949. Along with the American missionaries, the Indian Nationals were used to proclaim the good news. They were used to achieve the following such as: Proclaiming the good news; preparing pastors and evangelists; pioneering church ministry; participating in leadership and providing the younger generation with leadership skills. The late Rev. M. Benjamin was Superintendent of A.G of Tamilnadu during 1947 – 1951. Dr. Y. Jeyaraj who saw the vision of Christ, when he was 8 years served as Superintendent in A.G Tamilnadu for 38 years. Rev. K.C. Andrews, Rev. S. Adam Durai, Rev. Victor and others were Nationals whom God used to build the A.G church ministry in Tamilnadu. The A.G of Tamilnadu follows the sixteen fundamental doctrines which are written in the constitution and by laws of the South India A.G.

A pastor and his wife had to wear white dress only. The families were not allowed to wear jewellery. The pastor had to live a life of faith depending upon God for the daily needs of the family. However rupees thirty was given to support the family every month. This help was stopped after the ordination. Church services were held in a rented house. The house served as the pastor's residence and the living room was used for church service. Prayer, singing, testimonies special songs, offering, message, prayer and benediction were the order of Sunday service. Church conventions were conducted once or twice a year. Children were not baptized in infant stage but were dedicated by the pastor. Prayers were offered on behalf of the sick persons. There was a time when neither the pastors, nor the believers would take medicine. The above practices were observed by the researcher in the A.G churches.

The A.G ministry had its roots in Tamilnadu in 1948. The years 1948 – 1970 had been the period of sowing the seeds of good news. The period 1971 – 2003 is described as the period of harvesting. The A.G churches in Tamilnadu began to grow since a Bible school was started in 1948 in Madurai. It produced leaders, pastors, evangelists and lay

workers, who serve in Tamilnadu and elsewhere. The Tamil District Council of the South India A.G consists of a committee. It includes Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Secretary, Treasurer and a Committee member. The above officers are elected for one year in the annual conference meeting. The committee appoints presbyters in each section (District). A presbyter is to supervise 20 - 50 churches. A graduate from the Bible College will be taken on probation, and after one year a Christian workers certificate, will be given. Later Lisenciate minister's certificate and finally he will be ordained. In 1970, the total number of missionaries, pastors, and Bible women was altogether 56 – missionaries 4, ordained pastors 37, and Bible women 5. The total number of believers was three thousand. The Decade of Harvest started in (1989). The total number of the A.G churches in Tamilnadu in 1989 was 180. It enabled to establish 400 churches in 10 years. In 1999, the total number of churches has increased to more than 600. In 2003 it has increased as follows: organized churches 710, preaching points 1071, no of pastors 737, members 1, 29, 859.

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5 : 9 December 2009

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CHAPTER II

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS FOR EVANGELISM

In this chapter the following features are included:

❖ **Biblical mandate of evangelism:**

It is regarding what the Bible teaches about evangelism.

❖ **Psychological and Sociological aspects of evangelism:**

Psychology deals with the mind and human behavior. Evangelism deals with the mind and especially the change of the whole person (spirit, soul and body) under the influence of Christ. Sociology deals with the behaviour of people concerning, equality, freedom and justice. Evangelism deals with people that all human beings are equal before God. Evangelism leads people toward freedom, relieves them from bondages and enables them to respect every one.

❖ **Theological basis of evangelism:**

Theology deals with terms such as God, mankind, sin, Jesus Christ and repentance. Evangelism also deals with terms such as God, Man's separation from God owing to sin, Jesus Christ the loving Savior and forgiveness through repentance.

❖ **Missiological aspects of evangelism:**

It deals with the Old Testament concept of mission and the New Testament concept of mission. It is reaching the people with the good news of Jesus Christ.

2:1 – Biblical Mandate of Evangelism:

The meaning of the word mandate is, “a charge: a command from a superior official or judge of an inferior, ordering him how to act.”¹ The Biblical mandate

of evangelism is based on the Great Commission given by the Lord Jesus Christ. He gave the command to His disciples before His ascension. Biblical mandate of evangelism is viewed on the basis of the following: The will of the Father; the teachings of Jesus Christ; and The Mission of the Holy Spirit. ²

a) The will of the Father:

Jesus Christ the Son of God realized evangelism as the will of His Father. When Jesus was twelve years old, he went to the temple with his parents. After visiting the temple, the parents of Jesus and others left. Whereas Jesus the young lad aged twelve, was amidst those Jewish rabbis, discussing with them the heavenly matters. The parents of Jesus found on the way that Jesus was not with the other lads. They returned to the temple searching for Jesus Christ.

“Now so it was that after three days, they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions.” Luke 2:46 (NKJV) Mary the Mother of Jesus asked him with amazement, “Son why have you done this to us? Look your father and I have sought you anxiously.” And He said to them, “why did you seek me? Did you not know that I must be about My Fathers’ business?” Luke 2:48-49 (NKJV).

Jesus was very much conscious of His Father’s will ever since he was very young. Jesus Christ began to preach the good news at the age of thirty. Jesus had a close communion with His heavenly Father through prayer. One day while he was praying, He revealed, why God sent him to this world.

And in the morning, a great while before day, he rose and went to a lonely place and there He prayed. And Simeon and those who were with Him pursued Him. And they found Him and said to Him, ‘Every one is searching for you’. And He said to them, “Let us go on to the next towns, there I may preach also, for that is why I came out.” (Mark 1:35-38 RSV).

It was the will of His Heavenly Father that Jesus should speak to the people the good News. On another occasion, Jesus before healing the blind man, said to the disciples, “we must work the works of Him who sent me, while it is day, night comes when no man can work.” (John 9:4 RSV)

Jesus in His great High priest prayer said, “And this is the eternal life, that they know you; the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I have glorified you on the earth. I have finished the work which you have given me to do.” (John 17:3-4 NKJV). The above verses indicate the Father’s purpose in sending Christ to the world. The will of the Father was that Jesus Christ His Son must give His life, a ransom for the whole world. “The Son of man came to....give....His life a ransom for many.” (Mark 10:45 KJV). Jesus Christ wanted the disciples to do the will of the heavenly Father. As you sent me into the world, I also have sent them into the world (1 John 17:18 NKJV). So it is the will of the Heavenly Father, that the church should practise evangelism. World evangelist Morris Cerullo, a Jew says, “The heartbeat of God is souls! souls! souls!”³

b) The Teachings of Jesus Christ:

Jesus Christ started the ministry by reaching the people in their respective places. Jesus Christ went to the shore of Galilee, and spoke to Simeon and Andrew, “Follow me and I will make you become fishers of men.” (Mark 1:17 NKJV).

❖ First of all Jesus called the disciples to follow him. Jesus had a great plan for them. The above disciples were catching the fishes of the sea, which died when they were taken out of the water. Jesus wanted the disciples to catch the people, “who were dead in trespasses and sins.” (Eph 2:1 NKJV).

❖ Secondly Jesus called the disciples to be with Him: “Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach.” (Mark 2:14 NKJV). Jesus taught them by parables such as, the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son. He wanted to teach them God’s love and concern for people in the church and outside the church, in the home and outside the home. Jesus not only taught them but He practiced what He taught. Jesus came to seek and save those who were lost. Luke 19:10.

❖ Thirdly, He trained them. Jesus had twelve disciples, seventy disciples and many other people who followed Him. While they were with Jesus Christ, He gave them training and sent them two by two to reach the people in the region.⁴

“Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure disease. He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.” (Luke 9:1-2 NKJV). Jesus had a great concern for the people who were left without a shepherd. “After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where Himself was about to go.” (Luke 10:1 NKJV). Jesus also asked the disciples to pray so that the Lord of the harvest would send more labourers to the harvest field Luke 10:3.

❖ Fourthly, Jesus said to the disciples to wait in Jerusalem. It was to receive the power from above to be witnesses for God in various places. “Behold I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem, until you are endued with power from on high” (Luke 24:49 NKJV). Jesus wanted the disciples to preach the good news from Jerusalem to all the nations in the known world.

❖ Fifthly, Jesus commanded the disciples to preach the good news to every human being. And He said unto them, “go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every

creature.” (Mk 16:15 NKJV). Jesus called the disciples to follow Him. He chose them to be with Him. He made them to sit and He taught them. He sent them two by two and trained them. Then He commanded them to wait in Jerusalem to receive the power from high. Later He told them to go and preach the good news. The voice of Jesus Christ still sounds to those who want to follow Him.⁵

c) The Mission of the Holy Spirit:

The Holy Spirit is a person. He is called “comforter.” In Greek it is “παράκλητος” Paraklitos. It gives the following meaning such as, ‘one who stands by, advocate, helper and strengthener.’⁶ He is the third person of the Trinity. The Holy Spirit came upon Jesus Christ in the form of a dove while He was praying. “And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him.” (Luke3:22 NKJV).

Jesus started the ministry by the power of the Holy Spirit: “The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor.” (Luke 4:18 NKJV). The Holy Spirit was with Jesus in His evangelistic ministry. In the Acts of the Apostles, Luke writes, “How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil.” (Acts 10:38 NKJV).

Jesus commissioned the disciples to wait in Jerusalem in order to receive the power from above. “Behold I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem while you are endued with power from on high.” (Luke 24:49 NKJV).

❖ **Holy Spirit Gives:** He gives strength to witness: He is spoken of in Luke 24:49 ...as “The power from above.” In Acts 1:8 Jesus said of the Holy Spirit,” But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria and into the end of the earth.” (NKJV).

The disciples needed strength to bear witness for Jesus Christ amidst opposition and persecution. Witnessing is not merely believers' ministry. It is God who works in the mind of the believers through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit of God enables them to witness.

“But when the helper comes, whom I shall send you from the Father, the spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of me.” (John 15:26 NKJV).

Herold John Ookenga writes of the Holy Spirit's role:

*The Spirit has had a part in every stage of redemption, in creation, in revelation, in inspiration, in the incarnation, in the atonement, in the resurrection, in the formation of the church, in the missionary undertaking, in the prayer life of the believer, in the transformation of the believer unto the image of Christ, and so on. His work is a prerequisite to effective evangelism.*⁷

❖ **Holy Spirit Guides:**

The Holy Spirit not only gives power to witness to individuals, masses and nations, He also guides to witness in-different situations. Philip was a member of the laity in the Apostolic church. He was a man full of faith, wisdom and Holy Spirit. There was a persecution in Jerusalem which scattered believers everywhere. “At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria.” (Acts 8:1 NKJV).

The believers, who were scattered everywhere, started preaching the word. Philip went to Samaria and preached the good news to the mass. There was joy in that place. Later Philip was guided by an angel to go to the desert. He obeyed the voice of the angel at once. Afterwards, the Spirit said to Philip, “go near and overtake this chariot.” (Acts 8:29 NKJV). His obedience to the Spirit enabled the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch.

❖ **The Holy Spirit Guards:**

The Holy Spirit of God guides the believers, pastors, evangelists, and leaders to go in the right direction. He not only guides them but also warns them of impending danger and guards them in such situations.

“Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia. After they had come to Mysia they tried to go into Bithynia, but the spirit did not permit them.” (Acts 16:6-7 NKJV).

Paul and Silas were guarded by the Spirit of God and received warning from the Holy Spirit during the missionary journey.

2:2 Psychological and Sociological aspects of evangelism:

The word psychology means, “The scientific study of human mind, and its influence upon human behavior”⁸. The word psychology derives from two Greek words namely “ψυχη psuke” (mind or soul) and “λογος logos” (word or thought). It is the study of the human mind.

Psychology deals with personality which is reflected on the total quality of an individual’s behavior. Evangelism deals with the change of behavior, body soul and spirit. This happens when a person comes to himself or herself. The prodigal son who went on his own way became a beggar in no time. In the New Testament it is said that “... he came to himself” Luke. 15:17. The Hebrew word “*shub*” speaks of a “*⊂*” turn from one side of the path to the other side of the path.⁹ The Greek word μετανοια metanoia means “change of attitude” or “the change of mind.”¹⁰

The late William James was a psychologist and a philosopher. He is called *the father of modern psychology*. “In his early days, he was an artist, and later he became a medical student and he “developed an interest in experimental psychology.”¹¹ He taught physiology, psychology and philosophy at Harvard. He wrote several books. His book *Christian Literature and Living* www.christianliteratureandliving.com 120
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on, "The Varieties of Religious Experience" (1902), deals with conversion.¹² William James believed that, "conversion is the process gradual or sudden."¹³ He believed in change of attitude. He said, "The greatest revolution in my generation was the discovery that human beings by changing their inner attitudes of mind can alter the outer aspects of their lives."¹⁴

No one can change any one. When a person comes to self realization, there is a possibility for change of attitude. "A change in the mind which produces a sensible change in the body."¹⁵

Parents, teachers and others try to change children through teaching, and by disciplining. Negative approach like giving punishment leads a person toward temporary change or at times to develop negative attitude. People have been changed by the power of the Good News of Jesus Christ through the conviction of the Holy Spirit. The greatest achievement a person could experience in life is conversion or the born again experience.

Change of religion might take place by force or self realization. But conversion takes place only by the Grace of God and the decision is taken by the individual. Starbuck (1899) found the following motives leading to conversion:

*Social pressure and urging, the following out of a moral idea, remorse for sin, fear of death or hell, example or imitation, response to teaching, self regarding motives and altruistic motives central factors in conversion experiences he noted as spontaneous awakening, forgiveness, public confession, sense of oneness, self surrender determination and divine aid.*¹⁶

Kagawa was born in Japan on the 10th of July 1888. His father had influence in politics and he was a minister in the King's Cabinet. He had many wives and he used to drink. When Kagawa was three years old, his parents died. He was brought up by his grandmother and his foster mother. He didn't receive love from his foster mother or from his grandmother. He often received punishment and he suffered pain. He was even kept

in a dark room. Kagawa often suffered loneliness. He found refuge in places like the Bamboo Garden, King's Graveyard, and the river side. He loved nature.¹⁷ A child next to his house died due to some injury. Kagawa was blamed for no reason, and he suffered mental torture. During his studies, he was not happy with the hostel students who were following immoral activities. He came to know some missionaries. Their teaching and conduct lifted him up from frustration. A Christian teacher in the school where he studied, introduced him to Bible study and Jesus. Kagawa's search for love led him to have a personal relationship with God. In Christ he found the heroic model as that of Paul, "not I but Christ lives in me." Later when he went from one crisis to another his cry was, "Oh God makes me like Christ."¹⁸ Later Kagawa became a social worker. He began to help the down trodden people who were living in slums. Through his open air meeting, many prostitutes changed their behavior. He was against infanticide. Even children were sold during these days. He adopted children and began to care for them while he had theological training.

His involvement in social work influenced the poor, needy, and sick people. He visited the poor people and gave food to the hungry. He comforted the depressed ones. He counseled parents. He helped the parents to bury their dead children,¹⁹ by providing them the necessary arrangements for burial. He made his life happy by caring for people and changing their attitude by the power of the good news.²⁰

Psychological aspects of evangelism:

Bitterness, depression, frustration, stress and tension affect the mind, and body. Problems in one's personal life, family and society can have a negative impact on individuals, mind and body. The Japanese describe sickness as "The spirit in trouble."²¹

According to the medical association, sickness is owing to mental and spiritual problems.

Fifty percent of diseases are rooted in the mental and spiritual realm of a person . . .

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*Seventy percent of the people who come to doctors don't need medicine. They are passing on the sickness of their minds and souls to their bodies, and they will never get well unless they change their attitudes of mind and emotion.*²²

The good news of Jesus Christ convicts people and the Holy Spirit enables them to change their attitudes. Evangelism enables people to cast their burden upon the Heavenly Father and come out of bitterness, depression, frustration, stress and tension. Jesus was preaching in a house in Capernaum. Four people brought a man with palsy. Since there was a big crowd they let the sick man in by breaking the roof. Jesus touched the mind of the sickly person before healing his body. "When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy. Son thy sins be forgiven thee." Mark 2:6 (KJV). The above verse indicates that Jesus dealt with the mind of the man with the palsy before healing him. Probably the crowd might not have known the reason for the man's sickness. Jesus knew what the sickly man's problem was. After forgiving his sins the man was free from his guilty conscience. Later Jesus said to him, "I say unto thee. Arise and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. And immediately he arose, took up the bed and went forth before them all . . ." Mark 2:11-12 (KJV).

According to Professor C.H. Dodd, "it appears that the authority of Jesus penetrated to the subconscious depth of personality where so many mysterious disorders of mind and body have their source."²³

In the Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu, people with different problems in mind come to worship. Through hearing the gospel messages and prayers offered on their behalf, they receive inner healing.

A particular student went through internal conflicts ever since childhood. His father was from the C.S.I church a member of the laity and a business man. His mother was from a Roman Catholic background and both were devout Christians. His father was cheated by his family in the matter of property which affected him and his brothers. It brought helplessness and loneliness.

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In psychology it has been said, “Man is the product of heredity and environment.”²⁴ The student lived with his grandparents for more than five years, since he was three years old. He became a victim of environment. He began to mingle with boys who did not go to school. He became a fan of the Tamil cinema actor Mr. M.G. Ramachandran.

At this time the parents took him to his home, where his aunt also stayed and she used to hate him. His uncle who was his neighbor used to scold his family, and did not help when they went through poverty and suffering. The parents used to pray and cast their burden upon God. Since he was taken to Sunday school at the age of one and was given a Christian upbringing it gave him hope amidst conflict in the family circle.

According to statistics taken in USA by Christian psychologists conversion takes place between the ages of twelve to sixteen.²⁵ At the age of sixteen he decided to draw closer to God and he surrendered his life to Jesus Christ at the age of eighteen. His conversion was gradual. Evangelism through his parents, Sunday school teaching and church involvement from childhood enabled him to surrender his life to God. It was not the conflict alone that made him accept Christ. It was the Grace of God, prayers of parents, Christian upbringing and the work of the Holy Spirit that brought about a change of attitude in him.

Therefore evangelism plays a psychological role in changing the attitude of any person through the finished work of Christ on the cross.

Sociological aspects of Evangelism:

Sociology is based on human behaviour. It may be collective or individual human behaviour. Evangelism too is based on society, especially the transformation of individuals through the Good News of Jesus Christ.

If sociology is defined,

*“as the study of man in society and accepts the position that a complete analysis of human action requires the study of social cultural, and personality facts, then Sociology of religion may be defined as the scientific study of the reciprocal influences of religion and society, culture and personality.”*²⁶

The sociological theorists . . . give six basic functions of religion:

- ❖ Religions provides support in times of uncertainty; consolation in times of disappointment; and reconciliation in times of alienation from goals and norms of society.
- ❖ Religion provides security in times of contingency by cultic practices and formal worship. It offers transcendental relationship.
- ❖ “The norms and values of established society are sacralized by religion. This allows the group goals to be maintained over individual wishes.”²⁷
- ❖ Religion can provide a prophetic function by providing the standards of value.
- ❖ “Religion performs important identity function.” It enables people to find answer to who they are and what they are.
- ❖ “Finally, there is a relationship between religion and maturation. Religion sacralizes norms and ends which support the expectation of each age level.”²⁸

Sociological aspects of evangelism, by proclaiming the Good News, society have been changed in many aspects.

❖ **Slavery:**

The followers of Jesus Christ were known as followers of the way. In Antioch for the first time, the followers of Christ were called, “Christians.” The word Christian comes Christian Literature and Living www.christianliteratureandliving.com 125
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from the Greek word “CHRISTIANOS”²⁹ (χριστιανος). Antioch was the capital of the province of Syria, governed by a proconsul in charge of two legions. It was the third city in the Empire, with its own games, a tremendous building programme financed jointly by Augustus and Herod.³⁰ In Antioch there was an influential Jewish population. Antioch was known for immorality. Antioch was the centre for diplomatic relations and was a meeting place for many nationalities. There were many gentile converts to Judaism who enjoyed the full citizen’s rights. The Good News of Jesus Christ penetrated in Antioch among the gentiles and others.

“Different elements in the Good News appealed to different types of gentiles. There were the socially depressed classes, slaves and the poorer freed men.”³¹ Slaves were not considered as human beings in the ancient world, but as objects. They did not have any rights, not even citizenship. Through evangelism slaves, free men, Jews, Greeks and Romans became equal before the Almighty God. Everyone was adopted into the family of God.

The word “adoption” was familiar among the Romans. “In Roman law all born in the family were children, but only those legally adopted were reckoned as sons.”³² Adoption was not a Jewish concept at all. It was unknown to the Jews.

*It was a marvelous word for bringing home to gentiles the fact that they were once out of relationship with God, with no claim on him, but now through the divine initiative expressed in Christ the proper Son, they have become members of the family heir to riches and privileged to call God by the ultimate name Abba.*³³

Paul in his epistle Philippians states regarding the Christology of Jesus Christ as follows: “Who being in the form of God did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.” Phil 2:6-7 (NKJV). The Greek word used here for bondservant is “δουλος” meaning a slave.

Through Jesus Christ even the slaves received the free Grace (the unmerited favor of God). It was far from the slave masters. A slave could not expect pardon but severe punishment. It was death for him and his family. “It was common for a slave owner to find out a run away slave, shut him up in a place of custody, whip him and complain to the higher authorities for punishment.”³⁴

“The second century Christians treated the slaves in a kind manner, they permitted them to have the same rights as any one else. A former slave became the Bishop of Rome.”³⁵ The Good News of Jesus Christ through evangelism set free the slaves as well as the slave master, from their sins. It set them free from guilt and offered them hope. Jesus Christ through his preaching brought, the Romans, Greeks, Jews and the slaves under one category, “Jesus answered them, most assuredly, I say to you, who ever commits sin is a slave of sin” John 8:34 NKJV. St. Paul, a Roman citizen and a Jew became a follower of Christ. He called Onesimus a run away slave, “my son Onesimus” Philemon 1:10.

❖ **Segregation:**

The word segregation means, “a segregated mass or group: separation of one particular class of persons from another, as on grounds of race.”³⁶ The Bible declares that “God created man and woman in His image and likeness.” Gen 1:27 (KJV). But women have become victims and have suffered over the centuries. Women were deprived of their freedom, equality, dignity and many other things.

The Jews considered women as a play thing or as a goat. Among the Jews “the state of divorce was serious.”³⁷ According to the Jewish law a husband could give a bill of divorce for uncleanness or indecency. During the time of Jesus, there were two schools of thought. According to the school of Shammai a husband could divorce a wife on the

basis of adultery alone. According to the school of Hillel a husband could divorce a wife on the basis of indecency. The following activities were considered as indecent:

- Going out with her hair unbound,
- Spinning in the street,
- Talking to another man,
- Spoiling his (husband's) dinner,
- Speaking disrespectfully of her husband's parents,
- In her husband's presence, being a
- Scolding woman (and a scolding woman was defined as a woman whose voice could be heard in the next house).³⁸

In Greece women were treated as follows:

“We keep prostitutes for pleasure; we keep mistresses for the day-to-day needs of the body; we keep wives to be the mothers of our children and the guardians of our home.”³⁹

In Greece a male person could have relationship with members of the opposite sex before marriage. He also could have relationship with some one outside the marriage. It was normal and was a part of life.

Among Romans normal life was in question. “In the Roman world divorce was staggeringly common.”⁴⁰ Women were married to be divorced and later they were divorced to be married.

“As whole women were the depressed ones among the Jews, Greeks and the Romans. They were very much the second sex.”⁴¹ They neither had public rights nor influence. They were under the custody of their husbands.

*Christianity changed all this. Men and women were of equal value in God's sight: women had followed throughout his ministry and had remained faithful to him even men had run away.*⁴²

Jesus respected men, women and children and taught that everyone is equal in the sight of God. Jesus washed the feet of the disciples. It was “a task normally assigned to women or servants.”⁴³ Jesus respected women as human beings created in the image of God. The Good News of God was for both men and women of all ages and all walks of life. The following instances found in the New Testament are examples, of how Jesus respected the dignity of women.

- **Samaritan Woman:**

Jesus had to go to Galilee from Judea. Samaria was in between Judea and Galilee. John writes, “He had to pass through Samaria” (John 4:4 RSV). For a Jew, to go through Samaria was unthinkable because there was hatred between Jews and Samaritans for a long time. He would rather cross through Jordan and cross again to enter into Galilee and it would take six long days. Whereas if anyone went through Samaria it would take only three days. Jesus purposely went through Samaria in order to break the religious and social barrier. Normally a Jew would not talk to a woman on the road.⁴⁴ Jesus talked to the Samaritan woman and revealed to her the importance of the water of life. By asking the Samaritan woman a favour, Jesus broke the barriers. L.C. Scarborough says:

*Society, religion, racial pride, personal dignity and the traditionalism of thousands of years rose up to block the way of Jesus', further approach to the woman; but thank God, with one touch of His divine finger He brushed aside as the cracking grass before the storm all these barriers. Nothing can keep Jesus from the heart of the seeking sinner. Jesus did not seem to come down to it. The compassion of His soul went across these barriers without any sense of loss or compromise.*⁴⁵

- **Seeking woman:**

The Bible says that Jesus “entered a certain village” Luke10:38 (NKJV). A certain woman named Martha invited him. Mary the sister of Martha sat at the feet of Jesus and heard the word of God. Jesus had a motive in his ministry that was to speak the

life giving word to people every where. Jesus was willing to speak even to one individual regardless of their sex.

- **Serving woman:**

Since Jesus broke the social and sexual barrier, women, children, rich and poor followed him. They not only received blessings but they themselves became a blessing to others too. Jesus accepted their service.

Now it came to pass, afterward, that He went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with Him. And certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities-Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons, and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herods steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for Him from their substance. (Luke 8:1-3 NKJV).

- **Sinful woman:**

The gospel of St. John, chapter 8:2a states: “Now early in the morning He came again unto the temple.” While Jesus was teaching to the people who came to him, the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery. The scribes and the Pharisees were religious who were against Jesus Christ and they wanted to find fault in Jesus. They brought the woman but not that man who was involved in immoral act. Jesus knew “what was in man” John 2:25b. Jesus, the lover of souls understood the craftiness of the Jewish religious leaders. They wanted Jesus to answer whether to stone her according to the Mosaic Law. Jesus told them to stone her but on one condition. “He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first” (John 8:7b NKJV). Jesus stooped down and began to write. The crowd along with the religious leaders left the place since they were convicted by their conscience. There was only one person without sin. He was none other than Jesus. Jesus said to her, “Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more” (John 8:11b NKJV). Jesus had forgiven the sinful woman and told her not to do it anymore.

- **Sorrowful woman:**

A particular woman's only son had died. People carried the young man's body on a pier and the mother was walking behind weeping. "When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, do not weep." (Luke. 7:13 NKJV) Jesus spoke to the dead body to arise. The dead man got up and began to speak. Jesus gave him to his mother. Jesus gave hope to the weeping woman by raising her only son who was dead.

- **Suffering woman:**

There was a woman with hemorrhage. She suffered from this incurable disease for twelve years. She was an outcaste before the Jews and had to stay away from the people. Jesus was on his way to heal a twelve year girl who was struggling for life in her house. Her father came to call Jesus while she was in her death bed. During this time, the woman touched the hem of the garment of Jesus. She was immediately healed, and Jesus was the only person who knew the miracle happened apart from the woman. Jairus the ruler of the synagogue the father of the 12 year girl was happy since Jesus was on the way to the girl's house. At the same time, Jesus suddenly stopped on the way and asked, "Who touched my garment?" There was a big crowd around him. For Jairus it was a pathetic situation. Jesus stood for two reasons. It was to reveal to Jairus, that he should be still in faith, as his servants were to tell him the sad news that his daughter had already died. On the other hand Jesus wanted to give hope to Jairus. He wanted him to know that a lady with an issue of blood was healed by touching the hem of his garment. So, Jesus would raise his daughter even though she was dead. He wanted the crowd to know that the lady with an issue of blood was unclean according to the Jewish law. To Jesus the people with sinful nature they were unclean internally. Jesus was the only person who was clean before them. He was there to help all of them especially the woman and the girl. The lady was suffering for 12 years. And the girl was twelve years of age.

- **The Syrophonecian woman:**

Jesus respected the Jews, Romans, Greeks, slaves and others. The Jews considered themselves great before others. They disrespected the gentiles. A Greek woman who was a syrophonecian by birth came to Jesus. She fell at the feet of Jesus Christ and asked him to cast the unclean spirit out of her daughter. “But Jesus said to her, “Let the children be filled first, for it is not good to take the children’s bread and throw it to the little dogs” (Mark 7:27 NKJV). To the Jews the gentiles were considered as dogs. Probably Jesus was telling the woman, “Don’t you know that the Jews consider you as dogs?” She humbled herself in such a way and replied him saying, “Yes Lord, yet even the little dogs under the table eat from the children’s crumbs.” (Luke 7:28 NKJV). Jesus appreciated her words of faith by saying, “Then Jesus answered and said to her, “O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire” And her daughter was healed from that very hour” (Matt 16:28 NKJV).

The gospels give many more incidents of Jesus Christ, where he showed greatest respect for women. He talked to the Samaritan woman, taught Mary who sat at his feet and accepted the service rendered to him by the rich women. He forgave a sinful woman, raised a widow’s dead son and healed women and cast the evil spirit of the Syrophonecian woman’s daughter.

The missionaries and locals who proclaimed the Good News of Jesus Christ in several parts of India faced the following issues:

- ❖ **Caste restrictions:** Lower caste people were prohibited from fetching water from wells, and walking on certain streets. Women of a certain class were not allowed to wear dress to cover their chest.⁴⁶

- ❖ **Infant marriage:** A girl between the age of six and seven was married to a boy aged twelve. She had to stay in the boy’s home to understand his family and other customs.⁴⁷

❖ **Female Education:** Females were not allowed to go to school. It was considered as a disgrace. The Non Christians did not accept the concept of educating the girls. Ziegenbalg the Lutheran Missionary ⁴⁸ from Germany pioneered the first girl's school at Tranqubar in 1707 in Tanjore District. ⁴⁹

The late Paul Kadambavam, author of Mathar Malar (Tamil) women's magazine writes as follows: "In our college days, about 60 years ago (1910) female education was a keenly contested subject in our debating classes. Many strongly opposed it. The Chairman's remarks were ambiguous. Public opinion in those days was against female education." ⁵⁰

- **Widow's Marriage:**

Widow's marriage was unthinkable. "It was the Roman Catholic Church however which made the care for widows, its special concern." ⁵¹ The Roman Catholic Church took the first lead in practising marriages of widows. Secondly sisters of St. Anne opened a centre of religious activities for widows. ⁵²

- **Temple Girls:**

It was a custom to keep young girls in temples. These girls are supposed to do dedicated service to the gods. These girls were used for prostitution. Amy Carmichael, a lady missionary from Ireland rescued small girls from the temples. She kept them in her home amidst opposition. "The Zenana missionary Amy Carmichael made the rescue of small girls, dedicated to become devadasis, the center of her activities, soon after she had settled at Dohnavur in 1900." ⁵³

- **Superstitious practices:**

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Leprosy was considered as “a curse from God.”⁵⁴ The medical work and the education given by missionaries changed the above concept. Hugald Grafe quotes from S. Manickan’s social setting,

*Overcoming superstitious practices and the reluctance for surgery, for medical examination of women and for proper care of mothers before, during and after child birth, for overcoming ignorance of hygienic habits, for fighting malnutrition.*⁵⁵

There was a time when ladies were not allowed to wear slippers. The late Paul Kadambavanam writes as follows: “About sixty years ago (1910), our ladies were not allowed to use slippers, eye spectacles, not even umbrellas. Christian ladies were using them and we used to look at them with wonder, calling *kalikalam, kalikalam, kalikalam.*”

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❖ **Burning widows alive:**

When the husband died, the widow was burned alive along with the husband’s dead body. Otherwise it was considered as a curse and disgrace to the bereaved family. Missionary William Carey along with Raja Ram Mohan Roy, a Bengali reformer with the help of Lord Bentick, influenced the British government to enforce a law in 4.12.1827 against Sati.⁵⁷ (Burning of a widow alive)

The Christian Missionaries and national leaders through evangelistic approach stood against the above practices and brought about a great change. In these modern days the people of India enjoy the freedom, brought to them through evangelism.

In the Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu the ladies are more in number than men. Ladies are used in various activities. They conduct care cells, sing special songs, and preach in the meetings, visit hospitals and other places for evangelism. Ladies come for full time ministry and study in the AG woman’s Bible College. The believers

of the church do not practice caste restrictions, infant marriage, and superstitious practices. Today all over India girls have the freedom to study in schools.

2:3 Theological Basis of Evangelism:

The word “Theology” comes from the Greek words, θεος (Theos) meaning God and λογος (Logos) meaning thought, or word or saying. The two words give the understanding about God and His word or thought.⁵⁸

“Evangelism and Theology are complementary to each other and utterly depended upon each other.”⁵⁹ These can be very effective, when both are used simultaneously. St. Paul was a good theologian and an evangelist. St. Augustine was an effective evangelist who through his writing moved men toward God.

Jonathan was a theologian and his theology was recognized in the United States of America and England. He was a leading evangelist in his days and turned colonies to God.

Charles Finny was a revival preacher and he taught systematic theology in Oberline College. His evangelistic message was centered on theology. It enabled him to lead many people toward repentance and faith in Christ. Theology helps to define and explain the meaning of the good news.

*Evangelism is the living expression of doctrinal theology. Evangelism is not to be defined as a mere branch of practical theology. It is not founded upon isolated texts, concepts and practices, but upon the total meaning of the Christian faith.*⁶⁰

As the bone framework called skeleton is important to the body, so is theology to evangelism. The aim of evangelism is to confront the human race with Christ’s good news.

“A careful understanding of theology contributes to effective evangelism in two ways; Theology helps make the evangel simple and it is an agent in conserving results.”⁶¹

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Doctrinal words such as sin, judgment atonement, repentance, faith, Justification, Christ and resurrection make up theology. When these doctrines are properly used, the message becomes relevant and appealing. The knowledge of theology contributes to effective evangelism.

2:3 The theology of evangelism bears the following features:

Mr. C.E. Autrey in his book, “Basic Evangelism gives four concepts regarding Theology of Evangelism: (A) The Sovereign God, (B) The sinful mankind, (C) Christ the Loving Savior, and (D) Faith and repentance.”⁶²

A. The Sovereign God:

It is based on who God is; His character, His standards and what he expects from his creation. God is our Father and His love is for all creation. “For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son . . . (John 3:16 RSV); God . . . sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (1 John 4:10 RSV); “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself” (2 Cor 5:19 KJV). God is our creator, who has claim upon us. Our very existence depends on Him. We are made to worship Him, to have fellowship with Him and live for His glory. The sovereignty of God in grace gives us our only hope of success in evangelism. St. Paul speaks of people who are natural who do not understand the things of God. 1 Cor 2:14; Man’s natural impulse and status resistance are the hindrances of evangelism. (Eph 2:2; 2 Cor 4:4).

“It is God who changes the stony heart, leading people to Christ by His grace. Christ draws people through the word and spirit through the Father. God’s purpose is that they should come to him.”⁶³

In evangelism one must trust in the Almighty God who turns people's hearts and saves people. The confidence upon the Sovereignty of God's grace enables people to have faith amidst discouragement, patient amidst hopeless situation. Through prayer one depends upon God's sovereign move in the life of any individual.

B. The sinful mankind:

The law in the Old Testament helps to understand the human situation. It shows the sinful nature of mankind. Adam and Eve by disobedience inherited sin in the world. (Rom. 5:13; 7:7) A person can understand sin and its consequences. Sin is the cause for all problems. It separates people from God and makes them rebellious. The law and prophets reveal a person's alienation from God. Deep within a person there is a longing to have fellowship with God and get rid of the burden of sin.

According to theological understanding, Sin is "missing the mark." To the Roman Catholic, "breaking the relationship from God is sin." ⁶⁴

The Bible gives the following description about sin:

- ❖ Despising: "He who despises his neighbour sins" Prov.14:21 NIV.
- ❖ Pride: "Haughty eyes and a proud heart, the lamp of the wicked are sin" Prov. 21:4 NIV.
- ❖ Evil thoughts: "The thought of foolishness is sin" Prov. 24:9. "An evil motive is sin" Tamil Bible.
- ❖ Words: "When words are many sin is not absent" Prov. 10:19 NIV.
- ❖ Unbelief: "Everything that does not come from faith is sin" Rom. 14:23 NIV.
- ❖ Neglecting to do good: "Anyone then who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins." Jas. 4:17 NIV.
- ❖ Breaking the law: "Sin is the transgression of the law" 1 John 3:4 KJV.

The Bible also declares the Consequences of sin:

- ❖ Sin will catch a person: “Be sure your sin will find you out” Num. 32:23 RSV.
- ❖ Sin will remind a person: “And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door” Gen. 4:7 KJV.
- ❖ Sin will threaten a person: “And my sin is ever before me” Ps. 51:3 RSV.
- ❖ Sin will hide God’s face to a person:” Your sins have hid his face from you” Isa. 59:1- 2 RSV.
- ❖ Sin will testify against a person: “Our sins testify against us” Isa. 59:1-2 (KJV).
- ❖ Sin will enslave a person: “Truly, Truly, I say to you everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin” John 8:34 RSV.
- ❖ Sin will bring punishment to a person: “For the wages of sin is death” Rom. 8:23 KJV.

Sin will lead a person toward guilt, uncleanness, rebellion, alienation before God. At the same time there is a craving in people, knowingly or unknowingly to come out of the bondage of sin.

C. Christ the loving Saviour:

Evangelism is centered on Christ, the son of God, Incarnate Lamb of God and Savior. In order to deliver people who were in a hopeless state, God the Father sent Jesus Christ to the world. Jesus Christ the loving Savior through His death brought forgiveness to all.

“The Son of God became the Son of Man in order to transfer the children of men into children of God.”⁶⁵

Through preaching of the message of God’s grace through Christ, it was God’s will to save those who believe. 1 Cor 1:21.

“The Kerugma centers in the incarnation, the crucifixion, the resurrection and the ascension of Jesus Christ.”⁶⁶

Jesus came for all the people, died for all and rose again for all. In Christ Jesus new life starts. God gives the answer to the problem of sin through salvation by Christ.

The nature of a person’s salvation in Christ is expressed in many terms, such as ‘ransom’ (Mark 10:45) ‘with a price’ (1 Cor 5:21), ‘propitiation’ for sin (Rom 3:25). The cross becomes the provision of God’s forgiveness.

Forgiveness from God brings permanent relief 1 John 1:9. God is the author of redemption as people have ruined themselves through sin. In order to deliver them who were in helpless state, God made a way.

“For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God” Eph 2:8 KJV. God became man in Jesus who through His death brought, forgiveness for all people. Phil 2:5-11.

D. Faith and Repentance:

The hearer’s of the Gospel are summoned by God to repent and believe. “God . . . commendeth all men everywhere to repent.” Acts. 17:30. God fulfilled His work by becoming man, emptying himself, dying for mankind, and rising again from the dead. Now responsibility is given to man to accept the offer in repentance through faith. Faith is having confidence in God. (Heb 11:1).

It is surrendering one's entire being into His hand. It makes a person as God's child and it gives eternal life. (John 1:12; 3:36). Repentance is also a work of grace like faith. It is God who enables man to repent through the work of the Holy Spirit. Man who ran away from God, now in faith and repentance runs toward His face, in whom love is reflected. The grace of God completes the work of repentance. Man responds to the goodness of God (Rom 2:4). "When the goodness of God leads repentance then God forgives sins; or repentance is the moral ground on which God forgives sins."⁶⁷

The Campus Crusade has published a twelve page message to be used for evangelistic purpose. The four laws with scriptures are given below:

LAW ONE:

God Loves you, and has a wonderful plan for your life.

God's Love – John 3:16.

God's plan – John 10:10b.

LAW TWO:

Man is sinful and separated from God. Thus he cannot know and experience God's love and plan for his life.

Man is sinful – Rom. 3:23.

Man is separated – Rom. 6:23.

LAW THREE:

Jesus Christ is God's only provision for man's sin. Through Him you can know God's love and plan for your life. Rom. 5:8; John 14:6; 2 Cor 5:21.

LAW FOUR:

We must receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord by personal Invitation.

How to receive Jesus Christ – Read John 3:1-8; 1:12.

Personal invitation – Rev. 3:20.⁶⁸

Evangelism and Theology go together. Both are dependent upon one another. Theology is based on God and His word. God is Sovereign. He is the omnipotent, Christian Literature and Living www.christianliteratureandliving.com 140
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omnipresent, and omniscient God. He is immutable. Evangelism is based on God's mercy shown to the whole world through His Son Jesus Christ. Theology talks about the sinful mankind. Disobedience is the cause for sin. Evangelism deals with mankind who is far away from God owing to sinful nature. Theology defines sin as "missing the mark." In Evangelism the Holy Spirit convicts of people of their sinful nature.

Theology talks about Jesus Christ, who is the only substitute for salvation. He is the propitiation for all of us. In evangelism Jesus is the central figure for salvation. His suffering, death, resurrection made the way for mankind to come out of the guilt of sin and to have peace of mind.

Theology deals with faith and repentance. In evangelism faith and repentance are required to have forgiveness from God. Faith is a gift from God. Repentance that makes a sinner to come to God through Jesus Christ. Holy Spirit the third person of the Trinity does the work in each and every individual. So theology and evangelism go together hand in hand, Since God is all in all. He is the creator, companion, and caretaker.

2:4 Missiological aspects of Evangelism:

Chamber's Dictionary defines "Mission" as follows: "an act of sending, especially to perform some functions The errand or purpose for which one is sent: that for which one has been or seems to have been sent to the world." ⁶⁹

The word "Mission" is a broad term used in politics, military commerce, social work, religion etc. "The word missiology came into English language from the French word "missiologie." ⁷⁰

"The Latin word '*missio*' and the Greek words (λογος, 'ανθρωπου) 'Logos' and 'Anthropou' constitute the compound word." ⁷¹

The Latin word ‘*missio*’ refers to the mission of God and the Greek words (λογος, ἄνθρωπου), *logos Anthropou* refers to the nature of mankind. The word, “Mission” is the term generally used for those,

*special undertakings in which preachers of the Gospel, sent by the church and going into the world, carry out the work of preaching the Gospel and implanting the church among people who do not yet believe in Christ.*⁷²

The word ‘Mission’ was used very much from the seventeenth century onwards. “Missiology can be defined as the systematic study of the evangelizing activity of the church and of the ways in which it is carried out.”⁷³ The Christian mission began ever since Jesus commanded the disciples to outreach the world through evangelism. In order to carry out the great commission, Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit. The disciples were to evangelize every creature in every nation, through the power of the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament there are many references which speak of Mission. It is to proclaim the God of the Fathers to the people in every region.

- Adam and Eve disobeyed God’s commandment and they were afraid to face the presence of God. Though they were chastised by the loving God yet He gave a promise to Eve: “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.” Gen 3:15 NKJV. It was a promise, to send Jesus Christ to destroy the power of Satan. Robert Hall Clover in his book, “The Bible Basis of Missions” says, “that the missionary idea is to be found all through the Old Testament.”⁷⁴

- Abraham was from a family of idol worshippers. God chose Abraham and called him to go to the place of God’s choice. He had to leave, his relatives, his place and other comforts in order to obey God’s voice. God promised Abraham the following things:

Now the Lord had said to Abram:

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Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land I will show you, I will make you a great nation; I will bless you, and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. (Gen 12:1-3 NKJV).

- **Joseph**

God took Joseph to Egypt to be a blessing to his family and others. He had the missiological concept of witnessing to different people about God.

He was a beloved son to Jacob. He was hated by his brethren, since his father loved him more than others. Joseph had the consciousness of God and hated to join his brethren to do wicked things. The Bible says that “Joseph brought unto his father their evil report.” Gen 37:2b. God gave Joseph a plan for him through a dream. He told the dream to his family and as a result he suffered in the hands of his brethren and became a slave to Potiphar. The bitterness Joseph received from his brethren, and the new environment in Egypt did not make Joseph to forget his faith in God, which he learnt from his father Jacob. Now in Egypt, he kept his life pure, even though the Ten Commandments were not given at that time. In every situation he witnessed God whom he believed. **His testimony to Potiphar's wife:** Joseph was a principled personality and told the lady who wanted to lie with him, “How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God.” Gen 39:9b. Joseph feared the unseen God rather than known people. **His testimony before the prisoners:** Joseph was a righteous young man, yet he was misjudged, mistreated and he had to suffer imprisonment. God was with him in Potiphar's house, He was with him in the prison also. There he met a butler and baker from the Kings palace, who had dreams and they became sad. When they wanted some one to interpret the dream Joseph said to them, “Do not interpretations belong to God?” Gen 40:8b (NKJV). **His testimony in the Palace to the Pharaoh:** Pharaoh had a dream and he found through the chief butler that Joseph could interpret Pharaoh's dream. Pharaoh thought Joseph was the interpreter of dreams. But Joseph knew his limitations

and exalted God before Pharaoh as follows: So Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, "It is not in me, God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace." Gen 41:16 (NKJV).

His testimony to Poti-pherah's daughter, Joseph's wife: Joseph had two sons born through his wife Asenath, who was the daughter of Poti-pherah. "For God has made me forget all my toil and all my father's house." He said the above thing when Manasseh was born. For the second son Ephraim, Joseph said: For God has caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction." Gen 41:15b, 52b (KJV). **His testimony before his penitent brethren:** Joseph was lifted to a position next to the King Pharaoh. His brethren came there for grains. Joseph used different methods to make his brethren, realize the evil they did to Joseph. Finally Joseph told that he was their own brother. They became panic and Joseph told them, "I am Joseph your brother . . . do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; For God sent me before you to preserve life." (Gen 45:5NKJV). **His testimony to his parent Jacob:** Joseph forgave his brethren and told them, "Hurry and go up to my father, and say to him . . . God has made me Lord of all Egypt." Gen 45:9. Joseph had a theological insight in all situations. He testified of God who is the planner, protector and provider. He had missiological insight remembering God's promise to Abraham. Finally Joseph said to his brethren, "I am dying; but God will surely visit you and bring you out of this land of which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." (Gen 50:24 MKJV).

"Here and there throughout the historical books of the Old Testament we catch glimpses of the worldwide reach of God's purposes of grace." ⁷⁵ The book of Esther speaks of the hand of God upon the Jewish people. Hamaan wanted to destroy them. Mordekai and Queen Esther were used to approach the throne of God through fasting and prayer. As a result the Jewish people were saved from destruction. Many people joined the Jewish religion "Then many of the people of the land became Jews." Esth 8:17b.

The book of Psalms gives the missiological aspects in different chapters. “Among the Psalms which are peculiarly marked by a world-wide vision are the 2nd, 22nd, 47th, 50th, 67th, 72nd, and 96th Psalms.”⁷⁶ Psalm 2:8 says, “Ask of me and I will give you, the nations for your inheritance; and the ends of the earth for your possession.”

In the book of Isaiah, God has clearly vindicated his purpose of choosing the people of Israel. Chap 43:10 says, “You are my witnesses” says the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe me, and understand that I am He. Before me there was no God formed, nor shall there be after me I even, I am the Lord, and besides me, there is no Savior. I have declared and saved, I have proclaimed, And there was no foreign God among you; Therefore you are My witnesses, “says the Lord,” that I am God. Isaiah 43:10-12 (NKJV).

Barry Webb in his book, *The Message of Isaiah*, writes, “But Isaiah also foresaw the day when witnessing would assume a far more active form; heralds would be sent out far and wide to proclaim the Lord’s glory among the nations.” (66:19-20).⁷⁷ Daniel a Jew from a royal family was a witness for God in Babylon through his life and words.

*He witnessed for God in the courts of four successive heathen monarchs, and so effectively as to lead them to recognize and proclaim his God to be the most high God, whose kingdom was universal and everlasting.*⁷⁸

The book of Jonah speaks of God who loves the people of the universe. His love is the same to the Israelites and the gentiles. “*The prophesy of Jonah* is a foreign missionary book, designed to show that God is the God of the Gentiles as well as to the Jews.”⁷⁹

The Missiological aspects of evangelism have the basis in the great commission given by Jesus Christ in Matthew Chap. 28:18-20 (NKJV).

Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always even to the end of the age. Amen.

The New Testament is full of missiological insights. Jesus came to this world to give his life for the sins of the world. Jesus chose the disciples in order that the mission of God must be proclaimed to the people every where. Evangelism has been carried out in the past centuries and today it is evangelism that keeps the church active and alive.

*The one great fact in which all true thoughts of God must find their root is the fact of John 3:16, that “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.” This verse is commonly regarded as the central text of the New Testament, the very heart of the Gospel.*⁸⁰

God sent Jesus Christ to save the world. He did not send Jesus to condemn the world. So this message of salvation should be proclaimed to the people around the world. The four Gospels in the New Testament indicate the missiological aspect or missionary nature.

“The New Testament draws its breath in missions, it incarnates missions, and where ever it goes it creates missions.”⁸¹

Acts of the Apostles records the evangelism and missionary zeal of the Apostles, disciples, and the believers. “The Acts was designed by God as a guide and model for all later generations.”⁸² *The book of Acts* indicates the work of the Holy Spirit in evangelism and missionary activities. The coming of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and others was to make them witnesses. In Acts 1:8, it says “But ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” (NKJV).

Acts of the Apostles chapter thirteen gives the insight regarding the first missionary journey. The leaders of the early church were fasting and praying. That time Christian Literature and Living www.christianliteratureandliving.com 146
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the Spirit of God said to them to separate Barnabas and Saul for the work to which the Holy Spirit called them (Acts 13:1-3). *The book of Acts* does not close with Amen or benediction. The missionary activity is carried on by the churches who believe in missions.

The Epistles too indicate regarding the missiological aspect of evangelism. In *the book of Romans*, Apostles Paul writes as follows. “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for every one who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.” Rom 1:16 (NKJV).

People who believe in the Gospel of Christ through evangelism they become the children of the kingdom of God. The book of Revelation indicates as follows, “The Kingdom of this world are become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.” Rev 11:15 (KJV).

The Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu has missions mandate in its fundamental doctrines, under the title *The Church and its missions*:

*“The Church is the body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, the divine appointments for the fulfillment of her great commission.”*⁸³

The Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu have the following reasons for existence

- To be an agency of God for evangelizing the world. (Acts 1:8; Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16).
- To be a corporate body in which men may worship God (1 Cor. 12:12).
- To be a channel of God’s purpose to build a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son.”⁸⁴

Biblical mandate for evangelism is based on the great commission of Jesus Christ. It is preaching the gospel to the whole world. Evangelism is the will of the Heavenly Father. God the Father wants the whole world to be saved. The teachings and ministry of Jesus Christ indicate the importance of evangelism. Jesus preached the good news to the people. He called certain people to follow him. He made them to stay with him, taught them, trained them and commissioned them to go for evangelism. The mission of the Holy Spirit plays a vital role in Evangelism. The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, dwells in the hearts of the believers. He convicts people and makes them to believe in Jesus Christ. He gives strength for evangelism. He makes the believers to be strong in witnessing. He guides the believers everywhere to witness in different situations. The Holy Spirit warns the believers, regarding impending danger and guards them in such situations.

Psychology deals with personality which is the total quality of an individual behavior. Evangelism deals with the change of behavior, (body soul and spirit). William James the father of modern psychology believed in change of attitude. He believed that the conversion experience is a process. It may happen gradually or suddenly. The motive of evangelism is to lead people toward genuine conversion. Dr. Kagawa was a victim of environment. He underwent loneliness, peacelessness and hopelessness. A Christian teacher introduced him to Jesus Christ.

He became a changed person in Jesus Christ. He began to work among the poor, needy and sick people. He was a social worker for God since he found love, hope and encouragement in Christ. He made his life happy by caring for people and changing their attitude by the power of the good news. The researcher too went through mental conflicts owing to partition problem. He suffered starvation, hatred and helplessness. His parent's teaching about Jesus Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit led him toward conversion. He dedicated his life to serve God and he believes in change of attitude.

Sociology is based on the society. It is about people collectively and individually. Evangelism too is based on society, especially the transformation of individuals through the good news of Jesus Christ. During the New Testament days as well as prior to that time there was slavery. Certain people were sold in markets as that of things. Evangelistic messages brought freedom to such slaves and a former slave became the Bishop of Rome in the second century AD. Among the Jews, Greeks, Romans and others, women were treated as that of a play thing. Women had no rights and they were divorced and suffered punishment. Jesus, respected the women and honored them – Jesus taught a seeking woman, Mary who sat at his feet to listen to him. Jesus accepted the service rendered by the women, who served him with their substances. Jesus saved a sinful woman from the people who brought her to Jesus to stone her. Jesus gave hope to a sorrowful woman by raising her dead son who was carried to be buried. Jesus healed the daughter of a syrophonician woman who suffered by an evil spirit.

Evangelism in India enabled to bring the following results to the people. Caste restrictions were removed. Infant marriages were stopped. Female education was accepted in the society. Widow's marriages were implemented. Temple girls were redeemed and such practice was stopped. Superstitious practices came to an end and burning of widows alive became unlawful.

Theology is based on God and His word. Theology and Evangelism go together hand in hand. Theology is based on the Sovereign God, The sinful mankind, Christ the loving Savior, Faith and repentance. Evangelism too is based on God who is sovereign, mankind which is away from God owing to sinful nature, Jesus Christ the central figure who saves people from sins. Faith and repentance which are the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of individuals. So Theology and Evangelism, go together.

The term “Mission” speaks of evangelism. The term “Mission” was used for evangelism ever since the seventeenth century. There are many references in the Old Testament regarding “Mission.” The book of Genesis indicates God’s promise to Eve regarding the coming of the savior. God chose Abraham to follow God so that Abraham would be blessed. Through Abraham, nations were to be blessed. Joseph had the missiological concept and he was a witness for God in every situation. He witnessed to Potiphar’s wife, the prisoners, Joseph’s own wife, his unfaithful brethren, and his father Jacob. The book of Esther gives indirect reference regarding “Mission.” In Psalms God wanted the people of Israel to ask God the nations for their inheritance. In the book of Isaiah God wanted His people to be witnesses for Him. The book of Jonah indicates God’s concern for the Syrians who were gentiles.

The New Testament is full of missiological insights. Jesus chose the disciples in order that the mission of God must be proclaimed to the people everywhere. Acts of the Apostles records, evangelism and missionary zeal of the Apostles, disciples and believers. In the Epistles too, the missiological aspect of evangelism is found. The book of Revelation gives the insight that God will reign the world. The Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu exist on the basis of evangelizing the people. It’s missions mandate is based on the Great Commission that Jesus Christ gave to the disciples. So the missiological aspects of evangelism are to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to every nation, every tribe and every creature.

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CHAPTER III

METHODS OF EVANGELISM OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD CHURCHES IN TAMILNADU

Chapter three includes the following topics:

- ❖ The methods followed by Jesus Christ in evangelism. He is the best model for evangelism.
- ❖ The first century Apostolic Church and the methods used for evangelism. It is a challenge to the Christian churches today.
- ❖ The three methods specific to the Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu are discussed. These are House churches, Cell groups (Care cells) and “OIKOS” (οἶκος) evangelism (Household evangelism).

3:1. The methods followed in evangelism by Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ the Son of God came to proclaim the good news to the people while he was on the earth. The methods used by Jesus Christ are found in the gospels. Those methods are effective even today. One can learn many practical lessons from the evangelistic ministry of Jesus Christ. He followed seven methods such as, preaching, discipling, teaching, healing, casting out demons, witnessing and life style evangelism.¹

❖ **Preaching:**

- **Chamber’s Dictionary defines preaching as follows:** “To deliver a sermon: to discourse earnestly: to give advice in an offensive, tedious or obtrusive manner.”²
- **In Homiletics preaching is defined as follows:** “Preaching is a spoken communication of the divine truth with a view to persuasion.”³
- **According to Luke’s Gospel, Jesus Christ preached his first sermon as follows:**
“The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the Gospel

to the poor” Luke 4:18a. Gospel is the good news of Jesus Christ who came to save the people.

- **In Mark’s Gospel, we read as follows:**

“Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, and saying, the time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand, repent, and believe in the gospel.” Mark 1:14b – 15 (NKJV).

Luke’s Gospel chap. 4:18 indicates that the preaching of Jesus Christ had the following thoughts:

- ❖ **Spiritual:**

(Theological) “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor.” 4:18a.

- ❖ **Psychological and Sociological:**

“He hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.” Luke 4:18b (KJV).

The above scriptures indicate that the preaching of Jesus Christ ministered to the theological, psychological and sociological needs. Preaching was the first method Jesus Christ used in evangelism. Jesus wanted people to believe in the gospel, and repent of their sins. He was giving them hope by saying that the Kingdom of God was at hand. Preaching has been followed in all denominations, in the church services and evangelistic campaigns. In the Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu preaching is the main feature in the churches, cell groups and evangelistic meetings.

In Tirunelveli a senior professor from A.G. Tamilnadu Bible College was preaching in an evangelistic meeting. There was a young man, a Karate Master (Black belt holder) waiting to attack the professor. The young man was a religious fanatic who

was against Christian preachers. But he was touched by the power of God since the preaching was based on the Bible text, “What will it profit, if a man gains the whole world and loses his own soul?” (Mark 8:34 NJKV). The young man gave his life to Jesus Christ and later he joined the Bible College. Now he pastors an independent church at Hosur.

❖ **Discipling:**

Jesus Christ came to this world to preach the good news. He had a motive and it was to prepare disciples, who would follow the ministry of Jesus Christ. As he walked toward the sea side, he found certain persons mending their nets. Jesus said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men.” Mark 1:17 (NKJV).

Robert E. Coleman in his book, *The Master plan of Evangelism* writes the objective of Jesus Christ, “He intended to save out of the world, a people for himself and to build a church of the spirit which would never perish.”⁴ His love was universal and evangelism was being carried out to people all over the world. He chose men so that they could continue the ministry following his methods. “The initial objective of Jesus’ plan was to enlist men who could bear witness for his life and carry on his work after he returned to the Father.”⁵ Jesus Christ chose average people, such as fishermen, and a tax collector for the ministry. They were ordinary, useful and hardworking people who were willing to follow Him. After choosing them Jesus Christ spent most of the time teaching and training them.

The Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu had similar motive ever since its ministry started here. The leaders established a Bible school in Madurai in 1948 to train students. The purpose was to evangelize, build churches and train people to carry the ministry. In the Assemblies of God, church services and youth meetings, emphasis is laid on

challenging youth and others for ministry. The church pastor also gives training to the members of the laity, to conduct cell groups and take care of house churches.

One such example is Rev. K.C. Andrews senior pastor of the A.G. Church in Tuticorin, who has sent several students to the Bible College. Today those students have become pastors and they are pastoring churches. Mr. Ratnampaul was sent to the Bible College in the 1970's. He was a Tamil speaking student who used to give his testimony and who had a good singing voice. Three years of studies and training enabled him, to become an able pastor and evangelist.

Certain lecturers in the Bible College used Ratnam Paul to interpret chapel preaching from English to Tamil. Today Rev. Ratnam Paul pastors a church in Palayamkottai, which has more than 4000 members. He is also a convention speaker. He travels in India and other countries preaching in Tamil and English. He also prepares disciples in his church by sending them to the Bible College. He also trains them for local ministries through the teaching given to them.

❖ **Teaching:**

The word 'Teaching' means, "To show; to direct; to impart knowledge or art to: to guide the studies of; to exhibit so as to impress upon the mind." ⁶

Jesus Christ the Son of God came to this world, not only to preach but to teach as well. He was a master teacher. He taught the disciples, religious leaders and common people. The Bible says that, "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in the synagogues" (Matt. 4:23a NKJV). The Sermon on the Mount made a great impact in the life of the late Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the Indian nation. He said, "The New Testament produced a different impression, especially the Sermon on the Mount which went straight to my heart."⁷ People who listened to his teachings were impressed and

began to wonder. “For he taught them as one having authority.” Matt 7:29 (NKJV). Jesus was a man of words and deeds. So it came with power and authority.

Jesus Christ used illustrations and stories to teach the people. He taught the people the unknown things through the known things. e.g. The salt, the sower, the prodigal son, and the lost sheep. Jesus taught the people, on a mountain, near the sea, in the synagogue, in the Temple, and even while walking. (Matt 5:1-2; Mark 1:13; 6:1-2; 11:27; 12:1-44; 11:20; 22-26). Jesus Christ had a purpose in teaching, and he was able to make the people, listen to him three days continually without eating. Mark 6:33-36.

Jesus Christ taught many things, which were the needs of that time and today.

Some of the examples are given below:

Anxiety : Matt. 6:27-34 “Do not worry” v.34a.

Beatitudes : Matt. 5:1-10 “Blessed are the poor in spirit” v.7a.

Compassion : Luke. 10:30-33 “He had compassion” v.33b.

Discipleship : Mark 8:34 “Let him deny himself . . . and follow me” v.34b.

Ecology : John 6:12 “Gather up the fragments” v.12a.

Forgiving Spirit : Matt. 18:21-25 “The master forgave him” v.27b.

Humility : Matt. 18:3-4 “who ever humbles as this little child” v.4a.

Judging : Matt 7:1-2 “Judge not that you be not judged” v.1

Love toward God and one’s neighbor: Mark 12:30-31 “You shall

love the Lord your God . . . your neighbor as yourself” v.30

The Assemblies of God churches have Bible study for believers during Wednesdays. The late Rev. S.S. Stephen from Narimedu (Madurai) Assemblies of God used to conduct Bible study in the house of the late Rev. Thomas Walker. Mr. Thomas Walker was a railway officer. Later Mr. T. Walker resigned his job and began to pioneer an AG church in Kudalnagar (Madurai).

❖ **Healing:**

The four gospels St. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are filled with incidents illustrating the healing ministry of Jesus Christ. “And Jesus went about all Galilee . . . healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people. Then his fame went throughout Syria; and they brought to Him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments... and He healed them.” (Matt 4:23-24 NKJV). People in different places have question about sickness and ask why there is sickness.

Jesus gave the following reasons for sickness:

- **Sickness is from Satan:**

Ever since the fall of Adam, Satan began to afflict mankind through sickness. Jesus healed a woman who suffered from a spirit of infirmity, which caused her to become a hunchback. The ruler of the synagogue became angry since Jesus healed her on the Sabbath day. Jesus answered him saying, “So ought not this woman being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?” (Luke 13:16 KJV) It is also written in Acts of the Apostles that, “Jesus went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil.” Acts 10:38 KJV.

- **Sickness is owing to sin in one’s life:**

Four people brought a man of palsy, and they let him inside the house, where Jesus was preaching. “Jesus forgave the sins of the man before healing him.” When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven.” (Mark 2:5 NKJV). When a person sins against God, society and his body, he suffers sickness. Adultery, fornication, jealousy, hatred, anger, bitterness and other things bring sickness to the body.

- **Sickness comes to reveal the deeds of God. It is for God’s glory:**

Jesus as he was walking with the disciples saw a blind man. The disciples asked Jesus the reason for the blindness, saying, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him.” (John 9:1b NKJV). Jim Gleunon in his book *Your healing is within you* Writes: “THE GOSPELS RECORD, twenty six cases of individual healings performed by Christ and ten cases of multiple healings, ranging from “a few” to a great multitude.”⁹

The Protestants and the Roman Catholics have followed the healing ministry of Jesus Christ through medical work. Sick people have been healed through prayer, care and medical treatment. It has enabled the non Christians to believe in Jesus Christ. The Assemblies of God of India has a hospital in Calcutta to help the sick people through medication.

In the Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu, Prayer is offered for people who come with sicknesses. It is done through mass prayer as well as praying for them individually by laying hands on the head of the sick person. Good news meetings are conducted in the church or in the auditorium or in an open ground. Evangelists with the gift of healing minister to such needy people. Healing ministry has helped for the growth of the Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu and elsewhere.

In Tamilnadu, Nagapattinam is a place known for the Catholic Church (Velankanni Church) and the Muslim Mosque (Nagoor Andavar). In that area, there is a taluk name Poriyar, where Pastor Godwin has been pioneering an AG ministry since 1996. In Poriyar there lives a Government officer. He has three sons and one girl. The Government officer followed the self respect movement started by the late E.V. Ramasamy Naiker, known as E.V.E. RA. Periyar. Periyar believed in “REASON” and started the above movement. So the Government officer didn’t believe in any deity or God. His wife a non Christian, a religious person, possessed certain ability. She used to

follow divination and could tell things about her children and others. One day the wife of the Government officer, developed pain on her neck, and suffered greatly. A doctor in Chennai suggested operation was needed, which would cost rupees 25,000/- and even then the chance of her getting well was remote. On another occasion that family consulted their family doctor, a Brahmin lady. She advised not to go for operation, as even a small mistake would make her bedridden for life. She told them to take tablets for pain. The lady doctor too had a similar pain on her neck and had gone to the pastor of an AG church and got healed. Hearing the testimony of the family doctor, the officer immediately contacted Pastor Godwin through the telephone. The pastor witnessed to them about the love of Christ and his sacrifice upon the cross for sins and sickness. Before praying for her, the pastor told them to believe in Jesus Christ. After offering a prayer of faith, Pastor Godwin left that place. But within fifteen minutes, he was called again and was told that the lady was healed. The Government officer began to believe in Jesus Christ since he witnessed the miraculous healing of his wife whom he loved very much. Now the whole family attends the church and they have given their lives to Jesus Christ.¹⁰

❖ **Casting of Demons:**

Jesus Christ the Son of God recognized the existence of demons and the evil spirits. “And He cast out many demons; and He did not allow the demons to speak, because they knew Him.” (Mark 1:34b NKJV). In church services and evangelistic meetings demons manifest and try to obstruct the meetings. Believers, or pastors or evangelists who are gifted to cast them out, are used in the deliverance ministry. Sometimes believers and pastors fast and pray to cast out the demons. Demons are afraid of the Name of Jesus and the blood of Jesus. Hands are not laid to cast out the demons. But words such as “In the Name of Jesus Christ come out” or “I adjure you in the Name of Jesus Christ” are used.

In 1999, September, Rev. Jesudhas had a three days special meeting in third mile in Tuticorin. Believers and the pastor's family fasted for 40 days and expected great things to happen. A non Christian brought his son for prayer. The father had a pathetic story. He had been working in a salt refining place. He was the father of two girls and a boy. His wife left him and eloped with a sorcerer. In this situation his son who was studying in an Industrial Training Institute become indifferent, to studies and stopped going to school. His father took him to various places of worship for the boy's deliverance. At last he was brought to the church. During the evangelistic meetings, the boy began to roll on the floor and shouted, "I will not leave you, until I kill you." During the second day of the meeting, an anonymous letter reached the pastor. The content of the letter was that the boy would be killed and no one could stop it. Prayer was offered by the whole congregation. During the Sunday service, the boy was delivered from demonic trouble and he was calm and he talked normally. The father of that boy became very happy and now both of them attend the church regularly.¹¹

❖ **Witnessing:**

Jesus witnessed not only to the crowd; he had a heart for individuals. He considered every individual whether man or woman, rich or poor, young or old, important before the heavenly Father. Dr. A.T. Pierson says as follows: "Witnessing is the whole work of the whole church for the whole age."¹²

Nichodemus was a Pharisee, and a learned man. He was a ruler of the Jews and came to see Jesus at night. Jesus did not condemn him but was receptive to his questions. Nichodemus respected Christ and the authority Jesus had from God. Jesus asked that learned man, "You must be born again." (John 3:7b) L.R. Scarborough points out the impact of the statement:

*In one divine stroke Jesus brushed aside all the sinner's refuges of religious traditionalism, formalism, ceremonialism, legalism, ritualism and ecclesiasticism and pointed the barbed arrow of spiritual truth, at the needy place at the vital point in the spiritual need of the inquiring soul.*¹³

The third chapter of John gives the account of Jesus witnessing to Nichodemus. John's Gospel, chapter four gives the account of Jesus Christ witnessing to the Samaritan woman. He talked to her in a dialogue form. Jesus has set an example for the church at large to follow His footsteps in witnessing.

There was a young man in Madurai, to whom a Bible College lecturer witnessed during 1969 regarding the love of God. But the young man used to ridicule such witnessing, in a sarcastic manner. He was very much interested in detective story books. The lecturer kept on witnessing to him though he smilingly refused to accept the truth. After fifteen years, the lecturer met the young man in an Assemblies of God's church. To his amazement he found out that the young man had given his life to Jesus Christ and become an evangelist.

❖ **Life Style:** (Witnessing through an exemplary life)

Jesus Christ the Son of God not only followed the above methods in evangelism, but also He lived an exemplary life. The love of God was radiating in the words and life of Jesus, and that attracted every one, from children to adults. He wanted His followers to demonstrate evangelism even in their daily lives. He used examples such as, "you are the salt of the earth . . . ; you are the light of the world." Matt 5:13-14 (NKJV).

The life style of a witness has the potential to attract people to Jesus Christ. If the parents don't live before the children, they cannot expect from the children a standard of life which they themselves don't follow. "As a family training cannot rise above family character, so Christian service cannot rise above the Christian servant."¹⁴ One's life is transparent, others can see through it clearly. The committed life has a purpose that is to reflect Jesus Christ. The life speaks more than words can express. "Seek to live with such lucidity that the clarity of your motives becomes a lens which projects the image of Christ upon the screens of other's lives."¹⁵ Sadhu Sunder sigh was a Sikh convert and he

followed Jesus Christ amidst persecution from his family. He has been called the bleeding apostle of India. Once he visited a home in Europe and knocked at the door. A servant girl opened the door, and on seeing the Sadhu, she ran to her mistress and said, “Ma’am come and see, Christ has come.”¹⁶

A person’s life style would become a proof while witnessing to others about Jesus Christ. Dr. Sam kamalesan, former pastor of Immanuel Methodist Church, Vepary, Madras, became an international evangelist. He served in the World Vision International in various capacities. While preaching in Keswick Convention in Singapore he said, “My room mate’s consistent life and persistent witnessing made me, accept Christ as my personal Savior.”

Some one asked Mahatma Gandhi, “What is your message” he replied saying, “My life is my message.” The late Major Chinnadurai was a warden in an Engineering College in Madurai during the seventies. He used to attend the Assemblies of God church regularly. He lived a life of integrity that was a challenge to many people in the church and outside the church. As a warden of a boy’s hostel he was strict but very helpful to them. He used to give free tuition to the needy students. Since his hands were clean, he used to give good food to students at a moderate rate. Students who were attracted by him began to believe in Jesus Christ. Later he became the Registrar and Controller of Examinations in the Madurai Kamaraj University. He would not recommend any weak student to the university, though certain parents wanted a placement for their sons or daughters. It brought him a good name in the university. Therefore one’s life style will play a great role in leading souls toward Jesus Christ.

3.2: The first century church and the methods followed by them:

The first church or the apostolic church practiced different methods in evangelism. The apostles, believers, and others practiced evangelism. Michael Green

writes the following methods in his book “Evangelism in the early church.”¹⁷ The following methods helped the early church to grow amidst threat and martyrdom.

- **Synagogue Preaching:**

Jews founded synagogues when they were in Babylon as captives. Synagogues were the centers of evangelism in the early days. (Acts 4:1; 13:5; 17:17). In the Assemblies of God churches, house meetings are conducted like synagogue preaching.

- **Open air Preaching:**

It was the Jewish custom in Palestine to speak in the country yards, open fields, river banks and market places. Early church didn't hesitate to use this method. e.g. Temple site was used in Jerusalem (Acts 3:1; Chap. 4) Samaria (Acts Chap. 8); Lystra (Acts 16:13) Athens (Acts 17:17). In India open air meetings were conducted by missionaries and national leaders during 1900, and it attracted the crowds.¹⁸ During 1948-1988 open air preaching was a method used by the Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu.

- **Prophetic Preaching:**

Prophets were used by God and they possessed spiritual gifts. They were guided by the Holy Spirit. They foretold future events, warned the believers, edified them and preached (Acts 13:1). Prophet Agabus warned the early church regarding a famine that was to come (Acts 11:27-28). God has been using certain leaders and pastors in the Assemblies of God churches in prophetic preaching. One such example is Rev. D. Mohan in New Life AG Church. One particular Sunday while preaching, he prophetically told of a mother and her daughter who were in great distress. After the message was over, both

of them came and wept before the pastor. Later their problem was solved and they went from the church happily.

- **Teaching Evangelism:**

St. Paul the apostle and church father Origen followed the teaching method in Evangelism. Gentiles came to the school conducted by Origen in Alexandria. The school was used for teaching and evangelism. Teaching the word of God enabled people to pursue Christianity. e.g. Plutarch, Severus, Heron and Heraclites.¹⁹ Paul taught in the lecture hall of Tyrannus for three years at Ephesus. He dialogued with people regarding faith in Jesus Christ. (Acts 19:9). A certain member of the laity belonging to the First AG Church in Madurai used to give free tuition to the college students. He also taught moral and spiritual lessons from the Bible that led many students to follow Jesus Christ.

- **Testimony:**

The early Christians used their personal testimony along with the message. Apostle Paul used his testimony in different occasions. (2 Cor 9:15; Rom 7:23-25; 1 Tim 1:15) “This personal testimony to the truth of the message was an integral part of Christian marturia witness.”²⁰ The second century Christians testified for Christ even when being burned at the stakes. Justin Martyr, facing execution at the stake, when asked by the prefect who he was, replied that he was a Christian set free by Christ.²¹ Believers are given chance in the A.G Churches to testify. Big churches get such testimonies in writing and read it to save time. In conventions before an evangelist preaches, each night a person will testify for ten to fifteen minutes.

- **Household Evangelism:**

The houses of Christians were used as a means of evangelism. The motive was to reach, the members of the house such as husband, wife, children as well as servants and guests. E.g. Jason’s house at Thessalonica (Acts 17:5); the house of Justus (Acts 18:7); Philips house at Caesaria (Acts 21:8). Conversion of the husband or wife brought the

whole family to Christian faith. E.g. Cornelius (Acts 10:1-48), Lydia (Acts 16:14), and the Jailer (Acts 16:27-34). Conversion of slaves and freed men provided opportunities to reach the Roman families. The Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu practice care cell meetings, in the homes of church believers.

- **Indirect Evangelism in the Homes:**

The early Christians used their homes as an avenue for indirect evangelism. Their homes were decorated with Christian symbols. In the second century, Mosaics at Ostia and Rome had pictures of Eucharistic loaves, chalice and fish.²² The Mosaic pictures enabled the Christian believers to witness about Jesus Christ to the visitors. The believers of the Assemblies of God churches do follow this method in a similar way. e.g. Bible Scriptures plaques are kept in front of the homes and inside the homes. People who visit the homes read the scriptures which give them peace of mind. They also receive explanation of the scriptures, when they ask.

- **Varieties of House Meetings:**

The book of Acts gives examples that, houses were used for prayer meetings, Lord's supper, all night prayer, worship, instruction and evangelistic purposes. (Acts 12:12; 21:7; 2:46; 20:7; 16:32). Christian homes gave the children the opportunity to be brought up in faith in Jesus Christ. The church father Origen taught his son spiritual things and other academic studies. The Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu started through house meetings. In the early days houses of believers or rented houses were used for church services. It was also used for Bible study, prayer meetings, women's meeting and fasting prayers.

- **Personal Evangelism:**

It is one person sharing his or her faith to another individual. The gospel of John gives many examples. The testimony of John the Baptist led two persons to Christ (John

1:37). Andrew brought Simon to Christ (John 1:45). Philip the member of the laity led the Ethiopian eunuch to Christ (Acts 8:26-40). Church father Pantaeus led Clement of Alexandria to the Christian faith.²³ Certain pastors and believers follow this method. Rev. Asir started the church in Pondicherry through personal evangelism in the seventies. After his graduation from A.G Tamilnadu Bible College, he went to Pondicherry for ministry. He visited people in the houses and other places witnessing to them personally. Today he is the presbyter of Pondicherry section and has a main church with 1000 participants. He also has many branch churches.

- **Visiting:**

God, spoke to Ananias in a vision, asking him to visit Saul (Acts 9:10-18). Church father Origen visited Gregory and led him to the Christian faith. He employed earnest prayer and the Holy Scriptures in Evangelism.

*It was through the wise, dedicated individual Evangelism of Christians like Origen that some of the most notable converts were brought into the Christian church. Hand picked fruit was the best.*²⁴

House visitation is followed by the Assemblies of God church pastors and believers, especially ladies. It has become an avenue for evangelism. The late Rev. Stephen Manickam of the A.G. Church in Neively, visited a family to witness to them. The man of the house chased him out. Later the whole family gave their lives to Jesus Christ. Both husband and wife resigned the job, joined the Bible School in the 70's and they are still in independent ministry.

- **Literary Evangelism:**

In the Apostolic church, the leaders and the believers considered evangelism as their prime concern. They not only preached the gospel, they also wrote the message of Christ, his life and ministry in written form. e.g. Luke's Gospel, John's Gospel (John

20:30-31). The leaders and the pastors of the Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu have written pamphlets, books based on church and evangelism.

❖ **Methods of evangelism during 17-19th Century:**

Though evangelism is proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ, the methods have varied from time to time. Missionaries who labored in India between 17th to 19th centuries followed different methods. They learned the languages spoken in different parts of India. They translated the scriptures into the local languages. e.g. Bartholomew Ziegenbalg. He was a Lutheran missionary from Germany, sent to India by king of Denmark in 1705. He translated the New Testament in Tamil language. He learned the Tamil language while staying in Tranqubar, Tamilnadu. The contributions of the missionaries such as Ziegenbalg and the Jesuit missionary Beschi, to Tamil literature are remarkable.²⁵

Missionaries translated Christian hymns into local languages and dialects. Schools were established to teach children, both in the English medium and their mother tongues. “Bartholomew Ziegenbalg in the early 18th century founded schools at Tranqubar, Cuddalore and Madras.”²⁶ The missionaries also had discussions with various religious leaders. They felt the need to train local people to follow the evangelistic work. So they were trained and became teachers, catechists, and ordained pastors. The foremost objective of the missionaries was to lead non Christians to a genuine experience with God. Though they faced severe opposition from non Christian priests and leaders, they overcame such opposition through faith in God and their exemplary Christian lives. The missionaries expected the converts to lead such an exemplary Christian lives.²⁷

In the past centuries the following methods were used to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. Those can be divided into three divisions, Personal Evangelism, Mass Evangelism and Indirect Evangelism.

The above methods are still followed by Christian denominations.

❖ **Personal Evangelism:**

Rev. Sundar Clarke, the former Bishop of Church of South India, Chennai, defined Personal Evangelism thus:

*In this method of personal evangelism, we try to confront people, individually with the Gospel. Personal witness, personal testimony, the sharing of the good news from individual to individual has been one of our commonly accepted methods of evangelism. In this direct method we also confront people.*²⁸

In the Assemblies of God churches only a few people follow this method.

❖ **Mass Evangelism:**

This is one of the effective methods used to reach the masses in society. Mass Evangelism is conducted under various names such as ‘Healing meeting, Good news meetings and crusades. In the seventies the Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu used this method. The meetings were conducted in open grounds or church campuses. In the 80s “Abundant life meetings” were conducted in various parts of Tamilnadu before beginning an A.G. ministry in a particular Town or City. Today mass meetings are conducted in auditoriums, marriage halls and churches. The open air meetings conducted in street corners or wherever people gather, also come under Mass Evangelism.

❖ **Indirect Evangelism:**

Indirect evangelism is carried out through institutional works, literature ministry and audio visual methods.

○ **Institutional Evangelism:**

Medical, agricultural, educational, Industrial institutions and social agencies such as orphanages are included in the evangelistic work.²⁹

○ **Medical Institutions:**

The Protestant churches and Catholic churches have participated and continue to conduct medical work as part of their evangelism. The hospitals have been a great comfort to local people. They have received medical treatment regardless of their religion race or cultural background. One doctor from Thiruchengodu in Tamilnadu took his son to Vellore Christian Mission hospital. He entered the Christian chapel for peace of mind. His son became well after operation. He said that he felt the presence of God in the chapel which gave him hope for his son's healing.

○ **Educational Institutions:**

There are many educational institutions, colleges and schools established by Protestants and Catholics in Tamilnadu and elsewhere. These have moulded the lives of the students spiritually, mentally and physically. Scriptures were taught to students before India gained independence. A former student of a Catholic College in Trichirapalli became a district collector. On the College day he was asked to speak. He concluded his speech saying, "I will never forget the love work of the good Christian fathers." The Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu has educational institutions in Tirunelveli and Shencottah District.

○ **Social Institutions:**

Many social and community work institutions are run by Christian churches and individuals. These institutions are conducted under various names such as Orphanages, Boys homes, Children's home and Day Care Centre. Some of the Assemblies of God

pastors have orphanages for orphans and semi orphans. Any social work done in integrity with a vision to help the poor and needy in the name of Jesus Christ has brought lasting results.

❖ **Literature Ministry :**

The literature ministry has played an important role in the lives of people in different places. Through Christian literature, the minds of many have been enriched by the love of God. George Verver the founder of Operation Mobilization, India, cites a statement by Mahatma Gandhi's grandson on the importance of Christian literature: "The missionaries have taught us to read, but communists have given us literature."³⁰ Christian literature in the form of books, Gospel portions, booklets and tracts are very helpful in witnessing. The literature ministry is followed by the Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu, through books, magazines, tracts and correspondence courses.

❖ **Audio Visual Media :**

Flannel board pictures, slide projectors, film shows, and other methods were used in the past. Today radio ministry, cassette ministry and television ministry, play a prominent role in evangelism. The Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu has regular radio ministry every Monday morning, through the short waves. It also has T.V. ministry by prominent AG pastors.

3:3 Three Methods used by The Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu:

Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu have chosen three methods. These are House Churches, Care cells or Cell groups and "OIKOS evangelism." The above methods have helped toward the fast growth of the church.

❖ **House Churches :**

Christian Literature and Living www.christianliteratureandliving.com

5 : 9 December 2009

Lawrence Jayabalan, Ph.D.

Evangelism and Growth of the Assemblies of God Churches in Tamilnadu, India

From 1989-2003

After the ascension of Jesus Christ during the first century A.D, the churches had their beginning in homes. The first Apostolic Church was started in the upper room, where the 120 disciples received the Holy Spirit. Acts 1:13a (KJV) says, "When they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying."³¹

The houses were used by the Apostles for the following:

Breaking of bread, (Acts 5:42), teaching, prayer (Acts 12:12), preaching and fellowship (Acts 5:42).

"The first Christians gathered in existing buildings, usually the homes of individual believers. The earliest church of which traces remain in a normal Syrian courtyard house, which has been adapted for the purpose."³²

Till the third century AD the early church had their meetings in the houses only. "The edict of Milan, AD 313, brought a great change in the circumstances of the church which is reflected in the buildings for Christian worship."³³ When Christianity became an official religion in Roman Empire, churches were built at rectangular hall which was divided into three sections. During the reign of Constantine the Roman Emperor, churches were called, "Basilicas" and had beautiful structure inside and outside. "Basilicas are built at state expense. The roofs are adorned with gold and interlaid with marble. The Holy books of the Christians which once were given to the flames are now bound in purple and laid with gold jewels."³⁴

The above statements were made by the church father Jerome regarding Basilica, (churches).

In this century the house churches have become prominent in different parts of the world. In the houses, worship, prayers, preaching of God's word and fellowship with

believers are the main items. China has been called the Iron curtain country. It closed the doors for preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. According to reports, in China Christianity grows faster than anywhere else in the world. House churches are the reason for such growth in China.³⁵

Dr. John Vincent was pastoring in England for thirteen years. He found that the established churches either became empty or having a few old people. Then he decided to go to the traditional method of the New Testament church. It made him to start house type churches. His motive was to gather people in the house type churches for study, discussion, worship and action. He believed that the house church community has a sharing ministry. “Socially it helps the neighbors, pastorally there is celebration and fellowship and theologically it promotes discussion groups.”³⁶

During the 70's when the Singapore Government built high rising flats for families to dwell, it also allotted a flat for Christians to worship. In the early stages various denominational Christians felt uneasy to worship in house type place; later they were very happy to have church service in a flat or their own home. It saved them from traffic jam, travel risk and other practical problems. Goh Kee Seng in his book, *The House Church* writes, regarding the mission of the church as follows:

*At the service of men for the greater glory of God, through witnessing joy, understanding truth. The church is where people live, assemble, come together pray together, support one another, our members in the local groups, should be like the 12 apostles witnessing Jesus Christ, through friendship and openness to the joys and sorrows of their fellowmen.*³⁷

The worship service can be conducted in a rented house, or the house of a laity or church member. A house church helps any organization from financial difficulties, such as spending money to buy a land, struggle to get permission to build a church and so many other things.

It enables the pastor to encourage the laity to involve in evangelism. It enables him to train the church members to be active in ministry. It helps to reach the whole family, relatives, friends and neighbours.

The Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu has a goal of establishing six thousand churches, as five year plan between “2000-2005.” One year goal is to have one thousand and two hundred house churches.³⁸

Care Cells or Cell Groups:

Care cell or Cell group is the word used to describe a meeting held in a home of a church believer. The relatives, neighbors and friends are invited by the family for a fellowship. This type of meeting is started after several days of fasting and prayer. First of all the meeting starts with a casual form of talking with one another, singing, testimony, a short message and prayer. After the meeting is over prayers are offered for people who come with problems, such as peacelessness, fear, spirit of suicide, financial difficulties, family disunity, tension, witchcraft and other needs.

After prayer and counseling either supper or coffee with eatables will be given to all, those who attend cell group meeting. It will be announced that such gathering will take place every week to the participants. Care cell meeting is conducted, after much prayer, fasting and planning by the pastor and the members of the laity. For the first Care cell meeting, a hand bill will be printed under the title, family blessing, with a Bible verse time, place etc.

During the first cell group meeting, either a guest speaker or the local pastor or a layman will give a short message. In the coming weeks, the pastor or associate pastor will speak till the cell group leader is trained to take over. The church pastor will choose two lay members (both husband and wife) and train them in the church, to take care of a

cell group. Likewise Cell group meetings will be conducted in different homes of the laity. Families or individuals who regularly attend such cell meetings will be invited to attend the main church on Sunday morning.

People who have been blessed in cell group meetings will attend the church regularly. The cell group or care cell meetings have enabled the Assemblies of God churches to grow rapidly. The first century apostolic church conducted this method in the homes of Christians. Again this method has taken its root.

Paul Yonggi Cho, a Buddhist from South Korea was dying of Tuberculosis. He was forsaken by his family since the doctors had said that he would die within a few months. One day a Christian girl went to his hut to witness about Jesus Christ. He shouted at her saying “Christian dog get out.” She went to meet him again without losing hope. Again she received the same words with hatred. According to the Korean culture, it was not a custom for a lady to talk to a young man. But the above lady broke the barrier since she loved Jesus Christ and wanted to obey the unction of the Holy Spirit. During the third visit, Cho asked her, “Don’t you feel ashamed, hearing harsh words, yet visiting me again.” The girl with tears replied, “The love of Christ had made me to come again, since you are left alone to die with no one to care for you.” Such compassionate words and continuous visits convinced the young man to have faith in Jesus Christ and later he was healed out of Tuberculosis by Jesus Christ.

Later Paul Yonggi Cho, surrendered his life to God, and became a pastor in South Korea. During the sixties, he started the ministry in a tent with two to six people. In 1972 when he spoke in Assemblies of God leadership conference in Bangalore his vision was to build a church for 10,000 people. When someone asked him; he told that the vision was in his mind. Today his church is considered the biggest Assemblies of God church in the world⁴⁰. It has the membership of more than one lakh (One hundred

thousand). Dr. Paul Yonggi Cho is a man of prayer and faith, who struggled for the growth of the Assemblies of God church in South Korea.

One particular Sunday, after the morning service, he baptized hundreds of believers in water. During the evening service, he suddenly collapsed. While he was on bed, God impressed on him the need to use the members of the laity to share the responsibilities of the church.⁴¹ Paul Yonggi Cho started meetings in the homes of believers and named, such gathering “The home cell unit system.”⁴² This method started in the sixties and spread in many countries, since “care cell” or “cell group” system is Bible centered. Paul Yonggi Cho, discovered firm foundations from the Bible, “two vital facts of the home cell unit system:- lay leadership, and a unique usage of the home.”⁴³ His church is called Full Gospel Central Church, and he follows six principles for home cell unit system. They are as follows:

Leadership Needs Leadership:

Leaders need leaders to counsel and share responsibilities. In the account of Exodus 18:13-17, Jethro, Moses’ father in law advised Moses to establish “rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds and rulers of tens” (v.21). This was to be done for three reasons:

- In order that Moses would be able to endure (v.23).
- In order that Moses would be free to be “God ward” (v.19).
- In order that the people would regain peace and harmony (v.23).⁴⁴

The Lay Leader a Ministering Server:

In Acts 6:1-7 deacons were chosen by the Apostles to minister to the people such as widows. Among the deacons, Stephen preached the word to the Jews, became the first martyr and Philip who went to Samaria to preach became an evangelist.⁴⁵

Time and Circumstance – Tests of the dedicated:

In the book of Acts (6:22, 23; 11:30; 15:2, 4; 16:4; 21:18) there is frequent mention of elders in the Jerusalem church. Dr. Paul Yonggi Cho believes that the New Testament elders who were to help in the church were to prove their ministry and their ability as servers before being appointed as elders.⁴⁶

Unanimity:

When the elders and deacons were chosen, there was a spirit of controlled unanimity, which prevailed among the apostles and the congregation. The apostles laid hand on them as the final attestation. (Acts 6:6).

Utilization of women:

There were women in the New Testament church appointed as deaconess or leaders. e.g. Phebe was appointed as deaconess in Cenchera church (Rom 16:1). There are other examples in the New Testament, regarding using women in the church.

The home as a place of worship:

The ministry of Christ was in the homes, synagogues and other places. (Matt 8:14, 15; 9:23-25; Mark 1:29-31; Luke 8:51-56) Jesus used home for preaching, teaching and healing. Jesus sent his disciples to homes and elsewhere (Luke 1:5-7).⁴⁷

The above six principles made Paul Yonggi Cho to start, home cell units (cell groups) which enabled his church to grow in quantity and quality.

Qualification for cell group leaders:

- ❖ Leading an exemplary life, giving time and money for the church support.
- ❖ Attending all the meetings with one's family, including the midway prayer service.
- ❖ Dedicating themselves totally, for unity of faith among the congregation and other people.

- ❖ Attending the teaching session taught by the pastoral staff each week as well as periodic seminars.
- ❖ Finding perspective members and bringing them to the church, and visiting their families and nurturing them.
- ❖ Giving reports to the pastors, regarding people who need counseling.
- ❖ Husband and wife working together as heads of cell units to conduct home prayer meetings, visiting homes praying for the sick and giving report to the church.⁴⁸

Individuals and families come to house churches or care cell meetings with various needs. The following are the psychological, sociological and spiritual (Theological) problems people face:

❖ **Children's Problem:**

- Our parents have no fear of God. They don't worry about us.
- Papa drinks and plays cards. He does not bring money and we starve at home. Mummy suffers a lot.
- My parents fight at home. It bothers me a lot.

❖ **Financial Problems:**

- I lent money to some one without proper documentation. Now he refuses to pay the money. I borrowed the money for interest and I suffer a lot.
- My husband and me are educated but have no job so far. I have only a temporary job.
- We are in debts and unable to pay the interest. Don't know what to do.
- I educated my family people and supported them. Now they are all well-off and hate me.

❖ **Guilt Problems:**

- My past wrong doings come in my mind and torture me and I have fear in me.
- I did some thing wrong. I have cheated my friend by having an affair with his sister and he does not know it. I feel guilty.
- What I did in youthhood comes in my mind and I am troubled very much. I cannot forget the past.
- I have constant fear and cannot sleep at night.

❖ **Health Problems:**

- I am a diabetic and have knee problem.
- I am a cancer patient. Doctors have given up hope.
- My son fell from the tree and underwent an operation. Now he is bedridden since he was operated wrongly.
- I have an incurable sickness and I am in constant pain and fear.

❖ **Identity Problems:**

- We are hated by our neighbors. We are not allowed to take water.
- We are intercaste and intermarried couple. Both our family people have forsaken us.
- I have constant mental agony since I am looked down by people who consider themselves higher.

❖ **Marriage Problem:**

- My husband is a drunkard and he lives with another woman. He does not come home regularly. When ever he comes he beats the children or scolds them.
- I am married and mother of two children. My husband has an affair with another woman. I have constant head ache.

- I have been cheated by a man, who took me to his home, promising to marry me. I found that he had been married already. He wants to keep me as his second wife provided I bring money and jewels from my parents. My parents and the community have forsaken me. I wanted to commit suicide. I am afraid.
- My husband drinks and has friends who follow his footsteps. He wants me to drink and he wants me to please his friends.

❖ **Parents problem:**

- I am a widow. My son is 14 years old. He neither goes to school nor works. He wants to marry. Please advise him.
- My two sons don't obey me. They don't want to come to church. They are wasting the time, and make me to worry.
- My son beats me, asks money often. When we are not in a position to give him money, he takes the house hold things and sells.
- My son studies in seventh standard and he watches the TV most of the time.
- Our son is a drug addict. He creates constantly problems to our family members.

❖ **Witchcraft Problems:**

- My husband has a paddy field and some one has cast spell on it. After sowing the paddy, my husband cannot enter it and some one harvests the paddy.
- I am an auto rickshaw driver. I don't get people to ride and some one has cast spell on it.
- All of us are sick one after another. My two children are weak and look thin. There is a curse on our family.
- We have no children. Doctors say that there is nothing wrong in us. Some one has cast spell on us.

The above problems were mentioned to the guest speaker when people came forward for prayer. People who have been blessed after prayer, they have continued to attend the cell group meetings as well as church meetings. Certain people did not join the church since they were opposed by their family people⁴⁹.

Oikos Evangelism:

The Greek word (Oikos) means house or household. This evangelistic method is found in Acts of the Apostles. It is a New Testament principle. God told Peter to go to the house of Cornelius, a centurion. Cornelius waited for the Apostle along with his family, relatives, and friends. “Now Cornelius was waiting for them, and had called together his relatives and close friends” Acts 10:24b (NKJV).

Pastors who practice ‘Oikos’ evangelism motivate the believers to fast and pray for 21 days, 30 days or 40 days. Both the pastors and the believers pray in their respective churches, missing one meal or two meals, each day. While fasting and praying, the addresses of twenty persons, ranging from family folks, relatives and friends will be written on a paper. It will be pasted in the house and church and intercession will be made on their behalf. While praying, a cell group leader or a believer will lay hands on the names of each individual and intercede to God for salvation and peace.

Some times the believers in the church and the pastor would pray for forty days. Each believer would have some twenty people on his or her praying list. Later pamphlets would be given to the believer for distribution among the people prayed for. Later those people would be invited to the church or rented auditorium for a celebration service or special meeting.

During the “Family blessing service” or “Celebration service”, there will be songs as well as a short message given by the pastor or guest speaker. At the close of the service an altar call will be given. People who would have been convicted by the spirit of God will go forward in order to commit their lives to God. Prayers will be offered for salvation, healing, deliverance and peace of mind.

The pastor and the believers would walk by the street of their relatives, friends and others where their houses are situated and offer prayer for them. This type of ministry enables people who are under witchcraft or family problems, to be free from such problems.

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The “House church”, “Care cell” meeting and “Oikos Evangelism” are related with one another. The house church has been a pattern found in the Acts of the Apostles. In 50’s, the Assemblies of God churches had their beginning through house churches, where the pastor stayed and used the main room for service. In the care cell meeting, the believer of the church starts a fellowship in his house, every week on a particular evening. People who attend the cell group meetings are advised to go to the main church on Sundays. ‘Oikos’ evangelism’ is a method used by the believers to fast and pray for the relatives, friends and others. It enables people outside the church to know the love of God since the believers have concern for them.

The Assemblies of God churches of Tamilnadu have grown through the above methods. It has brought the following results among the people:

Salvation Experience:

It has brought salvation experience to families and individuals. Jesus entered the house of tax collector Zaccheus and said, “Today salvation has come to this house” (Luke 19:9 KJV). Many people who feel guilty and self condemned because of their unconfessed sins experience salvation through Jesus Christ.

A young man in Poriyar near Nagapattinam was a traveler. He lived with various women and got AIDS. He was deserted by his family and he had a sister who prayed for him. The pastor of the Assemblies of God church visited him in the hospital counseled him and prayed for him. Today he stays in the church premise and helps the pastor in the ministry. He has been set free from guilt, separation and now has a new life in Jesus Christ.

Healing:

Most of the people who come to the church have once suffered with sickness. Some of them had no cure through medicine. Message on Gods love, counselling care and prayer have enabled them to experience the healing touch of Christ. It has enabled them to follow Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Hope:

Different persons undergo problems one way or other. Those who cannot solve their problems go through depression and face a hopeless situation. Some of them had

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even committed suicide. Rengama of Mamangam had a miserable life with her husband. He has been a drunkard and a womanizer. He left his wife and began to live with another lady. Rengama being broken in mind attended the Assembly of God church in Salem. The message of the cross penetrated into her mind and she gave her life to Jesus Christ. Years have gone by; she attends the church regularly, managing her family by the grace of God⁵⁰.

Happiness:

Jesus Christ the saviour of the world promised joy and peace to those who come to Him. Jesus said, "My peace I give to you." John 14:24. A certain brother in Thiruparam Kundram – Madurai, a non Christian experienced the peace and joy through Jesus Christ. He said, "I never knew real peace and joy till I came to know Jesus Christ. I was in darkness and now I am in the light." People who attend the cell group meetings and church services feel the presence of God, in worship, singing, and preaching. The joy they receive from God free of cost make people to attend the church regularly.

Fellowship:

People from various walks of life attend the Assemblies of God Churches in Tamilnadu. The newcomers feel at home when they attend the church services for various reasons. The newcomers are given a warm welcome. They will be asked to stand and believers will clap their hands giving them due respect. Their addresses will be taken and prayer will be offered on their behalf. Anointed singing, powerful preaching and the warm fellowship encourage the newcomers to attend the church regularly. The newcomers are happy to see the pastor or some one such as a cell group leader inviting them enquiring their state of affairs, counseling, and praying for them. As days go by, prayer meeting or cell group meeting or house warming ceremony, or birthday gathering, or anniversary meeting are conducted on request. This gives the newcomers a new identity or sense of belonging and it gives them the desire to attend church meetings.

Service:

Believers of the Assemblies of God Churches in Tamilnadu are used in the local churches as well as other places. Inside the church, they are used in singing, playing instruments, leading the song service, and teaching in the Sunday school. Outside the church, they are used to visit people in homes, hospitals, conducting cell groups, and participating in social work.

Honour:

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People of various walks of life join the Assemblies of God Churches in Tamilnadu. Different caste groups who come to the church are given honour. Men are called 'brothers' and women as 'sisters'. They are greeted with words, "Praise the Lord brother or Praise the Lord sister." A particular engineer in an A.G church at Kadayanallur was asked reason why he joined a small church. The engineer replied that he felt home when he visited the church for the first time.

Jesus Christ followed preaching, discipling, teaching, healing, casting of demons, witnessing to individuals, and evangelism through exemplary life.

The first century church practiced different methods in evangelism. According to Michael Green, the methods were, synagogue preaching, open air preaching, prophetic preaching, teaching evangelism, testimony, household evangelism, indirect evangelism in the homes, varieties of house meetings, personal evangelism, visiting and literary evangelism.

The missionaries who went to different places learned the local language, and translated the Bible into the local languages. One such example is, the late Ziegenbalg a missionary from Germany, translated the New Testament in Tamil Language. Personal evangelism, Mass Evangelism and Indirect Evangelism were followed by missionaries. The Indirect Evangelism included medical, educational and social institutions, literature ministry and audio visual media.

The three methods specifically used are House churches, cell groups (Care cells) and OIKOS evangelism has enabled for the growth of the Assemblies of God Churches in Tamilnadu. People have received salvation experience, healing of the body and soul. Hope for the future, honour among the believers, happiness in present life, fellowship in the church and service to one and all.

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CHAPTER IV

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF THE GROWTH OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD CHURCHES IN TAMILNADU 1989 – 2003

The target group of 250 (35%) churches has been chosen at stratified random sampling from the 710 Assemblies of God Churches in Tamilnadu. These churches are drawn from twenty five (Districts) namely from South, North, Central, East and West of Tamilnadu. It is a period of fifteen (15) years from 1989 – 2003.

Reasons for choosing from 1989 – 1998, 1999 – 2003:

- 1989 – 1998, these ten years have been considered as the decade of Harvest for the Assemblies of Churches in Tamilnadu.
- Churches have grown faster during the past fifteen years.

The sample size is to interview five hundred people. In each section 10 churches will be chosen (25 x 10= 250) and two persons are interviewed from each church.

The method of data collection will be through questionnaire, interview, guide and observations. Data processing is done in a scientific manner.

The churches are classified as
Urban (City churches),
Sub Urban (Semi city) churches,
Town churches, and
Village churches (Rural)

The duration of study is classified as follows:

- The growth of the Assemblies of God churches from 1989 – 1993

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- The growth of the Assemblies of God churches from 1994 – 1998
- The growth of the Assemblies of God churches from 1999 – 2003

★ 1989 – 98 considered as the Decade of Harvest, a plan implemented for the growth of the A.G churches in Tamilnadu.

The total number of the A.G churches in Tamilnadu in 1989 was 180. It has increased to 600 churches by 1999, and in 2003 it is further increased as follows, organized churches 710, preaching points 1071, Number of Pastors 737, and members 1, 29,859 in Tamilnadu.¹

★ This period has been considered as the growth of the A.G churches in Tamilnadu.

Tamilnadu:

It was formerly known as Madras State. “*Tamilnadu is one of the most ancient regions in India.*”² The Tamil speaking people of the Dravidian origin have been living in this region ever since 4th century B.C. Tamilnadu was ruled by Kings such as Cholas, Pandiyas, Pallavas and Cheras. The East India Company had its base here. “Tamilnadu is the eleventh largest state in the country with an area of 1, 38,058 sq. kms, and a total population of 55, 858,946.”³ Tamil people are known for their hospitality. Tamilnadu is known for its historical and holy places. “Tamil culture is a unique blend of the ancient and modern, where dance, drama and music are an integral part of life.”⁴

According to tradition, Christianity took its roots in Kerala and Mylapore (Chennai) through the ministry of Apostle Thomas during the first century A.D.⁵ The Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu have A.G churches all over Tamilnadu. The Districts of Tamilnadu are divided into 25 sections. “Topographically, the state can be divided into district units. It is in Tamilnadu that the Southern most point of India Kanniyakumari is

located. The eastern and western ghats, meet in Tamilnadu and run along its eastern and western borders.”⁶

Details regarding the various sections where A.G churches are established are given below:

1) Chengelpet Section:

It is situated in the Eastern part of Tamilnadu. This district has Andhra Pradesh in the North and the Bay of Bengal in the east. This district has 66 towns. There are A.G churches in Achirapakkam, Chengelpet, Kalpakkam, Koduvancheri, Maduranthaham, Mahabalipuram, Maraimalai Nagar and other places.⁷

2) Coimbatore Section:

Coimbatore is located at the foot of the Nilgris Hills in western Tamilnadu. It has many textile mills and is called the “Manchester of South India.”⁸ There is a population of 4, 224,107 people living in 9 taluks, 78 towns and 415 villages.⁹ There are A.G churches in Coimbatore Town, Ganapathi, Mettupalayam, Paladam, Pollachi, R.S. Puram, Thiruppur, Udumalpet, Valparai, Velloni and other places.¹⁰

3) Cumbam Section: (Theni)

Cumbam section consists of Uttamapalayam and Andipatti taluks. These taluks are part of Madurai District. The Assemblies of God Churches are established in Andipatti, Bodi, Chinnamannur, Cumbam, Devaram, Lowercamp, Murukadi, Periyakulam, Theni, Vandiperiyar, and other places.¹¹

4) Dharmapuri Section:

Dharmapuri section is situated in the North Western part of Tamilnadu. It is bounded by Karnataka state in the North. Its neighbouring district is Salem. Dharmapuri Christian Literature and Living www.christianliteratureandliving.com 192
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has a population of 1, 676,185 people living in 5 taluks, 11 Towns, and 448 Villages.¹² There are Assemblies of God Churches in Anjetti, Bagalur, Bargur, Thenkanikottai, Dharmapuri, Hosur, Kaveripattinam, Krishnagiri, and other places.

5) Dindigul Section:

It became a separate District from 15th September 1985. Dindigul is known for lock and leather industries. “The Princess of Hill Stations” Kodaikanal, is situated from 100 Kilometers from Dindigul. Dindigul has a population of 1, 196,671 people, living in 7 taluks, 29 Towns, and 370 Villages.¹³ There are A.G churches in Batalagundu, Dindigul, Kodai Road, Nilakottai, Palani, Ottanchatram, Kodaikanal and other places.¹⁴

6) Kanchipuram Section:

It is known as “the City of thousand Temples.”¹⁵ Kanchipuram silk sarees are well known for the quality. It has a population of 2, 869,920 people living in 8 taluks, 48 towns, and 1091 villages.¹⁶ There are A.G churches in Alanthur, chrompet, Kanchipuram, Manapakkam, Medawakkam, Meenampakkam, Neelankarai, Pallavaram, Pammal, Perungulathur, Perungudi, Tambaram, and other places.¹⁷

7) Madras (Chennai) Section:

Now it is known as Chennai section. It is the capital of Tamilnadu and called “*The gateway to South India.*”¹⁸ In the early period it was called Chennapa Naikan Pattinam, named after a person Chennapa Naikan. The British named the city “Madras.”¹⁹ It has a population of 4, 216,268 people living in 5 taluks, and 55 Villages. During the 1950’s there was one A.G. Church in Chetpet. Later in 1973 Rev. D. Mohan pioneered an A.G. ministry in C.I.T. Nagar. Today there are A.G churches in Adambakkam. Adayar, Anna Nagar, Little Mount, Mandaiveli, Mylapore, Nungambakkam, Perambur, Thenampet, Thiruvanmiyur, Triplicane, Velacheri, Washermenpet and other places.²⁰

8) Madurai Section:

Madurai is a very old city and it has been called, “*The Temple City.*” Evangelist T.L. Osborn called Madurai “*The Athens of India*”, since he found temples everywhere, during his evangelistic campaign in the 1950’s. The word “Maduram” means “sweet” in Tamil. The name “Madurai” also derives from the name given to the Kadambam trees “Maruda Marangal.”²¹ It was the capital of the Pandiya Kings. Madurai is known for the Madura Mission of the Roman Catholics and the American Mission of the Protestant Missionaries.²²

The A.G. Tamilnadu Bible College was started in Madurai in 1948 as well as an A.G church near Arapalayam. Madurai has a population of 2, 562,279. There are people living in 5 taluks, 9 towns, and 663 villages.²³ There are A.G churches in Alangulam, Anna Nagar, Anupanadi, Ellisnagar, Jaihindpuram, Kalavasal, Kallupatti, K.K. Nagar, Koodalnagar, Solavandan, Thirumangalam, Thirunagar, Usilampatti, Villapuram and other places.²⁴

9) Nagarcoil Section:

Nagarcoil is the district head quarters for Kanniyakumari district. Famous tourist centre Kanniyakumari is situated in the southernmost land tip of India. Its sea shore is known for sunrise and sunset. It has a population of 1, 666,763 people living in 4 taluks, 60 towns and 76 villages.²⁵ There are A.G churches in Aramboly, Achankulam, Kattuvilai, Koodankulam, Nagarcoil, Panangudi and other places.²⁶

10) Nagapattinam Section:

Nagapattinam is located on the eastern coast of Tamilnadu. It is a place of cultural and historical significance. “*Nagapattinam was a prominent town in ancient Tamil Kingdom.*”²⁷

Since it is situated on the sea coast, it played an important role in the past. Bartholomew Ziegenbalg a German missionary came to Tranqubar in 1705 and he translated the New Testament in Tamil.²⁸ Nagapattinam has a population of 1, 487,055 people living in 7 taluks, 22 towns, and 492 villages.²⁹ There are A.G churches in Aaduthurai, Mailaduthurai, Nagapattinam, Porayar, Sirkali, Thruvarur and other places.³⁰

11) Nilgiris Section:

Its capital city is Udagamandalam (Ooty). Nilgiris district is a tourist center. “Ooty is called, the queen of hill stations. It is a beautiful place in Tamilnadu with its Blue Mountains and ever green scenery. It is located at the Eastern and Western Ghats.”³¹ There are 7, 64,826 people living in 6 taluks, 18 towns and 41 villages.³² There are A.G churches in Aravangadu, Coonoor, Gudalur, Karumbalam, ketty, Kotagiri, Ooty, Sholur, Wellington and other places.³³

12) North Arcot Section:

It is situated on the Northern part of Tamilnadu. Its boundary on the North and West is Chittor district (Andhra Pradesh). This district is a rural area with the population of 2, 66,718 people living in 890 villages, and 9, 59,714 in 34 towns.³⁴ There are A.G churches in the North and South Arcot in Ambur, Arakonam, Bagayam, Katpadi, Ranipet, Thirupathur, Thiruvannamalai, Vaniyambadi, Vellore and other palces.³⁵

13) Palayamkottai Section:

It is in Tinevely district. It has many Christian Colleges such as St. John’s, St. Xavier, and Sarah Tucker. In 1958 Dr. Billy Graham had goodnews meetings in Palayamkottai. There are A.G churches in Anbunagar, Kalakadu, K.T.C. Nagar, NGO Colony, Nauguneri, Palayamkottai, Panankulam, Thalavaipuram and other palces.³⁶

14) Pondicherry Section:

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It was once a French Colony. Pondicherry is a historical and religious place. In 1967 a group of students from Southern Asia Bible College, Bangalore went there to conduct open air meeting and for the distribution of tracts. In 1979 Rev. Asir, at present the Presbyter for that section, pioneered the A.G. ministry in that area. There are A.G churches in Ariyankuppam, Gorimedu, Karaikal, Muthalpet, Nedurkadu, Pondicherry, Ulavarkarai, Vilanur and other places.³⁷

15. Ramnad Section:

It is known as Ramanathapuram. It is known for religious, historical and cultural significance. There is a famous Catholic Church in Oriyur. John De Britto a Roman Catholic missionary died as a martyr in Oriyur.³⁸ The population of Ramnad is 1, 183,321 people living in 7 taluks, 11 towns and 393 villages.³⁹ There are A.G churches in Devakottai, Kamuthi, Manamadurai, Mandapam Camp, Paramakudi, Ramanathapuram, Singampuneri, Sivagangai, Thirupattur, Thirupuvanam and other places.⁴⁰

16. Salem Section:

Salem is an industrial area and known for stainless steel. It is also known for mango fruits. It has a population of 2, 992,754 people living in 9 taluks, 44 towns, and 619 villages.⁴¹ There are A.G churches in Aathur, Bethel, Metur, Namakal, Salem, Truchencode, Yerkadu and other places.⁴²

17. Sengottai Section:

It is known as “Sengottai.” The Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu has A.G churches in Sengottai section. It consists of three taluks from Tinevely. The first Assemblies of God Church in Tamilnadu was built in Kanakapillai Valasai in 1949. The A.G. Industrial School was established in 1948 by the late Rev. Edwards an American missionary. There are A.G churches in Aaikudi, Alankulam, Idayankulam, Kadayam, Kadayanallur, Mangalapuram, Shencottai, Surandai, Tenkasi and other places.⁴³

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18. South Arcot Section:

South Arcot is situated between Pennar river of Nellore and the Pennar river of South Arcot. It has 2346 villages and 17 towns. There are A.G churches in Chidambaram, Cuddalore, Kallidaikuruchi, Mannarkudi, Panruti, Virudachalam and other places.⁴⁴

19. Tanjore Section:

It is known by the name “Thanjavur.” It is called “The rice bowl of Tamilnadu.”⁴⁵ Thanjavur was known for Tamil learning and culture. German missionary Swartz was an instrument to propagate the gospel in 1750.⁴⁶ Thanjavur has a population of 2, 205, 375 people living in 8 taluks, 29 towns and 821 villages.⁴⁷ There are A.G churches in Anaikadu, Aranthangi, Kumbakonam, Pattukottai, Pudukottai, Thanjavur and other places.⁴⁸

20. Tinevely Section:

It is known as “Thirunelveli”, which was once an important place of the Pandiyan Kingdom. There are a number of Protestant and Catholic Christians living here. Amy Carmichael from Ireland started an orphanage for girls and boys in the 1900’s in Donavur (Kalakadu). It has a population of 2, 801,194 people living in 11 taluks, 44 Towns, and 481 Villages.⁴⁹ There are A.G churches in Alagiapandiyapuram, Mullaikulam, Palayapettai, Puliengudi, Pudupettai, Ramalingapuram, Sankarankoil, Sivagangai, Thalaiyoothu, Tinevely town, Vasudevanallur and other places.⁵⁰

21. Trichy Section:

It is known as “Trichirapalli” situated in the central part of Tamilnadu on the banks of Cauvery River. It was ruled by Chola, Pandiya, and Pallava Kings at various times. Trichy is well known for the Roman Catholic College St. Joseph’s for men and Holy Cross for women. The C.S.I. has the Bishop Huber College. Trichy has a Christian Literature and Living www.christianliteratureandliving.com 197
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population of 2, 388,831 people living in 8 taluks, 24 Towns and 479 Villages.⁵¹ The first A.G. Church was started in Melakalkandarkottai in the 1960's. There are A.G churches in Anna Nagar, Kattur, Lalgudi, Manaparai, Perembalur, Puthur, Sri Rangam, Thiruvarambur, Trichy city and other places.⁵²

22. Thiruvallur:

It is a place near Chennai known for automobile industry. It has a population of 2, 738,866 people living in 8 taluks, 32 towns, and 648 villages.⁵³ There are A.G churches in Ambatur, Avadi, Kolathur, Lakshmipuram, Madavaram, Manali, Poonamallu, Porur, Red Hills, Thiruvallur and other places.⁵⁴

23. Tuticorin Section:

It is situated on the eastern coast of Southern part of Tamilnadu known as "Thoothukudi." *"It was famous for its high quality pearls since ancient times."*⁵⁵ It has a population of 1, 565,743 people living in 8 taluks, 26 towns and 436 villages.⁵⁶ There are A.G churches in Alvarthirungari, Arumuganieri, Eral, Ettayapuram, Kadambur, Koilpatti, Nazareth, Ottapidaram, Pudukottai, Satankulam, Sawyerpuram, Srivaikundam, Truchendur, Tuticorin and other places.⁵⁷

24. Villupuram Section:

Villupuram is known for historical and religious places. It has a population of 2, 943,917 people living in 8 taluks, 18 towns and 1489 villages.⁵⁸ There are A.G churches in Marakanam, Thirukoilur, Tindivanam, Ulundurpet, Villupuram and other places.⁵⁹

25. Virudhunagar Section:

It is bounded by the Madurai district in the north, Tuticorin and Tinevely districts in the south.⁶⁰ This district has several small industries, and Sivakasi is called, "A little Japan"; which is known for match factories, fireworks and printing industries. It has a population of 1, 751,548 people living in 8 taluks, 27 towns and 597 villages. There are Christian Literature and Living www.christianliteratureandliving.com 198
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A.G churches in Arupukottai, Idyankulam, Kariyapatti, Koomapatti, Mt. Zion, Rajapalayam, Satur, Sivakasi, Srivilliputhur, Virudunagar and other places.⁶¹

Tamil Nadu District Map

4.0.1 The A.G. Churches in the 25 sections in Tamil Nadu



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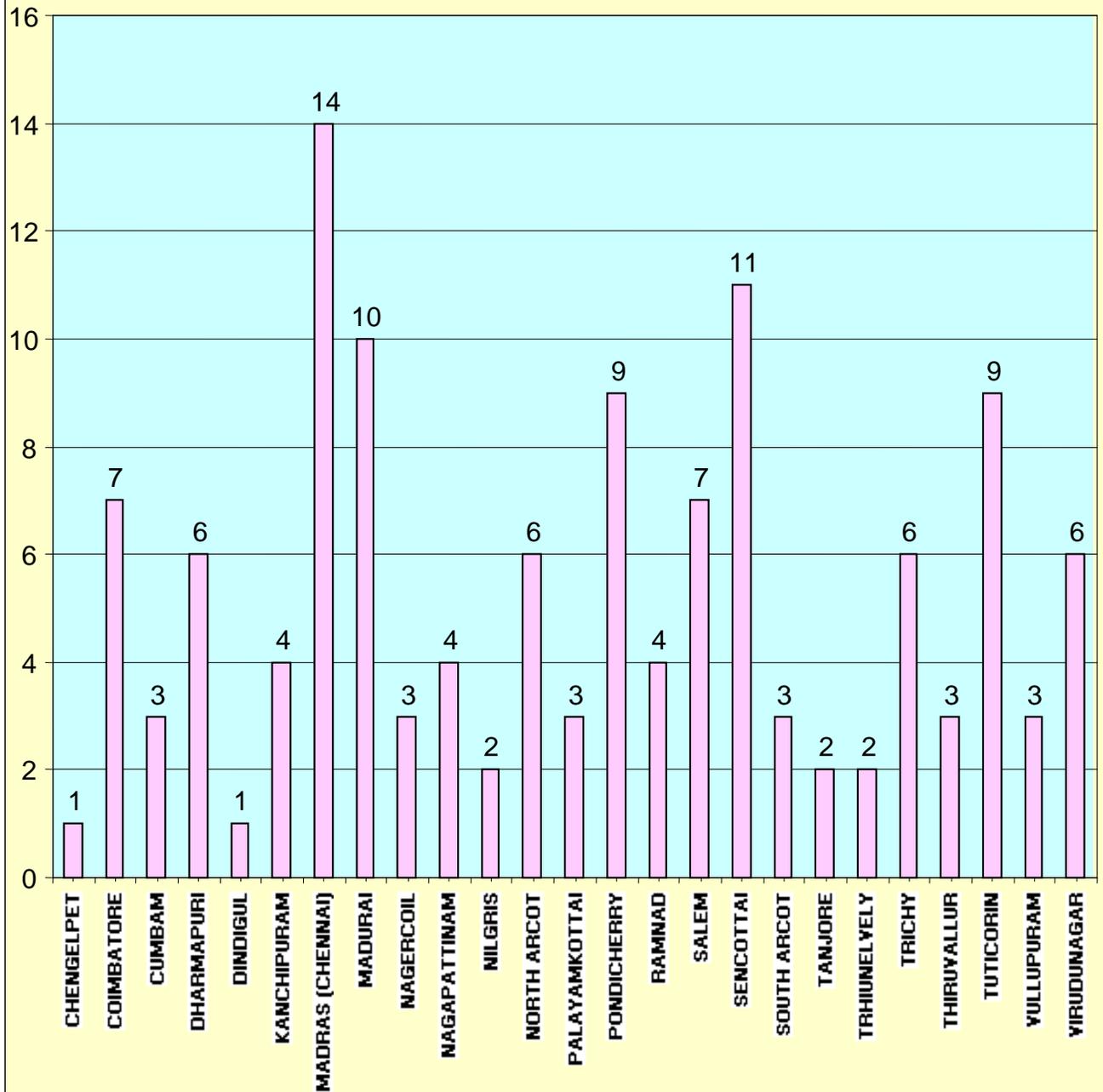
4.0.1. Data collected from A.G churches in 25 Districts of Tamilnadu.

The Assemblies of God churches are established in the 25 Districts of the Tamilnadu state

Sl. No	Name of the place	Number of Churches responded	Frequency	Percentage
1	Chengelpet	1	1	0.27
2	Coimbatore	7	21	5.66
3	Cumbam	3	8	2.16
4	Dharmapuri	6	16	4.31
5	Dindigul	1	9	2.43
6	Kanchipuram	4	9	2.43
7	Madras (Chennai)	14	44	11.86
8	Madurai	10	41	11.05
9	Nagarcoil	3	7	1.89
10	Nagapattinam	4	6	1.62
11	Nilgiris	2	4	1.08
12	North Arcot	6	12	3.23
13	Palayamkottai	3	10	2.70
14	Pondicherry	9	27	7.28
15	Ramnad	4	11	2.96
16	Salem	7	20	5.39
17	Sengottai	11	28	7.55
18	South Arcot	3	10	2.70
19	Tanjore	2	5	1.35
20	Thirunelvely	2	7	1.89
21	Trichy	6	11	2.96
22	Thiruvallur	3	8	2.16
23	Tuticorin	9	26	7.01
24	Villupuram	3	6	1.62
25	Virudunagar	6	24	6.47
	Total	129	370	100.00

There are seven hundred and ten A.G churches in Tamilnadu (2003). Questionnaires were given to 250 Churches. The researcher was able to collect 370 samples from 129 A.G churches from the above places.

129 Assemblies of God Churches



Among the 710 A.G. Churches in Tamilnadu, only from 129 Churches (18.42%) the researcher was able to collect the samples. In Chennai (11.86%), Madurai (11.05%), Sengottai (7.55%), Pondicherry (7.28%), Tuticorin (7.01%), Virudunagar (6.47%), and Coimbatore (5.66%), and Salem (5.39%).

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4.0.3 Position of the persons in the A.G church

Sl. No	Position	Percentage
1	Presbyter	6.27
2	Pastor	25.85
3	Asst. Pastor	15.40
4	Elder	11.23
5	Pastor's Wife	30.81
6	Believer	10.44
	Total	100.00

The questionnaire was filled by presbyters (6.27%), pastors (25.85%), assistant pastors (15.40%), elders (11.23%), pastor's wife (30.81%), and believers (10.44%).

4.0.4 Duration of pastor's association with the A.G church

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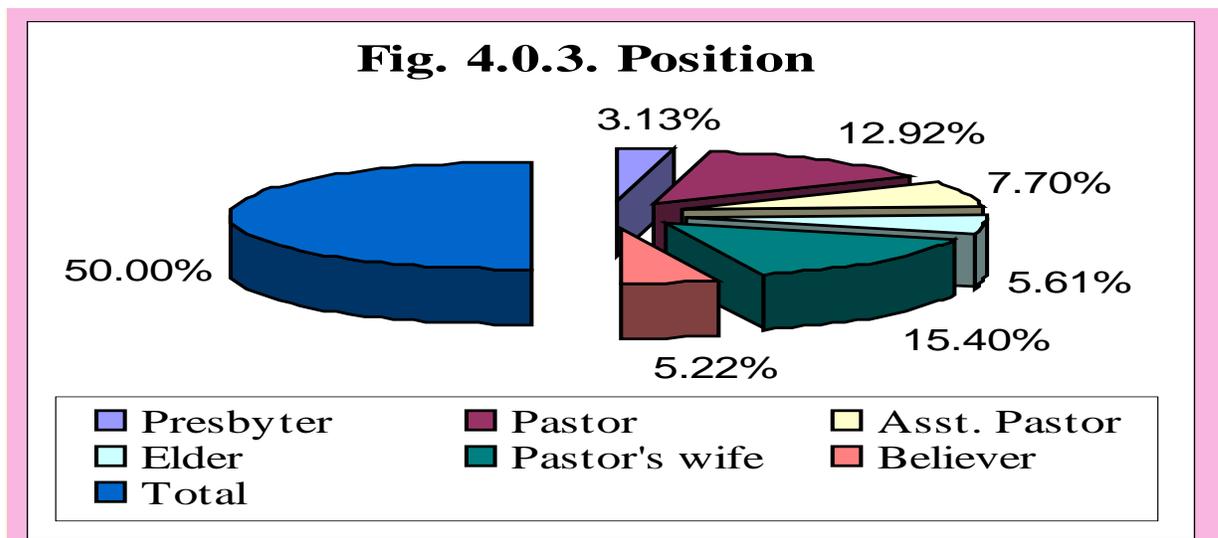
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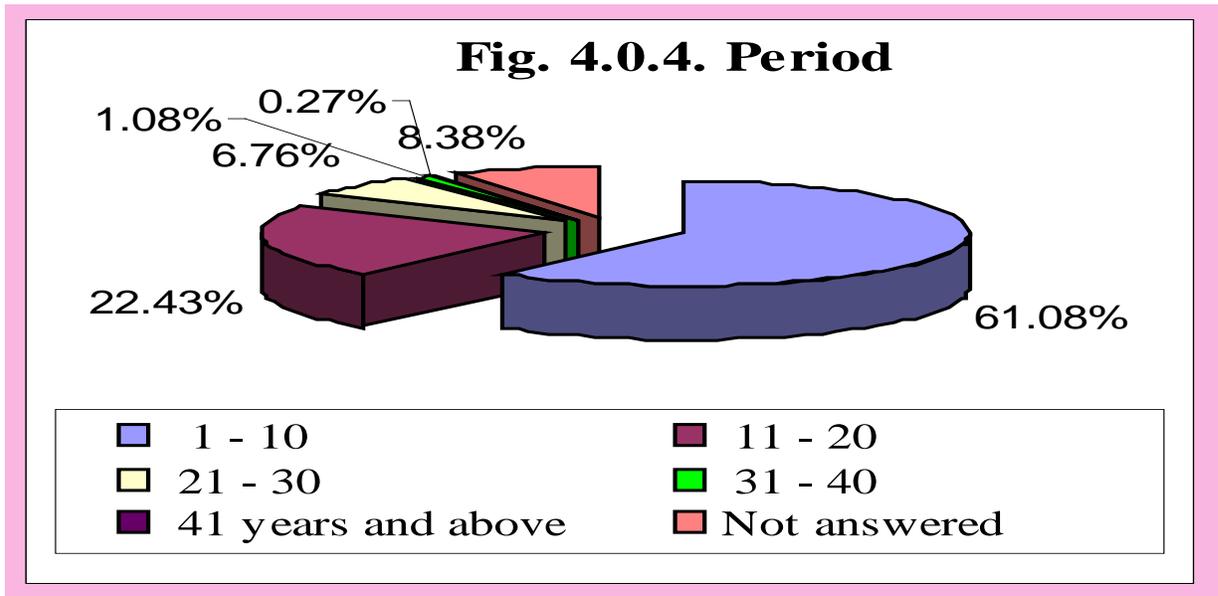
From 1989-2003

Sl. No	Years of Pastor's Association with the A.G. Church	Percentage
1	1 – 10	61.08
2	11 – 20	22.43
3	21 – 30	6.76
4	31 – 40	1.08
5	41 years and above	0.27
6	Not answered	8.38
	Total	100.00

Most of them (61.08%) have 10 years of Association with the A.G churches.



The questionnaire was filled by Presbyters (6.27%), Pastors (25.85%), Elders (11.23%), Pastors wives (30.81%), and Believers (10.44%).



The persons who filled the questionnaire, most of them (61.08%) have 10 years of Association with their local A.G. Church.

4.0.5 The year, A.G church was started

Sl. No	The year, A.G. Church started	Percentage
1	1949 – 1989 (in 40 years time)	45.90
2	1989 – 1993	12.82
3	1994 – 1998	10.26
4	1999 – 2003	6.41
5	Not answered	24.62
	Total	100.00

1949 – 1989 the total percentage of A.G churches (45.90%), in 1993 (12.82%), in 1998 (10.26%), in 2003 (6.41%), between 1999 and 2003 Church growth was affected owing to the anti conversion bill passed by the Tamilnadu Government.

4.0.7 Methods used by the A.G churches to start the ministry

a. Prayer:

Sl. No.	Prayer	Percentage
1	Morning Prayer	38.09
2	Fasting Prayer	32.89
3	All night Prayer	29.03
	Total	100.00

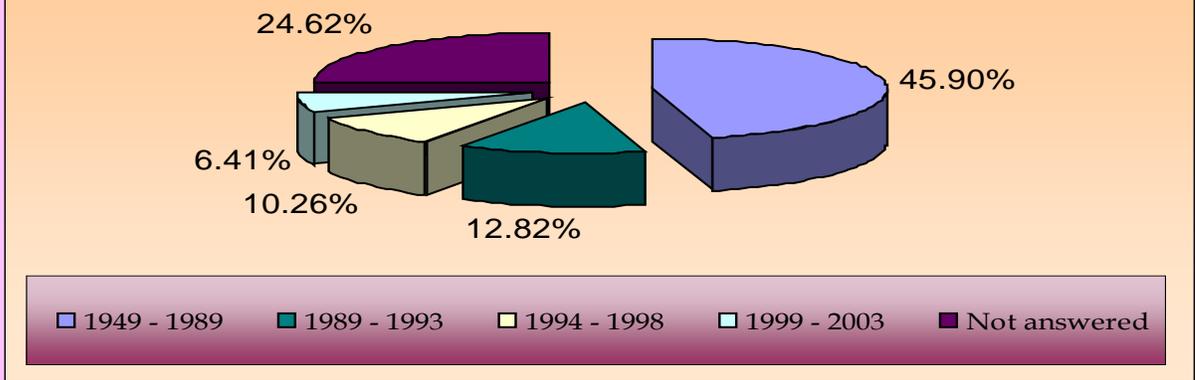
The A.G churches started as a result of morning prayers (38.09%), fasting prayer (32.89%) and all night prayer (29.03%).

b. Ministry:

Sl. No.	Ministry	Percentage
1	Sunday School	37.91
2	Personal Evangelism	36.36
3	House Church	25.73
	Total	100.00

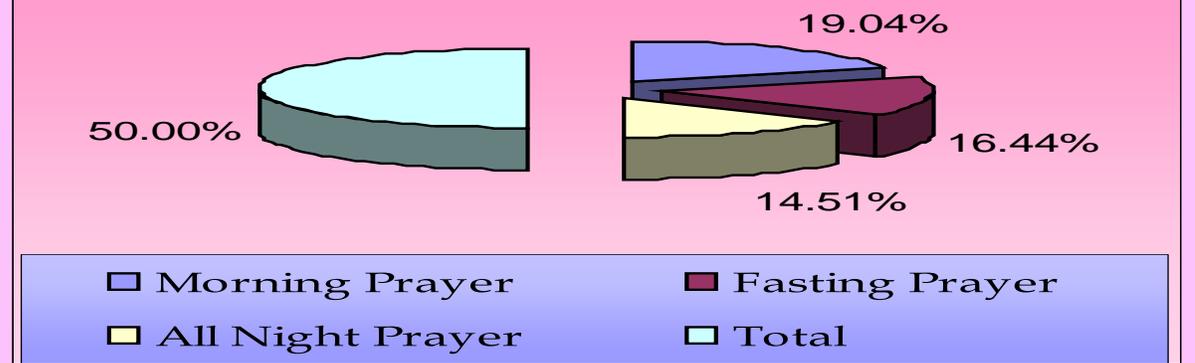
The A.G churches followed Sunday school (37.91%), personal evangelism (36.36%), and house churches (25.73%) to establish the ministry.

Fig. 4.0.5. The Church started

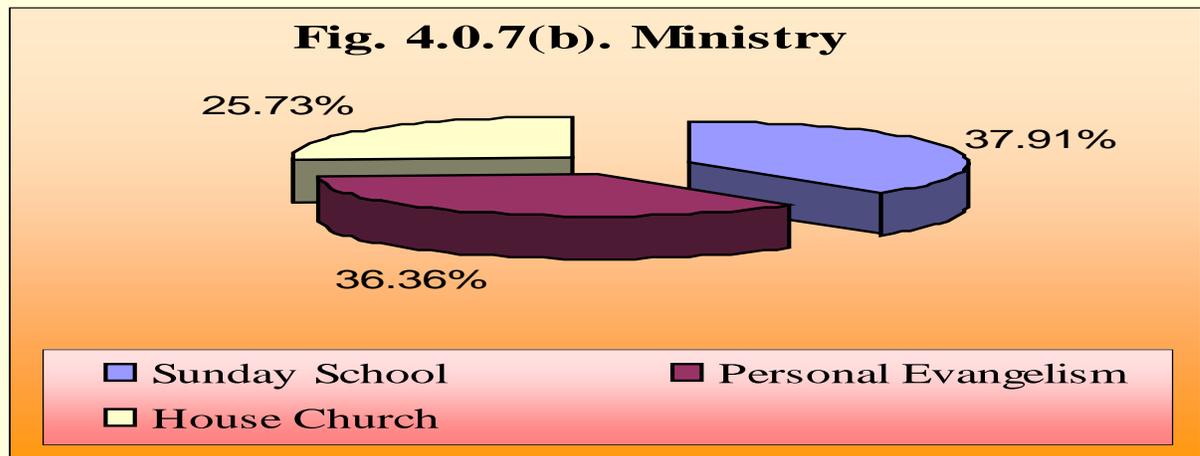


In 1989 the total percentage of A.G. Churches (45.90%), in 1993 (12.82%), in 1998 (10.26%), in 2003 (6.41%), between 1999 to 2003 Church growth was affected owing to the anti conversion bill passed by Tamilnadu Government.

Fig. 4.0.7(a). Prayer



The A.G. Churches started as a result of Morning Prayers (38.09%), Fasting prayer (32.89%) and all night prayer (29.03%).



The A.G. Churches followed Sunday school (37.91%), Personal Evangelism (36.36), and House Churches (25.73%) to establish the ministry.

4.0.8 Location of the churches

Sl. No	Location of the Church	Percentage
1	City (Urban)	31.6
2	Semi City (Urban)	10.23
3	Town	28.84
4	Panchayat	16.98
5	Villages	11.40
6	Slum	1.40
	Total	100.00

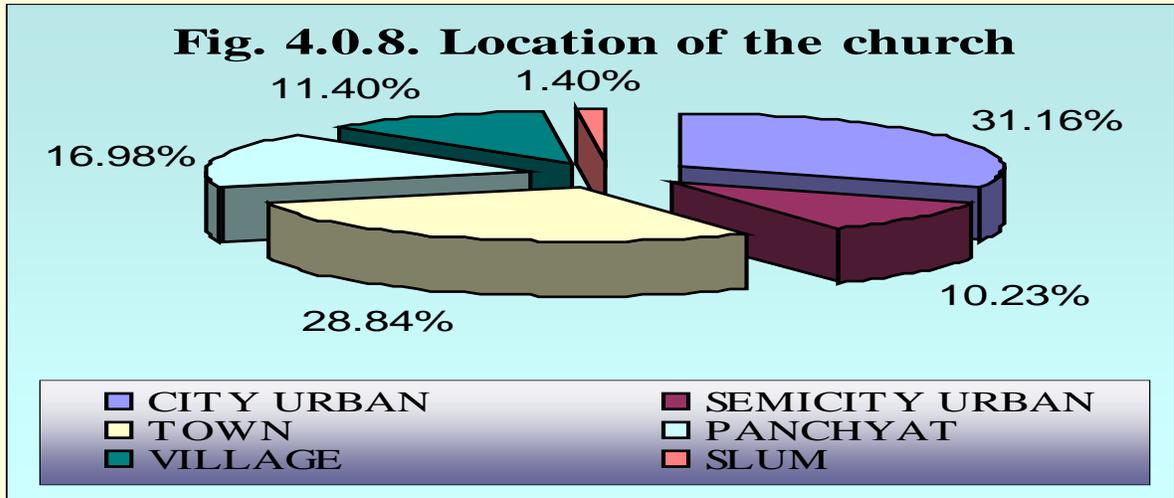
The majority of the A.G churches are located in Cities (31.6%) and Towns (28.84%) and other churches in Panchayats (16.98%), Villages (11.40%), and Slum areas (1.40%).

4.0.9 Theological education of the pastors

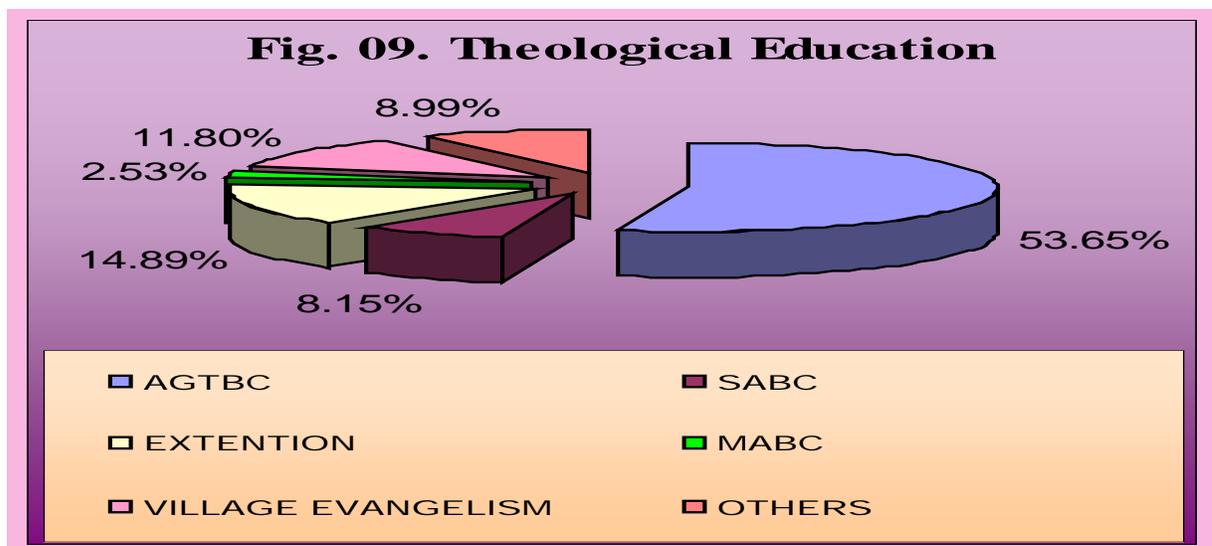
Sl. No	Theological Education	Percentage
1	A.G. Tamilnadu Bible College	53.65
2	Southern Asia Bible College	8.15
3	Extension Schools by AGTBC	14.89
4	Madras Assemblies of God Bible College	2.53
5	Village Evangelism Training	11.80
6	Others	8.99
	Total	100.00

The majority of the Pastors had their Theological training in the A.G Tamilnadu Bible College (53.65%). Whereas others had the training in SABC (8.15%), Extension Schools (14.89%), MABC (2.53%), and Village evangelism Training through the Tamil District Council of the South India Assemblies of God.

FIGURE 08 - 09



The majority of the A.G. Churches are located in Cities (31.6%) , Towns (28.84%) and other churches in Panchayats(16.98%), Villages (11.40%), and Slum areas (1.40%).



The majority of the Pastors had their Theological training in the A.G. Tamilnadu Bible College (53.65%). Whereas others had the training in SABC (8.15%), Extension Schools (14.89%), MABC (2.53%), and Village evangelism Training through the Tamil District Council of the South India Assemblies of God.

4.0.10 The benefits of the Bible College Education

Sl. No	The education has helped to	Percentage
1	Teach the Bible systematically	22.71
2	Counsel the needy people	19.16
3	Preach and take care of the church	20.32
4	Love people without any reservation	18.00
5	Train the members of the laity	19.81
	Total	100.00

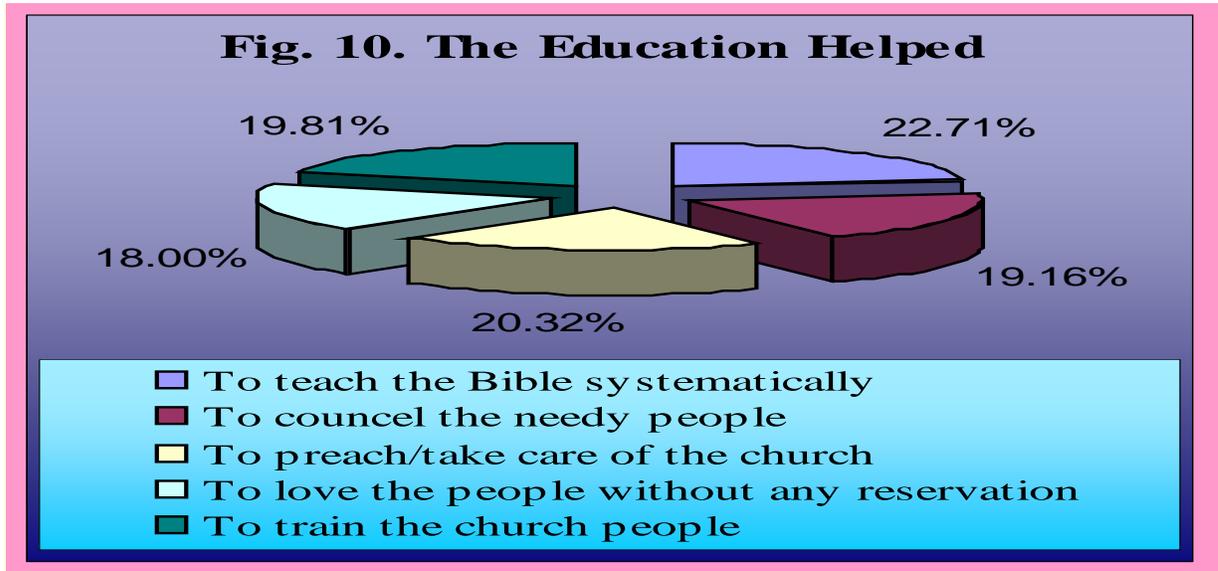
Theological education has helped to teach the Bible systematically (22.71%), Counsel the needy people (19.16%), Preach and take care of the church (20.32%), Love people without any reservation (18.00%) and Train the members of the Laity (19.81%).

4.0.11 The importance of Biblical and Theological Basis for Evangelism and church growth

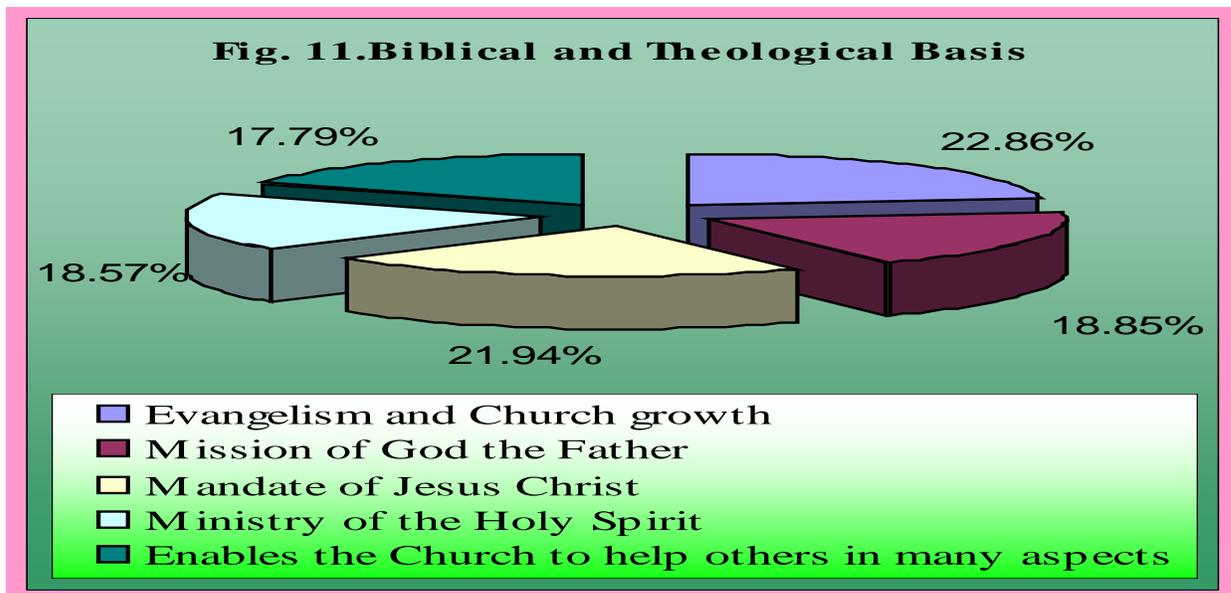
Sl. No.	Biblical and Theological Basis	Percentage
1	Evangelism and church growth are Bible centered	22.86
2	Mission of God the Father	18.85
3	Mandate of Jesus Christ	21.94
4	Ministry of the Holy Spirit	18.57
5	Enables the church to reach the society with God's love	17.79
	Total	100.00

Biblical and Theological basis plays an important roll for evangelism and church growth (22.86%); it is based on God the Father (18.85%), Jesus Christ the Son (21.94%), Holy Spirit the Comforter (18.57%). It enables the church to help individuals, families, societies, and nations to love one another and render service to the needy (17.79%).

FIGURE 10 - 11



Theological Education has helped to teach the Bible systematically (22.71%), Counsel the needy people (19.16%), Preach and take care of the church (20.32%), Love people without any reservation (18.00%) and Train the members of the Laity (19.81%).



Biblical and Theological basis plays an important role for Evangelism and church growth (22.86%); it is based on God the Father (18.85%), Jesus Christ the Son (21.94%), Holy Spirit the Comforter (18.57%). It enables the church to help individuals, families, societies, and nations to love one another and render service to the needy (17.79%).

4.0.12 Reasons for people joining the A.G churches

a. Sociological reasons:

Sl. No.	Sociological reasons	Percentage
1	To be free from sickness and witchcraft	18.30
2	For family unity	13.57
3	To come out of caste barrier (inequality, untouchability)	21.29
4	To get rid of poverty etc.	12.60
5	To mould the children	11.34
6	To receive equal status for ladies and children	22.89

	Total	100.00
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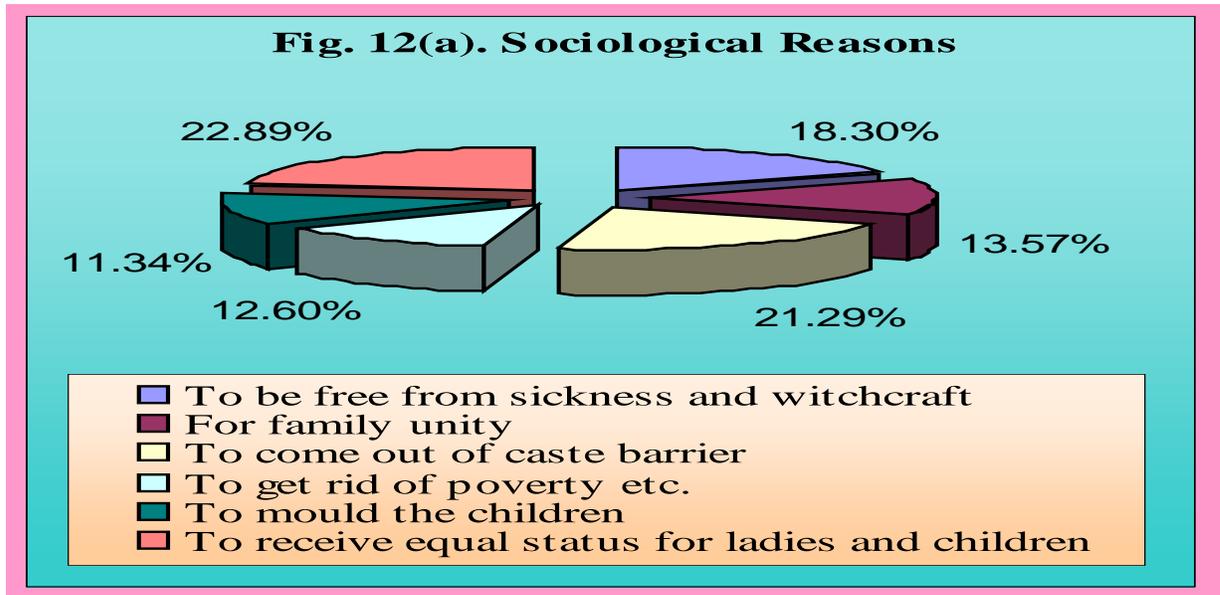
People have joined the A.G churches since they were healed or set free from witchcrafts (18.30%), for family unity (13.57%), to come out of caste problems (21.29%), poverty (12.60%), to mould the children in education and social status (11.34%), and to receive equal status for ladies and children (22.89%).

b. Psychological reasons:

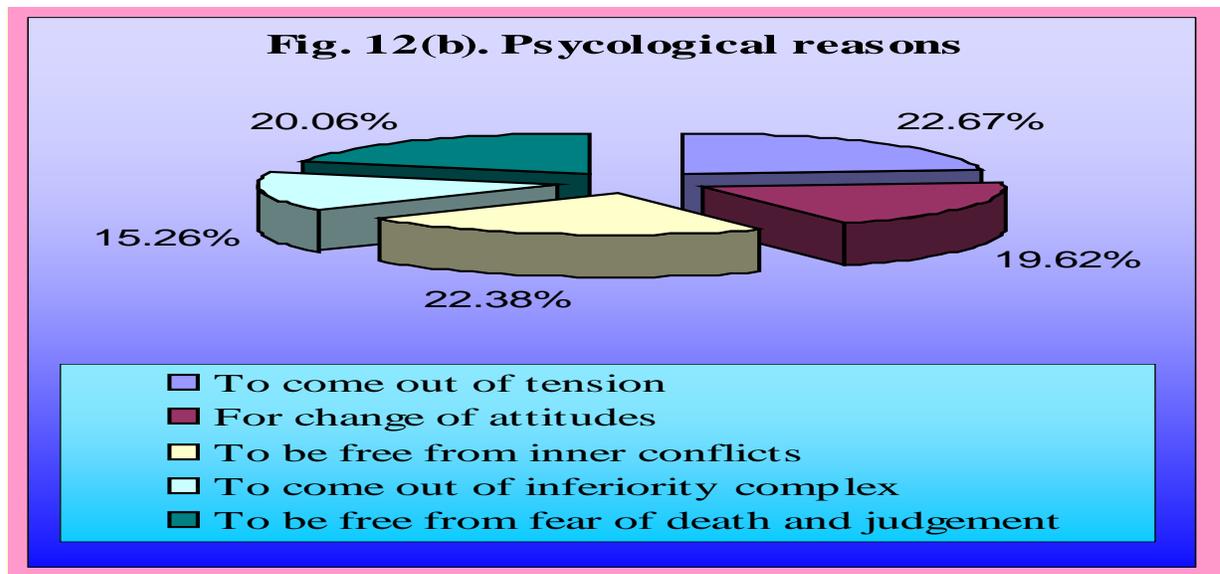
Sl. No	Psychological reasons	Percentage
1	To come out of tension	22.67
2	For change of attitudes	19.62
3	To be free from inner conflicts	22.38
4	To come out of inferiority complex	15.26
5	To be free from fear of death and judgement	20.06
	Total	100.00

People have joined the A.G churches to come out of tension (22.67%), for change of attitudes (19.62%), to be free from inner conflicts (22.38%), and to come out of inferiority complex (15.26%) and fear of death and judgement (20.06%).

FIGURE 12(a) – 12(b)



People have joined the A.G. Churches since they were healed or set free from witchcrafts (18.30%), for family unity (13.57%), to come out of caste problems (21.29%), poverty (11.34%), and to mould the children in education and social status (12.60%).



People have joined the A.G churches to come out of tension (22.67%), for change of attitudes (19.62%), to be free from inner conflicts (22.38%), and to come out of inferiority complex (15.26%) and fear of death and judgement (20.06%).

c. Theological reasons:

Sl. No	Theological reasons	Percentage
1	Search of reality (salvation)	23.18
2	Search of peace	30.38
3	Life after death	23.54
4	Fear of death and judgement	22.90
	Total	100.00

People have joined the A.G churches in search of reality (23.18%), peace (30.38%), and hope (23.54%), in search of quest about life after death and fear of death and judgement (22.90%).

4.0.13 The reasons for the growth of the A.G churches

Sl. No	The growth of the A.G churches	Percentage
1	Bible centered evangelism	9.98
2	Theological training	8.77
3	Personal evangelism	8.90
4	Members of the laity being used	10.41
5	House churches	8.96
6	Care cells meetings	9.70
7	OIKOS Evangelism	7.75
8	Decade of harvest	9.55
9	Visitation of houses and hospitals	8.09
10	Local church pastor's leadership	7.51
12	Any other	10.38
	Total	100.00

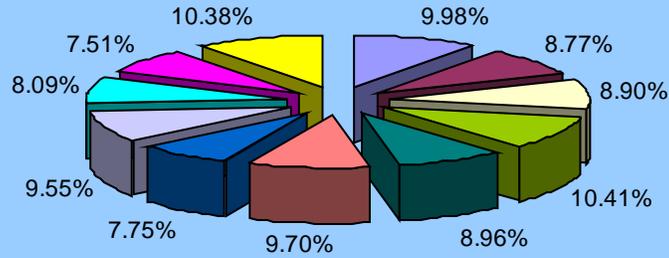
The A.G churches have grown for the following reasons such as Bible centered evangelism (9.98%), theological training (8.77%), personal evangelism (8.90%), members of the laity being used in the ministry (10.41%), house churches (8.96%), cell groups (9.70%), OIKOS evangelism (7.75%), decade of harvest (9.55%), visitation of houses and hospitals (9.09%) and pastor's leadership (7.51%).

FIGURE 12(c) – 13



People have joined the A.G churches in search of reality (23.18%), peace (30.38%), and hope (23.54%), in search of quest about life after death and fear of death and judgement (22.90%).

Fig. 13. The growth of the A.G. churches



- Bible centered evangelism
- Theological training
- Personal evangelism
- Members of the Laity being used
- House churches
- Care cells
- OIKOS Evangelism
- Decade of harvest
- Visitation of Houses and Hospitals
- Local church pastor's leadership
- Any other

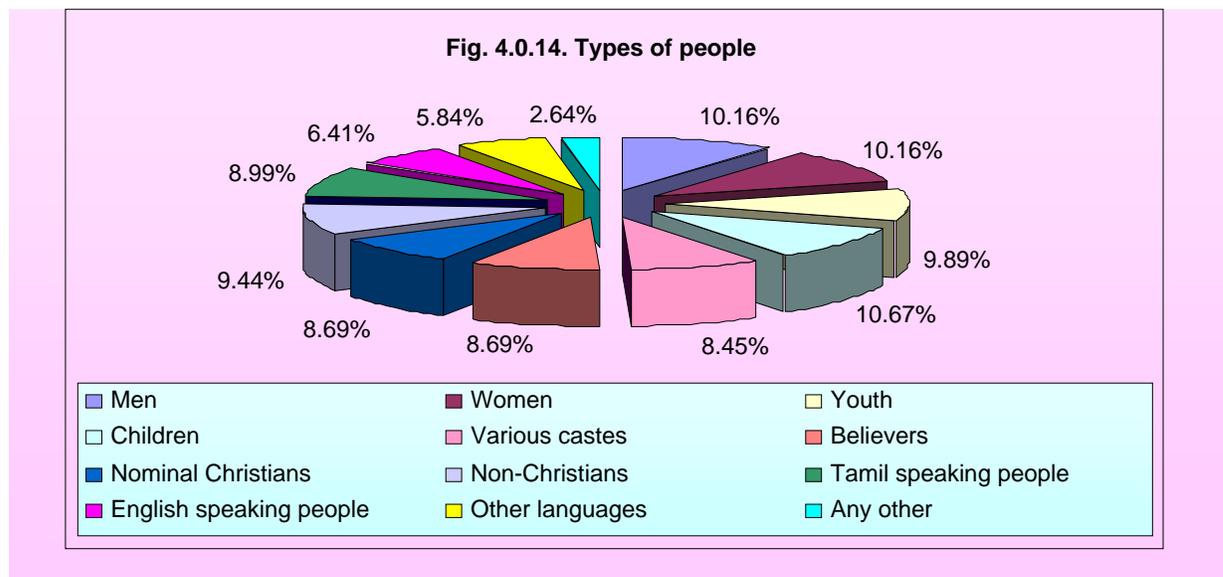
The A.G. Churches have grown for the following reasons such as Bible centered evangelism (9.98%), Theological training (8.77%), personal evangelism (8.90%), members of the laity being used in the ministry (10.41%), house churches (8.96%), cell groups (9.70%), OIKOS evangelism (7.75%), decade of harvest (9.55%), visitation of houses and hospitals (8.09%) and pastor's leadership (7.51%).

4.0.14 Types of people who come to the A.G church

Sl. No	Types of people	Percentage
1	Men	10.16
2	Women	10.16
3	Youth	9.89
4	Children	10.67
5	People from various castes	8.45
6	Believers	8.69
7	Nominal Christians	8.69

8	Non-Christians	9.44
9	Tamil speaking people	8.99
10	English speaking people	6.41
11	Other languages	5.84
12	Any other	2.64
	Total	100.00

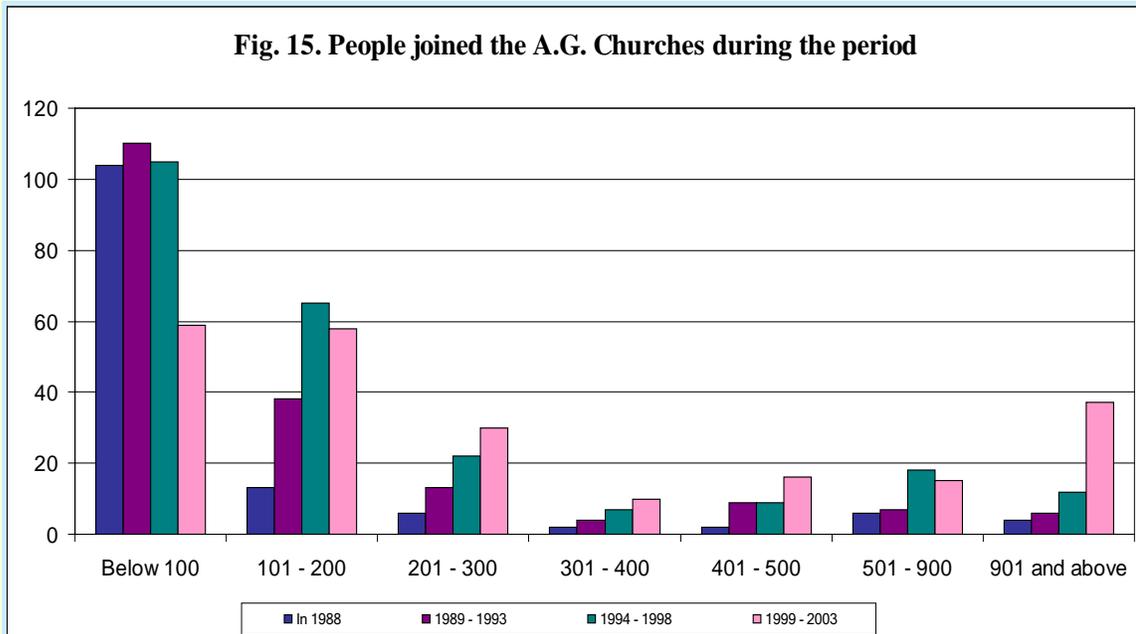
In the A.G churches men (10.16%), women (10.16%), youth (9.89%), children (10.67%), and people of various castes (8.45%), believers (8.69%), nominal Christians (8.69%), non-Christians (9.44%), Tamil (8.99%), English (6.41%) and other language speaking people (5.84%) attend the churches.



4.0.15 People who joined the A.G churches in the following years

Sl.No.	No. of People	In 1988	1989 - 1993	1994 – 1998	1999- 2003
1	Below 100	104	110	105	59
2	101 - 200	13	38	65	58
3	201 - 300	6	13	22	30
4	301 - 400	2	4	7	10
5	401 - 500	2	9	9	16
6	501 - 900	6	7	18	15
7	901 and above	4	6	12	37
8	Not answered	233	183	132	145
	Total	370	370	370	370

The above chart shows the number of people who joined the A.G churches during 1989-1993, 1994-1998, 1999- 2003.



The above chart shows the number of people who joined the A.G. Churches during 1989-1993, 1994-1998, 1999- 2003.

4.0.16 The ways in which the members of the laity are used in Evangelism and Church growth

Sl. No	The laity in evangelism	Percentage
1	Personal evangelism	19.92
2	Song leading in the church	15.64
3	Visiting	18.97
4	Conducting care cells	17.72
5	Conducting service in house church	17.95
6	Involvement in T.V ministry	9.81

	Total	100.00
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The members of the laity are used in personal evangelism (19.92%), song leading (15.64%), visitation (18.97%), conducting care cells (17.72%), house churches (17.95%), and involvement in T.V. ministry (9.81%).

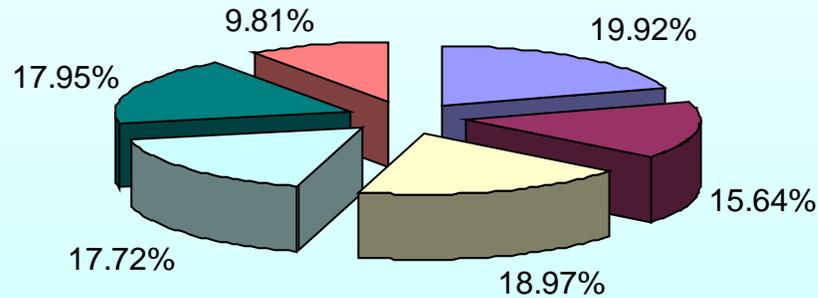
4.0.17 Information regarding Care Cells

Sl. No	Care cells	Percentage
1	Conducting service in the house	22.19
2	6 Month training for Leaders	16.59
3	Gathering of relatives and neighbours	20.92
4	Main items (songs, testimonies, and message)	19.32
5	Prayers offered	20.99
	Total	100.00

Cell groups are conducted in the houses (22.19%), 6 month leadership training is given (16.59%), relatives and neighbours gather for house meetings (20.92%). The main items in the cell meetings are songs, testimonies, message, and counselling (19.32%). Finally prayers are offered for the needy people (20.99%), for their spiritual social and psychological needs.

FIGURE 16 – 17

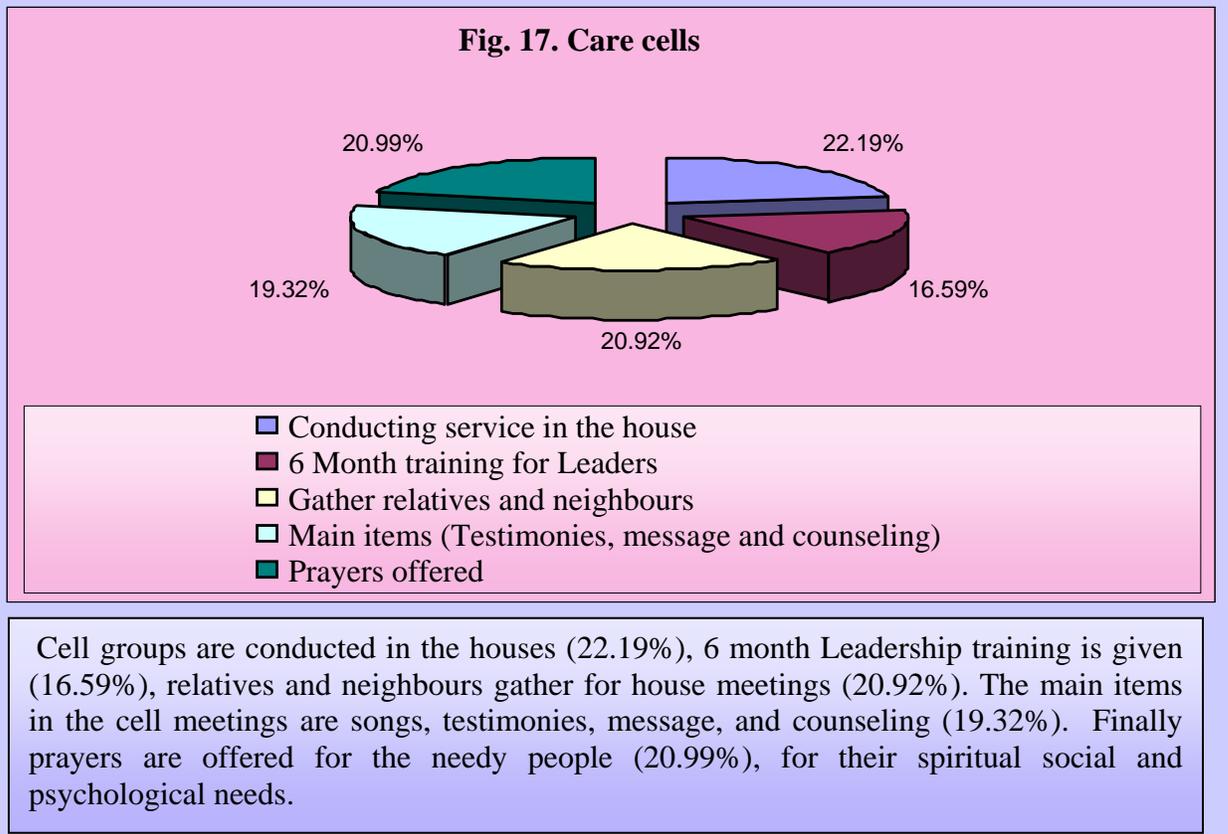
Fig. 16. Members of the laity in Evangelism



■ Personal evangelism ■ Song leading in the church □ Visiting
□ Conducting care cells ■ Conducting service in house church ■ Involvement in T.V ministry

The members of the laity are used in personal evangelism (19.92%), song leading (15.64%), visitation (18.97%), conducting care cells (17.72%), house churches (17.95%), and involvement in T.V. ministry (9.81%).

Fig. 17. Care cells



4.0.18 Information regarding House Churches

Sl. No	House churches	Percentage
1	New Testament pattern	21.29
2	Less expensive	20.63
3	Easy to maintain	20.76
4	No need for permission	19.25
5	Proven method	18.06

	Total	100.00
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House churches are based on the New Testament pattern (21.29%). It is less expensive (20.63%), easy to maintain (20.76%), Government permission is not needed (19.25%) and it is a proven method for church establishment and growth (18.06%).

4.0.19 Information regarding Oikos Evangelism

Sl. No	OIKOS	Percentage
1	Household	14.20
2	Believers are burdened	14.68
3	Believers pray for relatives	14.73
4	Names written on a paper	13.31
5	21 or 30 or 40 days prayer	14.52
6	Relatives invited	14.68
7	Prayer will be offered	13.89
	Total	100.00

OIKOS evangelism is based on house hold gathering (14.20%). Believers who are burdened (14.68%) pray for relatives, friends and others (14.73%). They write their names on a paper (13.31%) pray for them for 21 or 30 or 40 days in fasting and prayer (14.52%). Later they are invited (14.68%) and prayers are offered (13.89%).

FIGURE 18 – 19

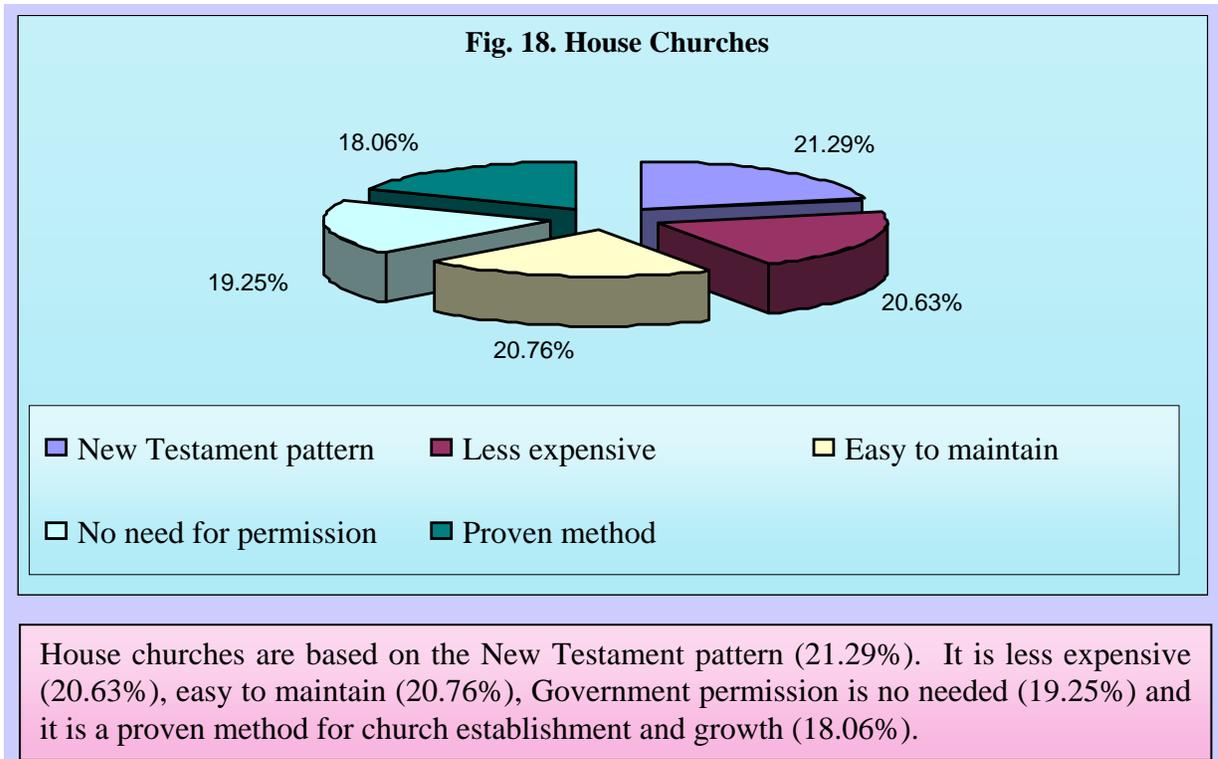
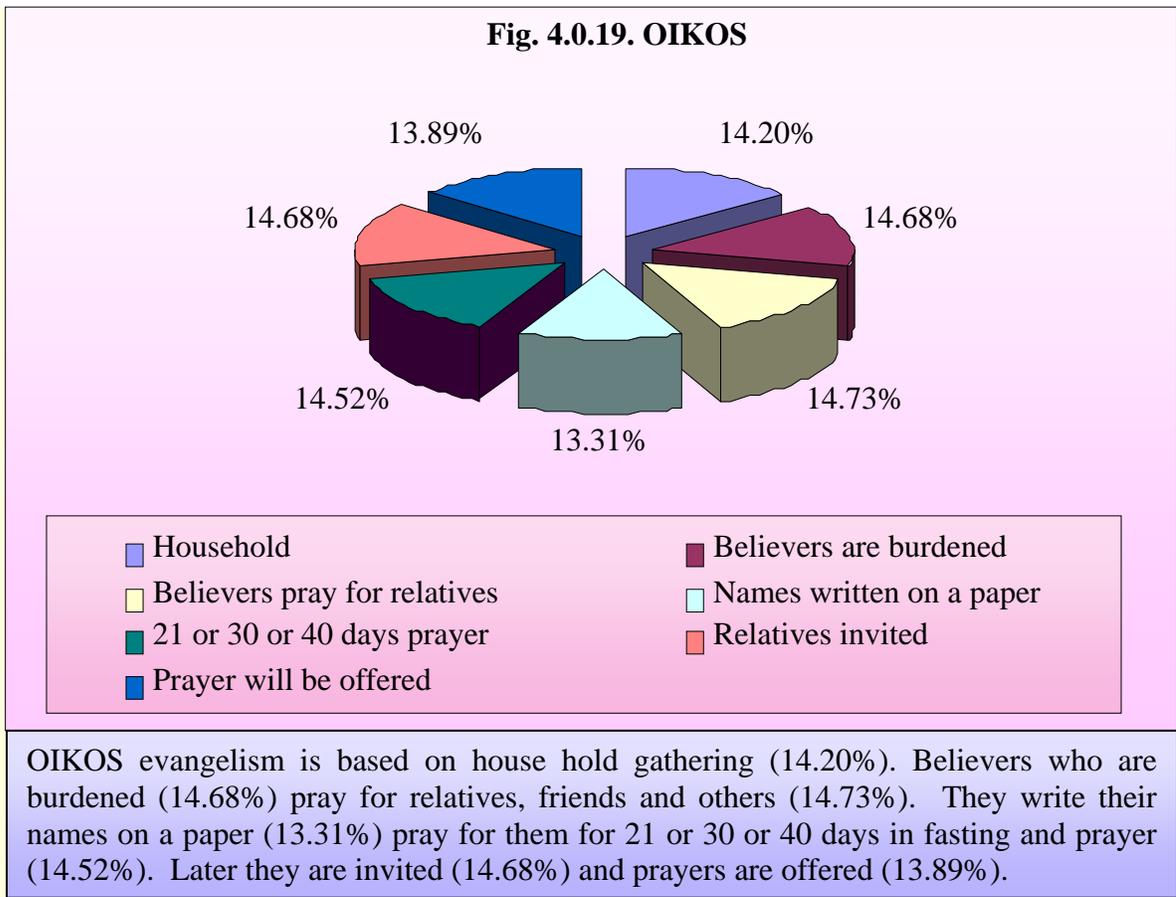


Fig. 4.0.19. OIKOS



4.0.20 The Sociological and Psychological changes taken place in the lives of the people who came to the A.G churches

a. Sociological:

Sl. No	Sociological	Percentage
1	Healing	19.54
2	Freedom from caste	14.50
3	Dignity in the church and society	16.28
4	Equality	17.77

5	Economic boost	18.91
6	Education	13.01
	Total	100.00

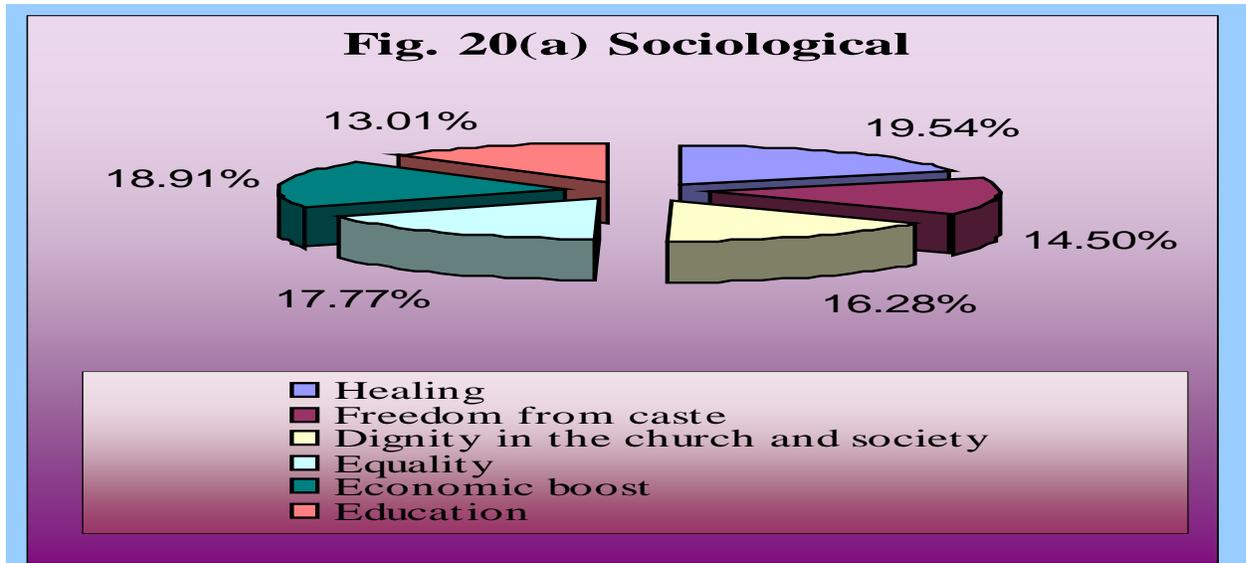
The following sociological changes have taken place in the lives of people who came to the A.G church: Healing from sickness (19.54%), deliverance from witchcrafts, freedom from caste problem (14.50%), dignity in the church and society (16.28%), equality in the church (17.77%), economic boost in the family (18.91%), and education given to family members (13.01%).

b. Psychological:

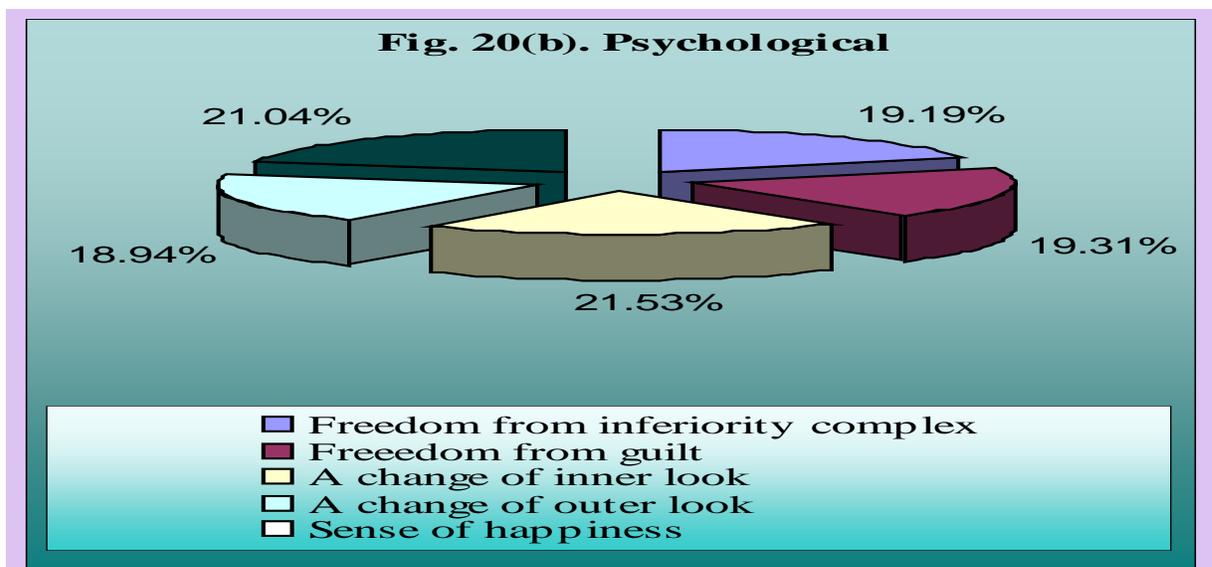
Sl. No	Psychological	Percentage
1	Freedom from inferiority complex	19.19
2	Freedom from guilt	19.31
3	A change in inner look	21.53
4	A change in outer look	18.94
5	Sense of happiness	21.04
	Total	100.00

People who joined the A.G churches have received freedom from inferiority complex (19.19%), guilt (19.31%), and a change in inner look (21.53%), outer look (18.94%), and a sense of happiness (21.04%).

FIGURE 20 (a) – 20 (b)



The following sociological changes have taken place in the lives of people who came to the A.G. Church: Healing from sickness (19.54%), deliverance from witchcrafts, freedom from caste problem (14.50%), dignity in the church and society (16.28%), equality in the church (7.77%), economic boost in the family (18.91%), and education given to family members (13.01%).



People who joined the A.G churches have received freedom from inferiority complex (19.19%), guilt (19.31%), and a change in inner look (21.53%), outer look (18.94%), and a sense of happiness (21.04%).

4.0.21 Themes of sermons preached in the A.G churches

Sl. No	Sermons preached in A.G Churches	Percentage
1	Salvation	20.33
2	Divine healing	19.51
3	Baptism of the Holy Spirit	20.03
4	Sanctification	20.44
5	Second coming and soul winning	19.69
	Total	100.00

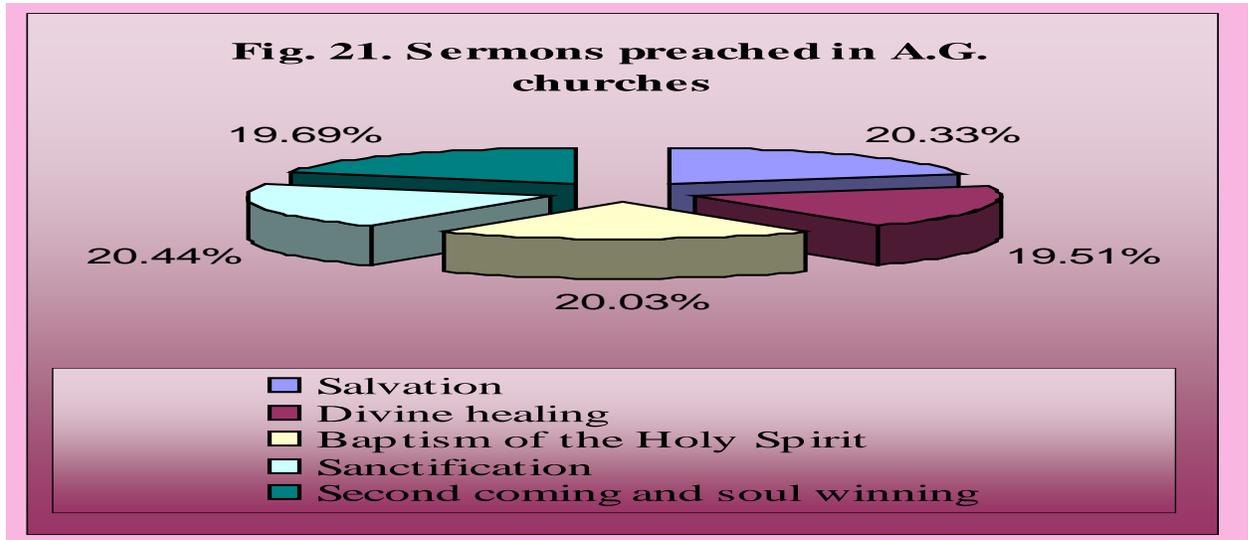
The sermons preached in the A.G churches, on topics such as salvation (forgiveness of sins) (20.33%), divine healing (19.51%), baptism of the Holy Spirit (20.03%), sanctification (20.44%), second coming and soulwinning (19.69%).

4.0.22 The content of Evangelistic message

Sl. No	The content of evangelistic message	Percentage
1	God loves you	25.31
2	Sin separates people from God's love	24.30
3	Jesus suffered, crucified, died and rose again	24.95
4	Holy Spirit convicts and leads people toward God	25.45
	Total	100.00

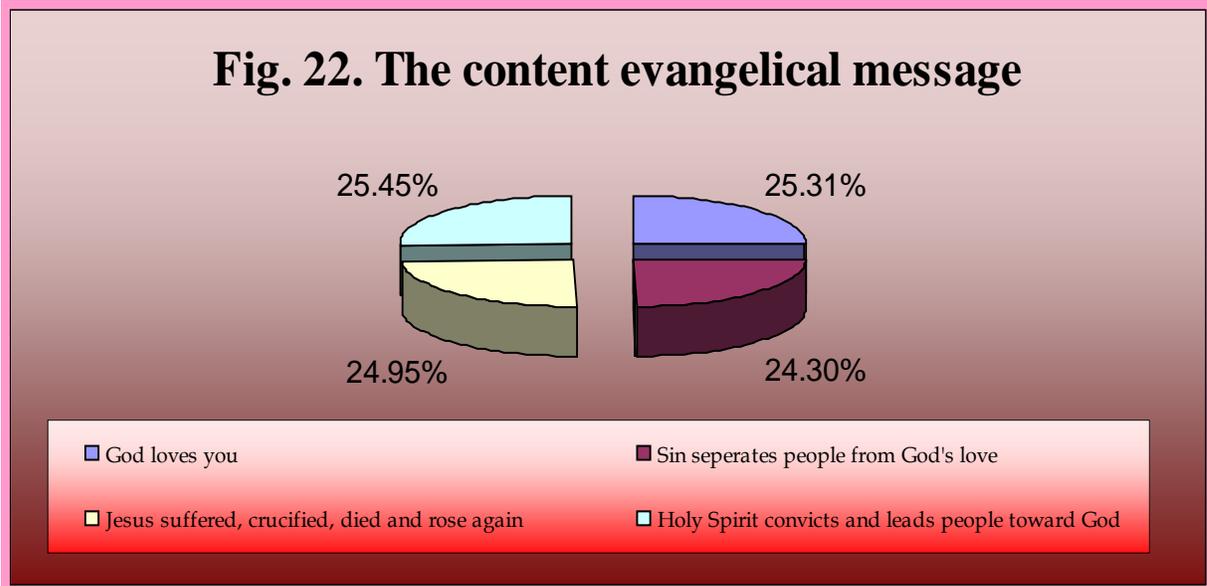
The concept of evangelism message is as follows: God loves you more than anyone else (25.31%), people are unable to experience God's love since sin separates them from God's love (24.30%). Jesus Christ came suffered, crucified, died and rose again (24.95%). The Holy Spirit convicts and leads people toward God (25.45%).

FIGURE 21 – 22



The sermons preached in the A.G churches, on topics such as salvation (forgiveness of sins) (20.33%), divine healing (19.51%), baptism of the Holy Spirit (20.03%), sanctification (20.44%), second coming and soulwinning (19.69%).

Fig. 22. The content evangelical message



Suggestion for evangelism to be done in healthy and spiritual lines. Respect other religions (17.49%). Appreciate the good things in any religion (18.77%). Have a positive approach (18.70%). It is God who convicts the people through the Holy Spirit (22.86%). It is not our methods that save people (22.18%). Show love and concern to evildoers.

4.0.23 The benefits of Educational and Social Institutions by the A.G denomination

Sl. No	Educational and social Institutions	Percentage
1	It is a blessing to the poor and needy	22.61
2	Education to students regardless of caste distinction	18.38
3	Moral education to students	21.15
4	Economic boost	18.38

5	Social upliftment	19.47
	Total	100.00

The benefits of education and social institutions run by A.G denomination are stated below – It is a blessing to the poor and needy (22.61%). Education is given to students regardless of caste distinction (18.38%); Moral education is given to them (21.15%). It has given them economic boost (18.38%) and social upliftment (19.47%).

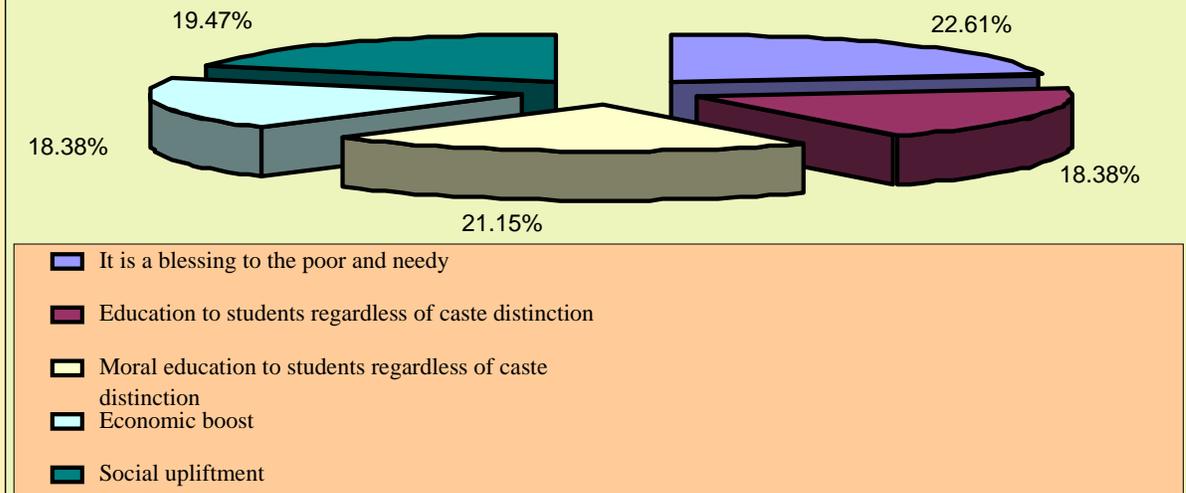
4.0.24 The concepts of Converts in the A.G churches

Sl. No	The concepts of converts	Percentage
1	Converts are considered as God's children	21.40
2	Converts are treated equally regardless of their caste	18.90
3	Converts are used in singing, praying conducting Sunday School, and Social work	20.18
4	Converts are trained to conduct Cell group meetings	19.33
5	Converts are used in witnessing	20.18
	Total	100.00

The converts in the A.G churches are considered as God children (21.40%), treated equally regardless of their caste (18.90%). They are used in the church in singing, praying, conducting Sunday classes and social work (20.18%). They are given training to conduct care cell meetings (19.23%), and witnessing (20.18%).

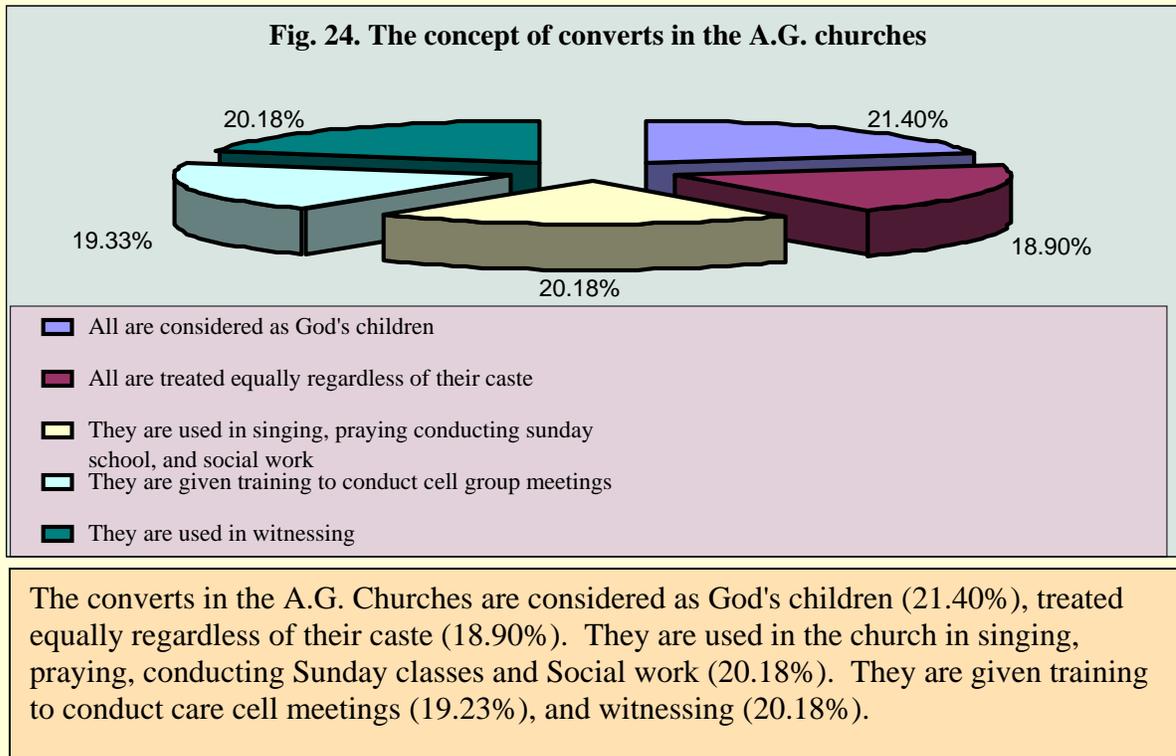
FIGURE 23 – 24

Fig. 23. Educational and Social Institutions



The benefits of education and social institutions run by A.G. Denomination are stated below – It is a blessing to the poor and needy (22.61%). Education is given to students regardless of caste distinction (18.38%); Moral education is given to them (21.15%). It has given them economic boost (18.38%) and social upliftment (19.47%).

Fig. 24. The concept of converts in the A.G. churches



4.0.25 A.G churches' teaching on Exclusivism

Sl. No	Teaching	Percentage
1	Salvation is only through Jesus Christ	27.08
2	Other religions have segment of truth	13.35
3	Christianity has the unique truth	23.65
4	Other religions have ethical teaching	15.87
5	Church respects other religions and adapts Indian culture	20.06
	Total	100.00

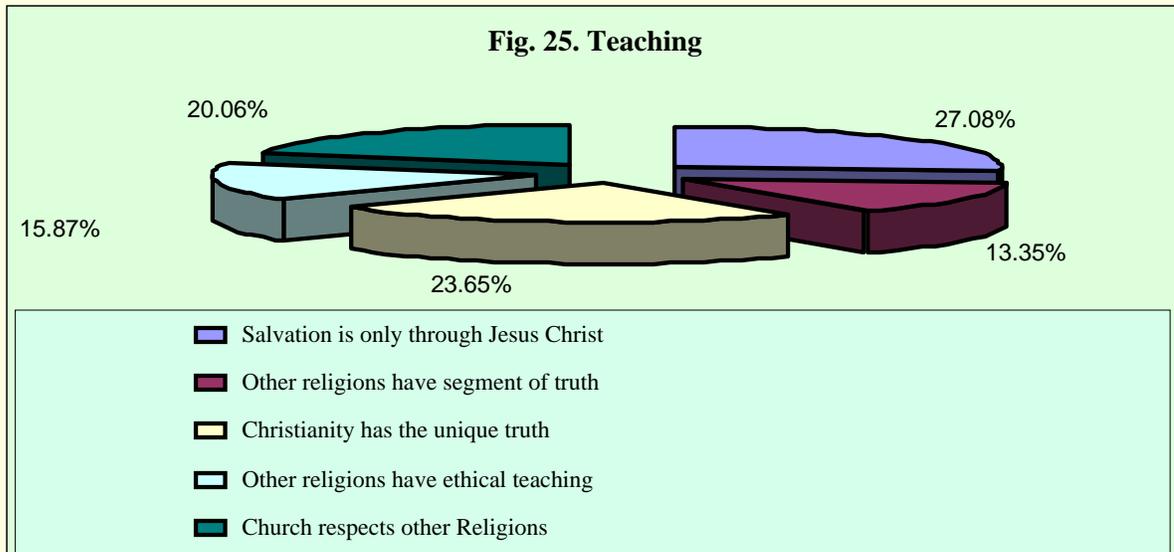
Since the A.G. Church believes in exclusivism. It teaches the following: Salvation is only through Jesus Christ (27.08%). Other religions have segment of truth (13.35%) and Christianity has the unique Truth (23.65%). Other religions have ethical teaching (15.87%). A.G churches respect other religions and follow Indian culture (20.06%).

4.0.26 The ways by which good news is communicated to the people

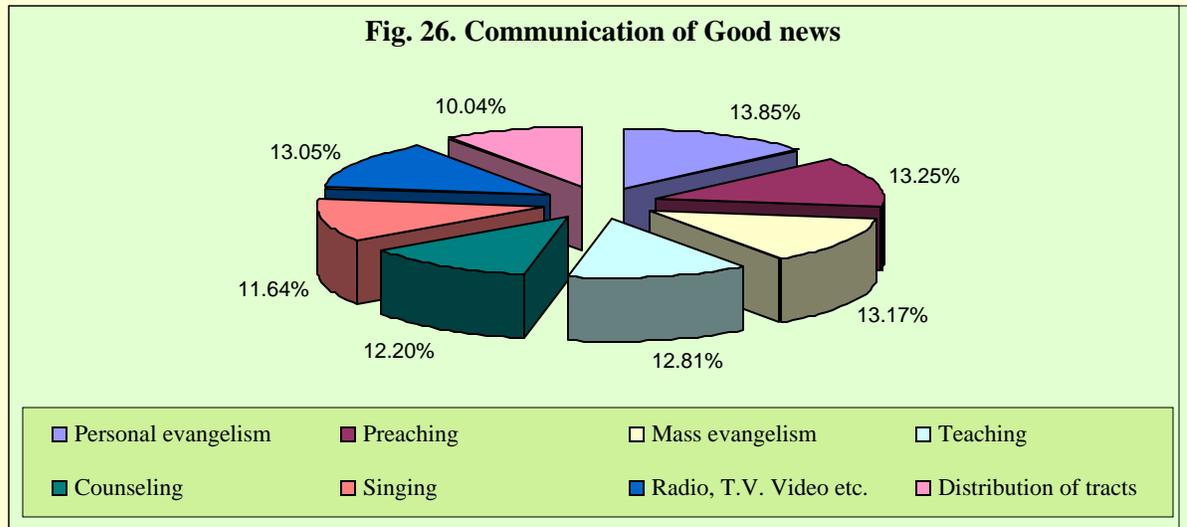
Sl. No	Communication of Good news	Percentage
1	Personal evangelism	13.85
2	Preaching	13.25
3	Mass evangelism	13.17
4	Teaching	12.81
5	Counseling	12.20
6	Singing	11.64
7	Radio, T.V., Video, Drama, Love feast etc.	13.05
8	Distribution of tracts	10.04
	Total	100.00

Good news is communicated to the people through personal evangelism (house and hospital visitation) (13.85%), preaching in the church and other places (13.25%). Mass evangelism (Healing and deliverance meetings) (13.17%), and teaching in house meetings and cell groups (12.81%), counseling (marriage, finance, and family) (12.20%), singing (11.64%), radio, T.V., video ministry (13.05%) and distribution of tracts (10.04%).

FIGURE 25 – 26



Since the A.G. Church believes in Exclusivism, it teaches the following: Salvation is only through Jesus Christ (27.08%). Other religions have segment of truth (13.35%) and Christianity has the unique Truth (23.65%). Other religions have ethical teaching (15.87%). A.G churches respect other religions and follow Indian culture (20.06%).



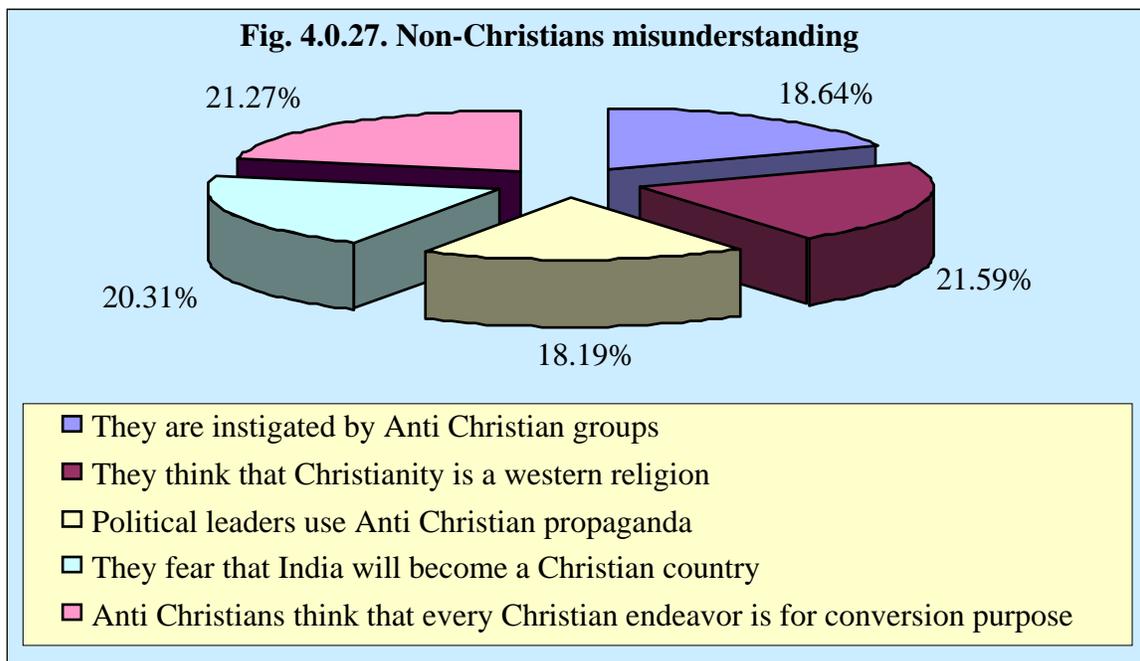
Good news is communicated to the people through personal evangelism (house and hospital visitation) (13.85%), preaching in the church and other places (13.25%). Mass evangelism (Healing and deliverance meetings) (13.17%), teaching in house meetings and cell groups (12.81%), counseling (marriage, finance, and family) (12.20%), singing (11.64%), radio, T.V., video ministry (13.05%) and distribution of tracts (10.04%).

4.0.27 The non-Christians' misunderstanding regarding Evangelism

Sl. No	Non-Christians misunderstanding	Percentage
1	The Non-Christians are instigated by Anti Christian groups	18.64
2	They think that Christianity is a western religion	21.59
3	Certain political leaders use antichristian propoganda	18.19
4	They fear that India will become a Christian country	20.31
5	The anti Christians think that every Christian endeavour is for the purpose of conversion.	21.27

	Total	100.00
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Certain non-Christians misunderstand the concept of evangelism for the following reasons: They have been instigated by anti Christian groups (18.64%). They think that Christianity is a western religion (21.59%). Certain political leaders use antichristian propaganda to gain sympathy from non-Christians (18.19%). They fear that soon India will become a Christian country (20.31%). Anti Christians think that every Christian endeavor such as education, medical work and other evangelistic work are used for the purpose of conversion (21.27%).



4.0.28 The qualities of Evangelism

Sl. No	The qualities of Evangelism	Percentage
1	Evangelism is centered around change of attitude	19.81
2	A person's life style is changed	19.38
3	A fearful person becomes a cheerful person	19.75
4	Realizes the value of life	20.31
5	He/She is useful to the family society and nation	20.75
	Total	100.00

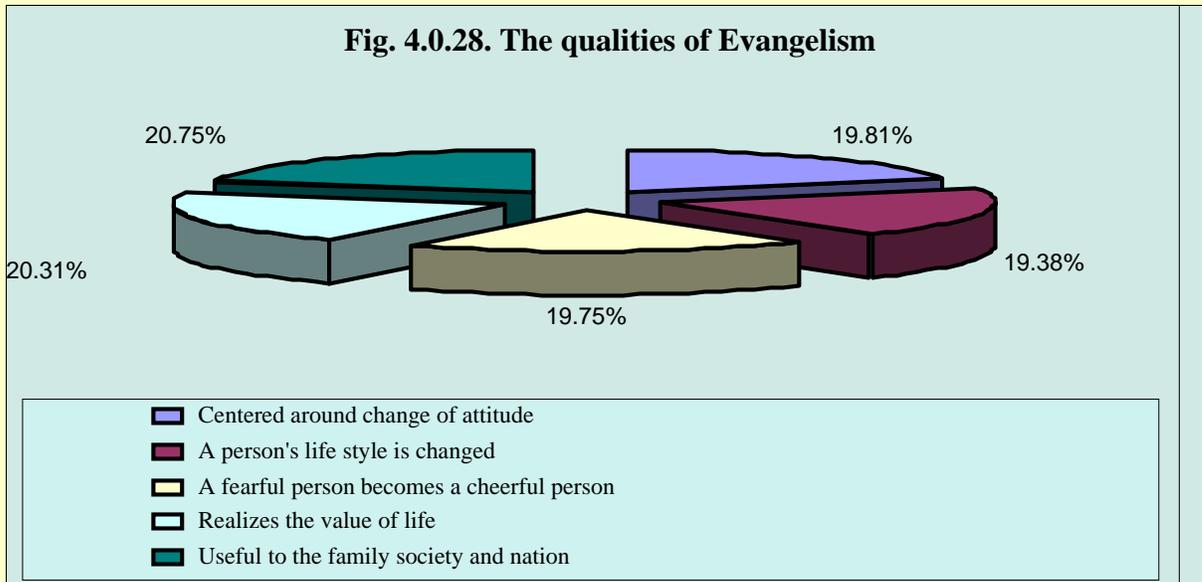
The qualities of evangelism are as follows: Evangelism is centered on change of attitudes (19.81%). A person's life style is changed (19.38%). A fearful person becomes a cheerful person (19.75%). The person who wants to destroy one's or other's life, realizes the value of life (20.31%) and lives with hope (20.75%), after coming to Christ.

4.0.29 The High Levels of Evangelism

Sl. No	The high levels of Evangelism	Percentage
1	Change of attitude	19.81
2	Love toward one another	19.38
3	Change of habits	19.75
4	Participation in social work	20.31
5	Involvement in nation building	20.75
	Total	100.00

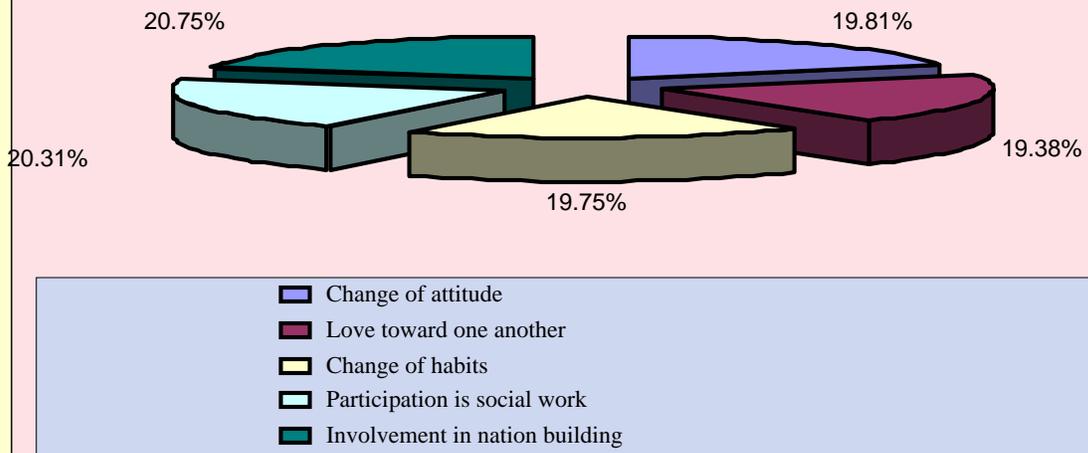
The high levels of evangelism are based on the following: The change of attitude (19.81%), and love toward one another (19.38%). The change of habits (19.75%), and participation in social work (20.31%) and involvement in nation building (20.75%).

FIGURE 28 – 29



The qualities of evangelism are as follows: Evangelism is centered on change of attitudes (19.81%). A person's life style is changed (19.38%). A fearful person becomes a cheerful person (19.75%). The person who wants to destroy one's or others life, realizes the value of life (20.31%) and lives with hope (20.75%), after coming to Christ.

Fig. 4.0.29. The High levels of Evangelism



The high levels of evangelism are based on the following: The change of attitude (19.81%), and love toward one another (19.38%), the change of habits (19.75%), and participation in social work (20.31%) and involvement in nation building (20.75%).

4.0.30 The manner of Evangelism carried among non-Christians

Sl. No	Evangelism is not carried out in aggressive manner	Percentage
1	People were not forced to accept Jesus Christ	20.39
2	Money was not given to embrace Christianity	20.27
3	False hope was not given	19.82
4	People were not threatened to accept Christian faith	19.57
5	Religions were not condemned	19.95
	Total	100.00

Evangelism is not carried out in aggressive manner. People were not forced to accept Jesus Christ (20.39%). Money was not given to embrace Christianity (20.27%).

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5 : 9 December 2009

Lawrence Jayabalan, Ph.D.

Evangelism and Growth of the Assemblies of God Churches in Tamilnadu, India

From 1989-2003

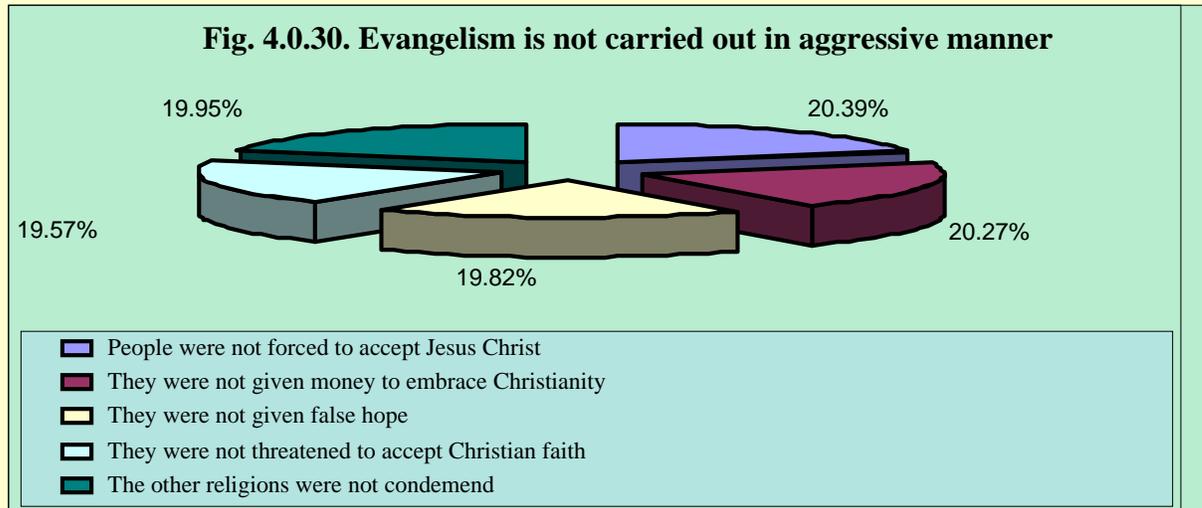
False hope was not given (19.82%), People were not threatened to embrace Christian faith (19.57%). Religions were not condemned (19.95%).

4.0.31 The concept of Prosperity Doctrine in the A.G churches

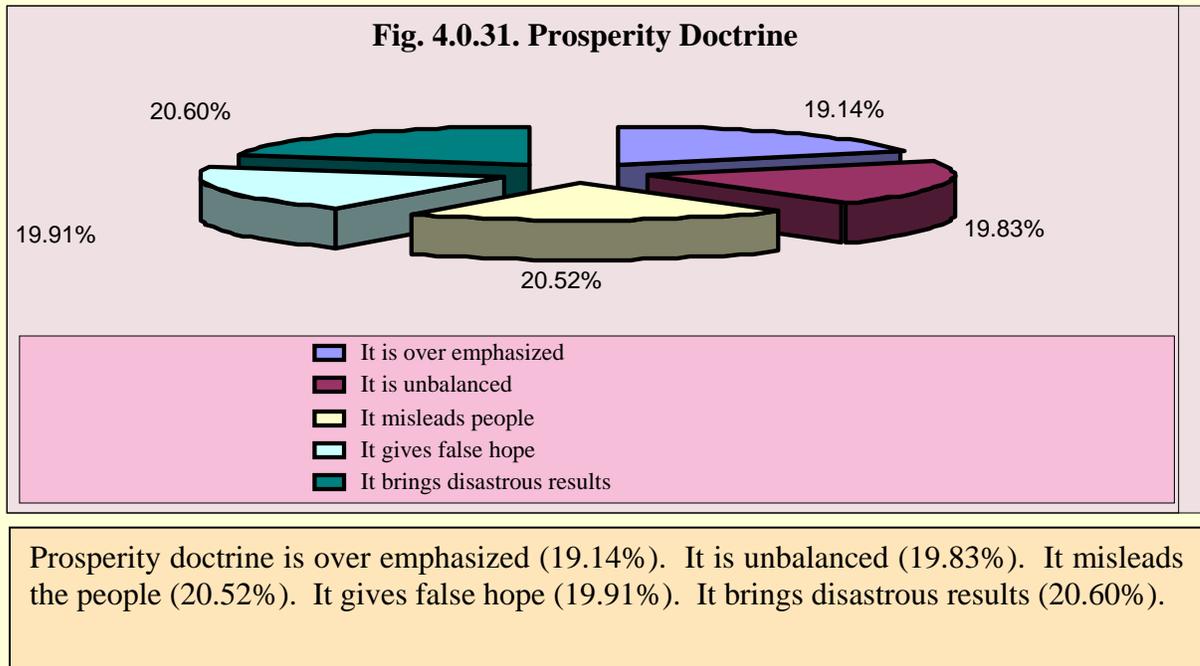
Sl. No	Prosperity Doctrine	Percentage
1	It is over emphasized	19.14
2	It is unbalanced	19.83
3	It misleads people	20.52
4	It gives false hope	19.91
5	It brings disastrous results	20.60
	Total	100.00

Prosperity doctrine is over emphasized (19.14%). It is unbalanced (19.83%). It misleads the people (20.52%). It gives false hope (19.91%). It brings disastrous results (20.60%).

FIGURE 30 – 31



Evangelism is not carried out in aggressive manner. People were not forced to accept Jesus Christ (20.39%). They were not given money to embrace Christianity (20.27%). They were not given false hope (19.82%). And people were not threatened to embrace Christian faith (19.57%). Religions were not condemned (19.95%).



4.0.32 Suggestions for Evangelism to be done in healthy and spiritual lines

Sl. No	Evangelism in healthy spiritual lines	Percentage
1	Respect other religions	17.49
2	Appreciate the good things in any religion	18.77
3	Have a positive approach	18.70
4	God alone can convince people through the Holy Spirit	22.86
5	It is not our methods that save people	22.18
	Total	100.00

Suggestion for evangelism to be done in healthy and spiritual lines. Respect other religions (17.49%). Appreciate the good things in any religion (18.77%). Have a positive approach (18.70%). It is God who convicts the people through the Holy Spirit (22.86%). It is not our methods that save people (22.18%). Show love and concern to evildoers.

4.0.33 The consequences of the Tamilnadu prohibition of forcible conversion of religion ordinance, 2002.

Sl. No	The consequences to the A.G churches	Percentage
1	We were not allowed to enter certain villages to distribute tracts	26.72
2	We were not allowed to conduct open air meetings	26.23
3	Anti Christian groups attacked our churches	26.96
4	We were not allowed to have film show or evangelistic meetings in our own premises	20.10
	Total	100.00

Christians were not allowed to enter certain villages to distribute tracts (pamphlets) (26.72%). They were not allowed to conduct open-air meetings (26.23%). Antichristian groups attacked the churches (26.96%). Christians were not allowed to have film show or evangelistic meetings in their own premises (20.10%).

FIGURE 32 – 33

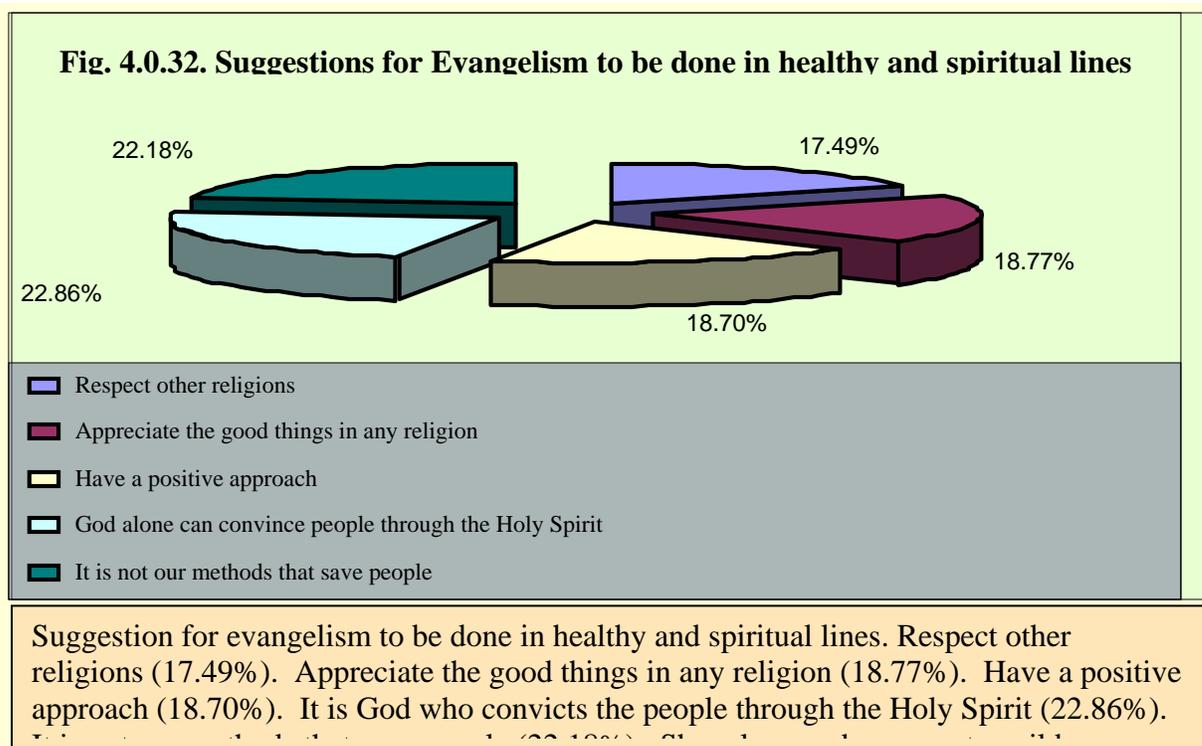
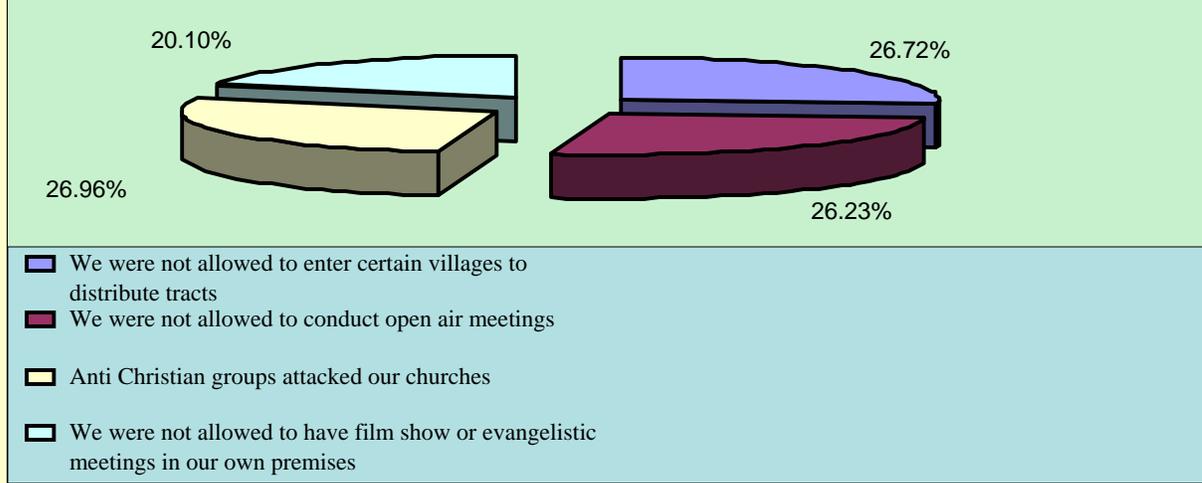


Fig. 4.0.33. the consequences of the Tamil Nadu prohibition of forcible conversion of Religion ordinance, 2002

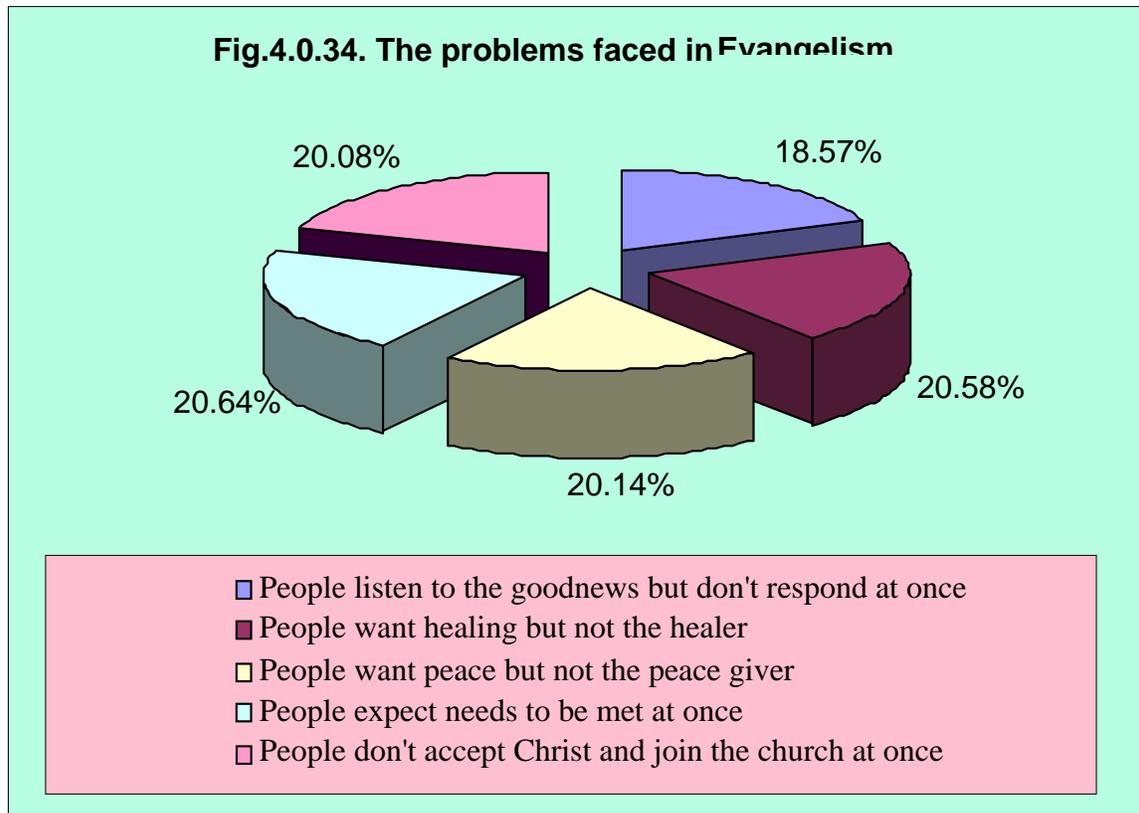


Christians were not allowed to enter certain villages to distribute tracts (pamphlets) (26.72%). They were not allowed to conduct open-air meetings (26.23%). Antichristian groups attacked the churches (26.96%). Christians were not allowed to have film show or evangelistic meetings in their own premises (20.10%).

4.0.34 The problems faced in Evangelism and Church growth

Sl. No	The problems faced in Evangelism	Percentage
1	People listen to the goodnews but don't respond at once	18.57
2	People want healing but not the healer	20.58
3	People want peace but not the peace giver	20.14
4	People expect needs to be met at once (Physical, financial and spiritual needs)	20.64
5	People don't accept Christ and join the church at once	20.08
	Total	100.00

People listen to the good news but don't respond at once (18.57%). They want healing but not the healer (20.58%). They want peace but not the peace giver (20.14%). They expect their needs to be met at once (physical and financial) (20.64%). They don't accept Christ and join the church at once (20.08%).

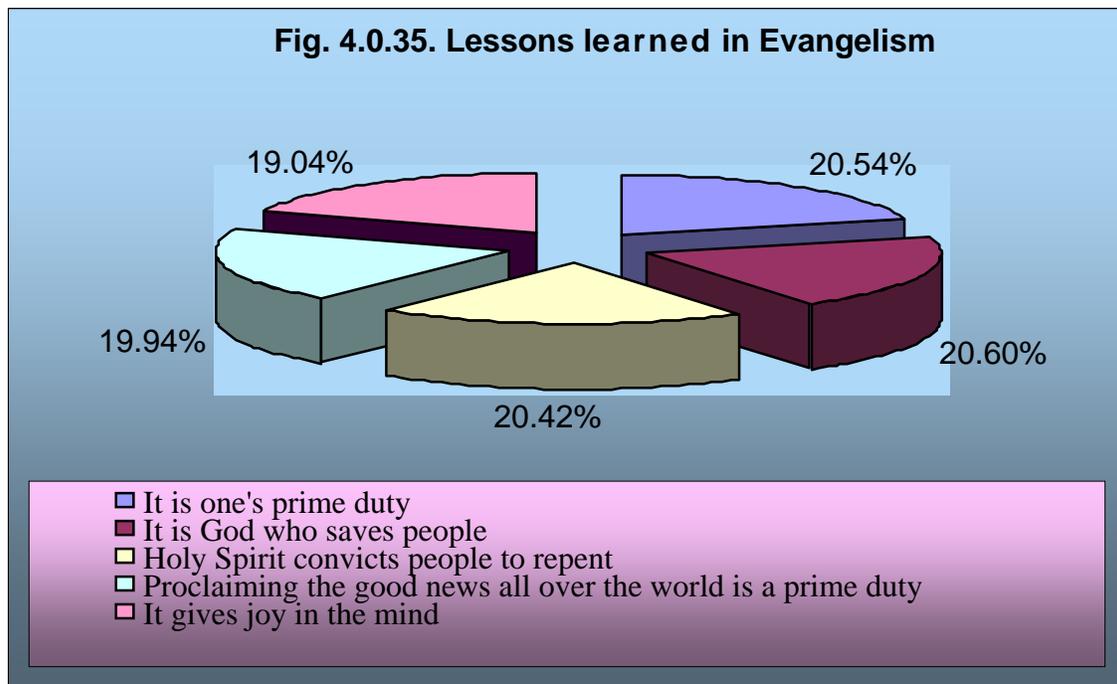


4.0.35 Lessons learned in Evangelism and Church growth

Sl. No	Lessons learned in Evangelism	Percentage
1	It is one's prime duty	20.54
2	It is God who saves people	20.06

3	Holy Spirit convicts people to repent	20.42
4	It is the command to proclaim the good news all over the world	19.94
5	It gives joy in the mind, seeing people who were to commit suicide now live in hope and serve the society.	19.04
	Total	100.00

Lessons learned in evangelism and church growth. Proclaiming the good news is the command given by Jesus Christ. It is one's prime duty. No one can convert anyone by any method (20.54%). It is God who saves the people (20.06%). Holy Spirit convicts them to repent (20.42%). Proclaiming the good news all over the world is the responsibility of the Christians (19.94%). It gives joy in mind while seeing frustrated and rejected people who were to kill themselves have overcome such thoughts (19.04%). They have become a witness to the family and society regarding God's love showed to them.



Statistical analysis of the growth of the Assemblies of God Churches in Tamilnadu (1989 – 2003).

The target group of 250 (35%) churches has been chosen in stratified random sampling from the 710 (35%), Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu. Those churches chosen are from 25 sections (Districts) from Tamilnadu for a period of 15 years from 1989 – 2003.

The sample size was to interview five hundred people from 250 (35%) churches from 25 sections. The researcher was able to collect from 129 (18%) churches, 370 samples. Data processing was done in the scientific way.

The A.G churches have been grouped as Urban (city churches), Sub urban churches (semi city) town churches and Village churches (Rural).

In the Tamilnadu State, data was collected from the following sections (Districts):
1. Chengelpet; 2 Coimbatore; 3. Cumbam; 4. Dharmapuri; 5. Dindigul; 6. Kanchipuram; 7. Madras; 8. Madurai; 9. Nagargoil; 10. Nagapattinam, 11. Nilgiris; 12. North Arcot; 13. Palayamkottai; 14. Pondicherry; 15. Ramnad; 16. Salem; 17. Shencottah; 18. South Arcot; 19. Tanjore; 20. Tinevely; 21. Trichy; 22. Tiruvellore; 23. Tuticorin; 24. Villupuram, and 25. Virudunagar.

☞ The data was collected on the basis of the 35 questions which are given in the appendix. The questionnaire was filled by presbyters, pastors, elders, pastor's wife, and believers. Most of them have 10 years of association with the A.G churches. The A.G churches have been started as a result of morning prayers, fasting prayer and all night prayer.

- ☞ The A.G. ministry was done through Sunday school, personal evangelism and house churches. The majority of the A.G churches are located in cities and towns, and other churches in panchayats, villages and slum areas.
- ☞ The majority of the pastors had their theological training in the A.G. Tamilnadu Bible Collage. The theological education helped the pastors to teach from the Bible systematically and take care of the church members, in every possible way.
- ☞ The Biblical and theological basis for evangelism is important, since evangelism and church growth are Bible centered.
- ☞ People have joined the A.G churches for sociological reasons such as family problems, sickness, and family status.
- ☞ Psychological reasons such as to come out of tension, attitude problem, inner conflict, inferiority complex and fear.
- ☞ Theological reasons are such as in search of reality, peace and the quest for life after death.
- ☞ The A.G churches have grown for the following reasons: Bible centered evangelism, Theological training, personal evangelism, OIKOS evangelism, decade of harvest, visitation of people, and pastor's leadership.
- ☞ In the A.G churches, men, women, youth, children, people of various castes, believers, nominal Christians, non-Christians Tamil speaking people and other language groups attend.

- ☞ 1949 – 1989 the total percentage of the A.G churches (45.90%), in 1993 (12.82%), in 1998 (10.26%), in 2003 (6.41%), between 1999 and 2003 church growth was affected owing to the anti conversion bill passed by the Tamilnadu Government.
- ☞ The members of the laity have been used in personal evangelism, song leading, visitation, conducting care cells, house churches and involvement in T.V. ministry.
- ☞ Care cells groups are conducted in the houses. 6 month leadership training is given and relatives and neighbours gather for house meetings. The main items in the cell meetings are songs, testimonies message, counselling and prayer.
- ☞ House churches are based on the New Testament pattern. It is less expensive, easy to maintain, Government permission is not needed and it is a proven method for church establishment and growth.
- ☞ “OIKOS” evangelism is based on household gathering. Believers pray for their relatives and friends and invite them for a blessing meeting and prayers are offered for them.
- ☞ People who have joined the A.G churches, sociological changes have taken place, such as, healing to the body, freedom from caste problem, dignity, equality, economic boost and educational upliftment.
- ☞ Psychologically they have been free from inferiority complex, guilt, a change in personality and a sense of happiness.

- ☞ In the A.G churches messages are preached on salvation, healing, baptism of the Holy Spirit, sanctification, second coming and soulwinning.
- ☞ The content of evangelistic message is based on God's love, sin a hindrance to experience God's love, Jesus death on the cross, and Holy Spirit's conviction to go to God.
- ☞ The educational and social institutions of the A.G denomination have brought blessing to the poor and needy. Education is given regardless of caste distinction, which has helped them toward economic boost and social upliftment.
- ☞ The converts in the A.G churches are considered as God's children. They are treated equally, used in singing, praying, Sunday class and social work. They are given training to conduct care cell meetings and witnessing.
- ☞ The A.G churches believe in exclusivism that salvation is only through Jesus Christ. Other religions have segment of truth and Christianity has the unique truth.
- ☞ The goodnews is communicated to the people through personal evangelism, preaching, mass evangelism, teaching, counseling, singing, radio, T.V. ministry and literature ministry.
- ☞ Certain non-Christians misunderstand the concept of evangelism as they have been instigated by Anti Christian groups. They think that every Christian endeavor such as education and medical work are for conversion purpose.

- ☞ The qualities of evangelism are as follows: It is centred on change of attitudes, life style and personality. A person who hated life now realizes the value of life and lives with hope.
- ☞ The high levels of evangelism are as follows: The change of attitude, habits, love toward one another, and participation in social work and involvement in nation building.
- ☞ Evangelism has not been carried out in an aggressive manner. People were not forced and were not given money to embrace Christianity. False hope was not given or threatened to embrace Christianity. Religions were not condemned.
- ☞ Prosperity doctrine is over emphasized. It is unbalanced, misleads the people, gives false hope and brings disastrous results.
- ☞ In order to do evangelism in healthy and spiritual manner one should respect other religions, appreciate the good things in other religions. Have a positive approach and know that God alone can convict people and show love and concern to evildoers.
- ☞ As a result of Tamilnadu prohibition of the conversion of Religion ordinance, Christians were not allowed to enter certain villages for evangelism. Anti Christian groups attacked the churches.
- ☞ In evangelism people listen to the good news but don't respond at once. They want healing not the healer, peace but not the peace giver.

☞ The lessons learned in evangelism and church growth are as follow: Proclamation of the goodnews is a command given by Jesus Christ which is a prime duty. It is God who saves the people through the Holy Spirit. It gives joy, to see frustrated and rejected people, who hated themselves, now have become a blessing to the family and society.

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CHAPTER V
SOCIOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE GROWTH OF
THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD CHURCHES IN TAMILNADU.

This Chapter deals with the following:

Reason for people joining the church:

Casteism: It's effect upon the people for generations, mentally, physically, socially and spiritually. The goodnews of Christ has given them new hope.

Social oppression, inequality and untouchability: The above factors are some of the reasons for people to choose Christianity which has given them a new outlook in life.

Social changes:

Education: There was a time when only high caste people were able to study. Christianity offered education to all classes of people and it lifted them from depression and oppression.

Economic: Through education given by Christian schools the lower classes of people got economical boost. It has given them, moral, spiritual values and economical status.

Social Acceptance and Acculturation: People who were affected in the society made them to come out of inferiority complex through the goodnews of Jesus Christ. It has made them walk in society with dignity and be worthy of respect. It has also enabled them to follow Indian culture in matters such as eating habits, wearing of dress, art, music and way of life.

Opposition:

Hindutva: It is a religious motivated wing which has its origin in Maharashtra. It has been opposing the non Hindus, and claims India a Hindu country.

Official restrictions: In 2002, The Tamilnadu prohibition of forcible conversion of Religion ordinance bill was passed by the ruling party. It affected the Christian churches. The Anti Christian groups took advantage and attacked the churches.

Fundamentalism: The Hindu Fundamentalism has used its followers to attack the Non Hindus. Its main aim is to make the Democratic India a Hindu country.

5:1 Reason for people joining the church:

Casteism:

In the early Indian history, before 2000 B.C Dravidians were the original inhabitants of India. During the second millennium B.C, a host of tall and light skinned people called Aryans migrated to India. They occupied the upper Ganges and forced the dark skinned Dravidians to occupy the lower Ganges regions.¹ The Aryans gained power after adopting a priestly role and performing sacrifices and drove the Dravidians further south.

Origin:

The word caste derives from the word, “Varna colour, is one of two Sanskrit words used to indicate distinctions of caste.”² The word caste also has its root, from the Spanish and Portuguese word, “Casta” (from Latin “Custus”) meaning ethnic or clan lineage.”³

David C. Scott gives the following regarding the origin of caste system in India:

One of the most celebrated Hindu creations for life myths of the Vedic period is the story of Purusa. A thousand headed is the man with a thousand eyes, a thousand feet; encompassing the Earth on all sides, he

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*exceeded it by term finger's breadth. Using the Purusa as their oblation the Gods performed the primordial sacrifice. Spring served them for ghee, summer for the fuel, and autumn for the offering. From this sacrificial born from his mind the sun came into being from his eye, while from his breath the wind was born. His mouth became the eloquent Brahman, from his arms the powerful Ksatriya was born, from his legs the common Vaisya, while his feet became the sudra.*⁴

Caste system though it was based on colour of the skin, culture of the people, later it divided people. People were classified accordingly and were to do certain jobs only.

Brahmans : Priests, seers, intellectuals, philosophers and writers.

Ksatriyas : Nobles and warriors (administrators).

Vaisyas : Producers (merchants and farmers).

Sudras : Aritisans (labouring groups).

Panchamas: Outcastes and untouchables (Chandala).⁵

The main castes had their mark on their foreheads (tilak or pottu) to identify themselves: Brahmins used white pottu. (A white colour spot on the forehead), Ksatriyas, red; Vaisyas, yellow; and Sudras, black. The fifth class the untouchables or Panchamas didn't have any pottu on their forehead.⁶

Brahmins, Ksatriyas and the Vaisyas were considered twice born, having the pure Aryan blood. Sudras were not allowed to learn the Vedas. The untouchables were to live outside the community. Sudras and the untouchables (Panchamas) were not allowed to enter the Hindu temples.⁷

J.N. Farquhar cites caste in "Rig-Veda":

Before the canon of Rig-Veda was finally closed, a hymn found its way into the collection which declares that the Brahman, the Rajanya, the Vaisya, and the Sudra had

each a separate origin in God. The Brahman was his mouth, the Rajanya was made from his arms, the being called Vaisya he was from his thigh, the Sudra from his feet.⁸

The doctrine of Karma and rebirth, the pillar of Hinduism states that each man is born into a caste because of his actions in a previous life. “All serious scholars agree that in the society represented in the Rig-Veda there was no caste.”⁹

“Caste arose and became hardened into the most rigorous system of class distinctions that the world has ever seen, inspired and justified by the doctrine of transmigration and Karma.”¹⁰

A man was born a Brahmin, if he was advanced in Karma merits in his previous life. A little lower in Karma merit he would have been born a Kstriyas, and so forth. A person who lived a bad life before the birth, outcome was rebirth as a dog, pig or some other animal or as a Chandala (outcaste).

Infact caste system played a very tricky role. A high caste person would rejoice saying, “my former good life brought me to this state.” He or she would follow rituals so that in next birth too, they would be born in a high caste. For their children the marriage would be fixed only among the high caste and the result, the children born to such couples, would be automatically high caste.

Whereas a family from depressed class would do their best in the present life, so that in the next birth, they would be born a high caste. When they would marry their son or daughter to some one, it could be only with in the depressed class. So their grand children would be outcastes only.

The motive of evangelism was to preach to all classes of people regarding the love of God. Evangelism attracted the lower classes of people. When they entered the

church they found dignity and equality. In the Assemblies of God churches of Tamilnadu, the majority of people who attend the church are from Sudras and Panchamas caste.

Social oppression, inequality and untouchability:

For generation people of higher castes enjoyed all the privileges. They were in high social status in the place of work or business. Whereas the down trodden people they were oppressed and did not enjoy equal status with upper castes. C.P. Thangaraj, a sociologist in his book *whither Indian Christianity* writes that, “The attitude of Hindu society has to be taken into account.”¹¹

A medium caste / class Christian is a teacher in a village dominated by Hindus. He invites a low caste Christian in his house for lunch or dinner. The result is that the Christian teacher is excommunicated by the village. “His wife will not be able to draw water from the village well, the barber and the washer man will not come to his house, and he will not be able to buy in the village shop.”¹²

In the Bhavat Gita – Panchamas or untouchables are not found in the caste division:

“Brahmans, Ksatriyas, Vaisiyas and Sudras are distinguished by the qualities born of their own natures in accordance with the material modes, o chastiser of the enemy.”¹³

The qualities of work for each caste, was given in Bhavat Gita, which made the higher castes to enjoy social upliftment and dignity. The natural qualities of work designed for:

◆ **Brahmans:**

“Peacefulness, self control, austerity, purity tolerance, honesty, knowledge, wisdom, and religiousness these are the natural qualities by which the Brahmans work.”¹⁴

♦ **Ksatriyas:**

“Heroism, power, determination, and resourcefulness courage in battle, generosity and leadership are the natural qualities of work for the Ksatriyas.”¹⁵

♦ **Vaisyas and Sudras:**

“Farming, cow protection and business are the natural work for the Vaisyas and for the Sudras there is labour and service to others.”¹⁶

Bhavat Gita discouraged a person of high caste to marry a person from a lower caste.

*By the evil deeds of those who destroy the family tradition thus give rise to unwanted children, all kinds of community projects and family welfare activities are devastated.*¹⁷

The four orders of human society were to follow “Santana dharma or Varnasrama – dharma.”¹⁸ It was designed for them to attain ultimate salvation. People who refused to follow the Varnasrama – dharma and mingled with other caste people in marriage were to undergo miserable lives in hell.

“O. Krishna, maintainer of the people, I have heard by disciplic succession that those who destroy family traditions dwell always in hell.”¹⁹

So the caste rules became very rigid and it brought oppression and inequality in the society.

♦ **Untouchability:**

The following words have been used to call the untouchables: Panchamas, Chandala and so forth. Mr. Narasinha Metha was born in North India. He belonged to a

Brahmin community. He “defied the whole community by claiming the untouchables his own.”²⁰

Gandhi named the untouchables, “Harijans” meaning “Lord’s people.” He called others including him “Durjan” “men of evil.”²¹

Now the untouchables use a different name for themselves, calling “Dalits.” It is from a Marathi word meaning, “down trodden.” The untouchables use different names to escape from inferiority complex. e.g. Devendra Kula Vellalar.

Mahatma Gandhi was against caste system and untouchability. “Hindu defects were pressingly visible to me. If untouchability could be a part of Hinduism, it could be a rotten part or an excrescence.”²²

One of the prominent groups from the Panchamas caste in South India was a leading clan among the Dravidians. Hendry Whitehead writes that “They had been dethroned from their position and became slaves by the high caste people’s influence.”²³

According to the laws of Manu the punishment to a person from the lowest caste was unthinkable.

*If a man of the lowest caste injures a man of a higher caste with some particular part of his body, that very part of his body should be cut off; If a man raises hand or a strike, he should have his hand cut off; if in anger he strikes with his foot, he should have his foot cut off. If a man of inferior caste tries to sit down on the same seat as a man of superior caste, he should be branded on the hip and banished, or have his buttocks cut off. If in his pride he spits on him, the King should have his lips cut off; if he urinates on him, the penis; if he farts at him, the anus, if he grabs him by the hair or by the feet, the beard, the neck, or the neck or the testicles (the king) should unhesitatingly have his hands cut off.*²⁴

The following restrictions were imposed on to untouchables:

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- * They were not allowed to stay in a village or town. They had to live outside the village.
- * They were not allowed to bathe in water, even washing of clothes.
- * They were not allowed to walk on a particular street.²⁵
- * They were not allowed to enter the temples and were forbidden to pull the rope for the Radham (temple chariot).²⁶
- * They were not allowed to enter a restaurant. Sign boards were kept to stop them from entering restaurants.
- * Education was forbidden for them.²⁷
- * Untouchables were called dirty people wearing dirty clothes since their clothes produced bad smell. They were to wear the cloth used for the dead bodies. They were to make porridge from the rice kept at the graveyard.
- * Separate wells were dug for them.
- * They were to call the high caste people “Swami” a high honour in words used given as that to gods.²⁸
- * They were to work for Sudras, and eat the food left by Sudras and wear their used clothes.²⁹

The high caste people were forbidden from the following:

- To marry a woman from a low caste.
- To eat with a low caste or touch them.
- To go abroad for studies. Since the foreigners were considered as outcastes or Panchamas, high caste people were not allowed to cross the ocean. The head man of the community forbade Gandhi and excommunicated him, since Gandhi went to England for studies “this boy shall be treated as an outcaste from today. Whoever helps him or goes to see him off at the docks shall be punishable.”³⁰

Punishment for disobeying caste restrictions:

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- Excommunication from the caste
- To be born as an animal or outcaste in next life.
- Frightful punishment in hell.³¹

Contribution of the Good News of Christ to the depressed people:

Christianity has played a vital role in helping the downtrodden and depressed people, who were affected through caste problem. The Christian missionaries visited them, ate in their homes, invited them to their houses and allowed them to attend the church services.

They employed the depressed people as cooks, Ayas, gardeners, drivers, and care takers. The downtrodden were allowed to stay in the missionary compound, and had the privilege to wear trouser, shirt, and coat and work with the missionary with dignity. The Catholic priests built houses for church members or gave land to them. When the Protestant missionaries left India, gave their belongings to the workers.

In the schools managed by missionaries, poor children were accepted without any reservation. They enjoyed an atmosphere where love and care was shown to them. After high school education they went to different colleges for higher studies. Later they were employed in the same school or college and became a blessing to their families and society.

In the 1900's a pastor from Trinevely from a respectable caste, was appointed as pastor among the various classes people in the union church Kodaikanal. Landlords, merchants, tourists, cooks, gardeners, drivers and other people attended that Tamil church. The pastor preached equality among the congregation and gave his daughters in marriage to the local people without any reservation. He also made the members of the congregation to do the same without any caste distinction.

A very rich man from a non Christian family embraced Christianity in Dindigul. He attended a protestant church filled with depressed class people. He identified with them and made his children to marry to the church members.

When the Assembly of God ministry began in Tamilnadu in the 1940's, the missionaries and the nationals ministered among the lower section of the society. They also stayed in the remote places like Kanakapillai Valasai in Tirunelveli District.

The A.G churches were built in remote areas. Today A.G churches are established in the cities, towns, and villages. People from different castes attend the services. Pastors are appointed on the basis of need, not on the basis of caste. Pastors, presbyters, and the general council executive committee, consist of members from various castes.

5:2 Social changes:

Education:

There was a time that the high caste people alone were able to study. Christianity offered education to all classes of people, regardless of their caste and creed. They were allowed to sit in the class along with high caste students. It lifted the depressed classes from depression and oppression and brought them to self respect and dignity. In those days only the high caste people were allowed to teach.

“In education, the Brahmin alone has the right to teach.”³²

A high caste Hindu was not allowed to cross the ocean. It meant he was not allowed to go abroad for studies. If anyone went to Europe or America for studies, such person had to undergo prayachitta (a ceremony of atonement) after returning to India.³³

Female education was highly opposed and it was not practiced till the missionaries made effort to teach girls.

*The strong and universal prejudice among the respectable class of society against female education was not only obstacle encountered. There was also the difficulty of finding even one mistress properly qualified to teach.*³⁴

Through the American Missionary Daniel poor the Madurai Mission Schools were established in 1835. During this time (1840) six Tamil and Hindustani School, were started by Muslims and a Tamil and Telugu School by a Brahmin. The Hindu Schools used palm leaves (ola) instead of paper. In the Christian Schools books were used. “Most of these Schools were held on Verandas or Pials and were therefore called Pial Schools. Brahmin children and many others avoided mission Schools because of printed books.”³⁵

The children who attended the classes were mostly poor and despised. Such students were given beautiful printed cards and books. It made the rich children from non Christian school to become jealous, as they used only palm leaves as books.

During the 1840’s the classes were conducted as follows:

*The pupils in each School were divided into four classes with reference to reading. The first class learned the alphabet by writing in the sand and copying from a printed card; the second learned to read and copy the spelling book; the third used a descriptive picture book; the fourth read miscellaneous books on moral and religious subjects. All the classes studied arithmetical tables and Bible lessons according to their capacities.*³⁶

Daniel O’ Connor aptly gives the impact of the Christian Schools:

“The impact of Christian educational mission in India has been considerable, on the history of the nation, on society and social change and on the development of the Indian church.”³⁷

The Christian teachers (leaders) paved the way to encourage national leader, the late Mahatma Gandhi to set India free from foreign domination.

“S.K. Rudra, was part of the Bengali Diaspora.”³⁸

Rudra was an influential person, a remarkable personality. He joined St. Stephen's College in Delhi along with C.F. Andrews, a young English Missionary. S.K. Rudra was appointed Principal of the College. S.K. Rudra and C.F. Andrews supported Mahatma Gandhi for the growing national movement.

“Gandhi planned his Non Co-Operation movement in Rudra's house, and there with Andrews, drafted statements on the Khilafat campaign.”³⁹

Today the anti Christian religious groups propagate that the Christian Schools have been used for conversion purpose. The Christian Missionaries started the educational institutions to uplift the down trodden and others to come out of their inferior status. Though they proclaimed the Good News as part of their mission, the main purpose was to help the Indian community to come out of bondage spiritually, mentally and physically.

Jayakumar quotes the following:

*It is to be remembered that about hundred and fifty years ago education was found in India under three forms. The first was the 'Native education' that was available only for Brahmins and upper caste Hindus. The second was 'Government education' initially offered in Sanskrit and Arabic and meant for training Brahmin and Muslim Judicial officers. Later the purpose of government education was changed and it was offered in English so that all pupils irrespective of caste could learn. The Schools were run with the motive of result and profit. The third was Christian education offered by the Christian Missionaries; it was philanthropic and charitable in nature. It was offered out of love and concern for the advancement of the poor and the oppressed communities who could not otherwise get educated.*⁴⁰

As a result of Christian missionaries' contribution toward education brought impact and improvement of the Indian society as a whole. Education was given to males and females regardless of their caste and creed. The missionaries came to India to

proclaim the goodnews of Jesus Christ. So they learnt the local language, gave shape to the language, wrote text books and taught children, both males and females.

Problems of Christian missionaries:

- “In the beginning the general public viewed the education of Christian missionaries with suspicion; they thought this western education was a trick to convert people to Christianity. It took some time for this suspicion to clear.”⁴¹

- Missionaries accepted children from different castes. They required them to sit and eat in the same hall without any caste difference.”⁴² Hence some of them withdrew their children from the Christian schools.

- Missionaries wanted to educate girls. In the early years (1880’s), it was forbidden for girls to have education. “Even at the beginning of this century, Mother Rose had to go from house to house in Madurai persuading parents to send their daughters to school.”⁴³

It improved the educational system from veranda or pial to structured class rooms. Ladies who were to be at home doing house chores became potential persons in many areas of life. It paved the way for Indian leaders to strive for independence.

In regard to education the credit goes to the Protestant and the Roman Catholic Institutions. They used education as a means of promoting Christian virtue of love and care.

The Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu has Schools in certain places to teach the children to come with standard education and moral behaviour.

- **Industrial school:**

The late missionary Edwards was used by God to pioneer the A.G ministry in Tamilnadu. In 1948 he started the A.G. Industrial School in Kanakapillai Valasai near Tenkasi in Tinevely District. It had a very humble beginning with a thatched shed consists a kitchen, dining room, class room and workshop. At the beginning, nine boys joined the school for carpentry. Later the school grew rapidly, and today the shed has given way to a three story building on ten acre land. Today more than 300 students pursue courses in various fields, such as tailoring, printing, welding carpentry and fitting.⁴⁴

Missionary Edwards motto for starting the industrial school was, “It is better to build boys than to mend men.”⁴⁵ A particular boy, a Sunday school student committed suicide owing to starvation at home, which challenged Rev. Edwards to start a school for boys so that they could earn their living through a trade.

The Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu has Elementary schools, Matriculation schools in Tenkasi and surrounding areas. A.G pastors in many parts of Tamilnadu run orphanages for the poor and needy children.

- **Economic:**

Through education given by Christian schools the lower classes of people got economical boost. It has given them, moral, spiritual values and economical status. Once upon a time only the high caste people alone were the teachers. They enjoyed, receiving salary and considered as high class people before the society. Through the missionaries, social workers and various leaders the eyes of people were opened. It brought awareness and freedom. It made people toward dignity and self respect. As a result people all over India regardless of their caste or creed, have the privilege to have

education anywhere in India or abroad. It also has given privileges to work in any department without any reservation.

- **Social Acceptance and Acculturation:**

Before the Independence the downtrodden people (untouchables) were not allowed to have education. They were neither given equal right nor any Government job. Two reasons were given as lame excuse for not allowing untouchables to have equal right or Government job. They were blamed that they were unclean and have no education.

The untouchables were not clean and were not allowed to use public wells. They were forbidden from working in houses, shops and industries. They were not allowed to do the work of a potter or coolie. They were to work in the jungles and paddy fields just for insufficient porridge that would fill half of their belly.⁴⁶

Today untouchability is considered as a great evil and sin. Regardless of caste people, have social acceptance and upliftment.

According to chambers Dictionary the meaning for acculturation is, “The process or result of assimilating, through continuous contact, features (customs, beliefs etc.) of another culture.”⁴⁷

Culture is based on customs, habits, art, language, dance and other aspects of a society.

*The word culture is defined as traditional manners, customs, work tools, dress, food habits, house layouts, and transmitted values of unwritten laws and behaviors peculiar to certain ethnic groups. It comprises the totality of human invention and achievements, including all the principles, agencies and techniques of control which has acquired over his behaviour and nature.*⁴⁸

No society or nation, or religion can claim that their culture is pure or the same ever since their origin. Culture has been shaped from time to time. Today's culture is a combination of things people follow from their community as well as what they see through their eyes. They adapt various cultural elements from T.V. programme and daily walk of life. For example the researcher noticed a gypsy woman, going to Kodaikanal in the bus. She was in her gypsy dress. She spoke colloquial Tamil to the conductor. On her shoulder she hung a transistor Radio.

In these modern days of globalization the world is considered as a global village. Each one has the right to "think globally and act locally." Christianity is not against any culture and it has adapted the customs accordingly.

Joseph Pathrapaukal quotes from the Epistle of Diognetes dated from the second century regarding the culture followed by the second century Christians:

"The Christians do not set themselves apart from other men either by their vocabulary or their language or their clothes; they conform to local usage as regards to food and way of life."⁴⁹

People who were affected in the society had to follow what was determined for them. The Good News of Jesus Christ has made them to come out of their inferior status. It has made them walk in society with dignity and respect. The Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu follow the Indian culture in matters such as habits, customs, wearing of dresses, music, art, language and way of life. Songs are composed in Indian tunes, sung in Tamil and the order of worship is conducted in Tamil language in all the A.G. Churches in Tamilnadu.

The educational and social institutions run by Assemblies of God denomination have helped the people in the following aspects:

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- **It has been a blessing to the poor and needy:**

Children from poor families have joined the school education. Children from villages and far places are kept in a hostel, free of charge. They stay there during the study period and go home during holidays from the Kanakapillai Valasai Girls hostel and the Industrial School and the hostel for boys at Kanakapillai Valasai in Shencottai district, Tamilnadu.

- **Education is given to students regardless of caste distinction:**

Students are admitted in the schools in Tamil medium or English medium, after seeing their ability and improvement in the pre kindergarten class or lower kindergarten class. They are not admitted on the basis of caste.

- **Moral education is given to students:**

Today the children are exposed to Television, Computer, Internet and Cine wall posters posted in different places. Their minds are polluted right from early stage. When moral stories from the Bible and other sources are taught, it plays a vital role in changing their lives while they are in the school or when they reach adulthood.

- **Economic boost:**

Since each one is given a chance to study on the basis of merit, and they study with a desire to achieve something after education. After they finish their higher studies, they go to various places for work. Certain people join the same institution as tutors. Others go abroad as tutors, carpenters, drivers, mechanics, and tailors. Through their earning the family people are blessed economically.

- **Social upliftment:**

Parents who have been poor and depressed now rejoice since their children are educated and earn their living. People, who have been living in huts or rented places, now have their own houses and socially they are uplifted.

5:3. Opposition: Hindutva, Official restrictions and Fundamentalism:

Origin of Hindutva:

It was born under the name RSS on 25th September 1925. It started with the declaration, “Hinduism is Nationalism.”⁵⁰

RSS floated over 50 frontal organizations including Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (1948), the Jana Singh (1951), Vanavasi kalyan Ashram (1952), Bharatiya Majdoor Sangh (1955), Vishwa Hind Parishad (1964), and the Bajrang Dal (1984). The last two function as the militant arms of the Hindutva movement, whereas the Jana Sangh, in 1980, transformed itself into the political arm, namely Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).⁵¹

Kesava Baliram Hedgewar was born on 1st April 1889. He was the third son born in a Brahmin family, a Telugu Brahmin resident in Nagpur, Maharashtra.

“In August 1923 Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya organized Hindu Maha Sabha. He led fanatic Hindus in riot after bloody communal riot against the Muslims.”⁵²

During this time K.B. Hedgewar developed the basis for the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh known as RSS. He was not happy with the congress programmes and decided to form a volunteer’s brigade.

The first group, from a Brahmin locality in Nagpur didn’t have any name. But had “regular akhara (exercise) sessions throughout the week and political classes on Sundays and Thursdays.”⁵³

K.B. Hedgewar chose Madaavrao Sadashiv Golwalker known as Guruji as his successor. This he did before his death. Golwalker was a Brahmin born in Maharashtra, on Feb 19, 1906. He was the son of a teacher. From childhood he got saturated in religious ideologies. He earned M.Sc degree (Zoology) in Banaras Hindu University.⁵⁴

Mr. Golwalker spoke of Ariyans and Non Ariyans as follows:

*The origin of our people is unknown to scholars of history. In a way we are anadhi; without a beginning or we existed when there was no need of any name. We are the good, the enlightened people. We are the people who know about the laws of nature of the spirit. We have brought into actual life almost every thing that was beneficial to mankind. Then the rest of humanity was just bipeds and so no distinctive name was given to us. Sometimes in trying to distinguish our people from others we were called the enlightened Ariyas and the rest the melachas.*⁵⁵

The prayer song of RSS:

Salutations to you, O Motherland where I am born; my body will ever again bow to you in salutation. O Guru, the messenger of Rama grant us good character; Give us soon all the virtues to become full Hindus; Induct us to your grace and make us followers of Rama; May we become celibate, defenders of faith and men of brave determination.

Victory to Samrath Shri Ramdas, the Guru of the Nation.

Victory to Mother India.⁵⁶

The above prayer (Hindi – Marathi prayer) was sung in the shaktas till 1939. Later the prayer has been used in Sanskrit in a modified form.⁵⁷

According to the ideology of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar (1883-1966), Hindutva requires four things:

- (a) Birth and growth in Indian Territory;
- (b) Belonging to the Indian race, that is possessing Hindu blood;

- (c) Appreciation for and practice of all the customs and traditions of Hindu Sanskrit; and acceptance of India alone as one's fatherland (pitrubhu), and holy land (punyabhu), and its heroes as persons of veneration (virpurush), as well as Sanskrit as the common language;
- (d) Allegiance to one of the religious traditions that has emerged from India, such as Hinduism or Buddhism, Jainism and Sikkism as offshoots of Hinduism.⁵⁸

For Golwalker the people of India especially the non Hindus must follow Hindu Religion, Hindu culture, the Sanskrit language and be submissive to the Brahminic rule.

*The non Hindu people in Hindustan must adopt Hindu culture and language; must learn to hold in reverence Hindu religion, must entertain no idea but those of glorification of the Hindu race and culture... (They) may live in the country wholly subordinated to the Hindu nation, claiming nothing, deserving no privileges; far less any preferential treatment not even citizen's rights.*⁵⁹

The strategies of Hindutva:

Hindutva is a movement, using force and violence in order to achieve its target. On 4.2.1948 the government of India declared the RSS unlawful and gave the following reasons:

*Undesirable and even dangerous activities have been carried on by members of the Sangh. It has been found that in several parts of the country individual members of the Rashtriya Swayansevak Sangh have indulged in acts of violence involving arson, robbery decoity, and murder and have collected illicit arms and ammunitions. They have been found circulating leaflets exhorting people to resort to terrorist methods, to collect fire arms, to create disaffection against the Government and suborn the police and the military. These activities have been carried on under a cloak of secrecy, and the Government has considered from time to time how far those activities rendered it incumbent of them to deal with the Sangh in its corporate capacity.*⁶⁰

Their strategies:

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- ◆ Using Hindu Religion as a means to get votes from Hindus for political power.
- ◆ Reconstructing of the Ram Temple.
- ◆ Excluding Muslims, Christians and others from Hindu fold saying that Hindu blood does not flow in them, blaming that they follow different faiths, cults, and languages.
- ◆ Fighting against the enemies of Hindus, in order to abandon their faith, cultural practices and to establish Hindu race and culture.
- ◆ Rewriting the history and text books for educational instructions with Hindu ideology.
- ◆ Using media as the most powerful means to propagate against Muslims and Christians.
- ◆ Reconverting people from Islam and Christianity to Hinduism.⁶¹

Official restrictions:

The Tamilnadu prohibition of Forcible conversion of Religion ordinance, 2002.

*An Ordinance to provide for prohibition of conversion from one religion to another by the use of force or allurement or by fraudulent means and for matters incidental thereto.*⁶²

It was “promulgated on 5.10.2002 and published in T.N.G. Gazette, Extra; No.659, dated 5.10.2002 in pt IV.S.2.”⁶³

The reason for such ordinance, explanatory Note has been given as follows:

*“Reports have been received by the government that conversions from one religion to another are made by use of force or allurement or by fraudulent means”,*⁶⁴

According to the above Ordinance- *“giving a gift or gratification either in cash or kind”, “grant of any material benefit, either monetary or otherwise” meant “allurement.”*⁶⁵

The word “convert” meant- “to make one person to renounce one religion and adopt another religion.”⁶⁶ “Force” – “a show of force or a threat of injury of any kind including threat of divine displeasure or social ex-communications.”⁶⁷

“Fraudulent” means includes misrepresentation or any other fraudulent contrivance; “Minor” means a person under eighteen years of age.⁶⁸

For forcible conversion punishment: Three years imprisonment, and a fine, up to fifty thousand rupees. For converting a minor or a person from scheduled caste or scheduled tribe punishment: Four years imprisonment and a fine up to one lakh rupees.⁶⁹

If a person was converted from one religion to another, the religious priest had to send intimation to the District Magistrate before performing the religious ceremony.

Failure to inform the magistrate meant imprisonment extends to one year or fine extend to one thousand rupees or with both.⁷⁰

“The Sangh Parivar and the BJP have extended full support and welcomed the act of Ms. Jayalalitha”⁷¹ wrote Kanti Biswas – minister for Education in the west Bengal Government and it was published by the Hindu, Sunday Dec 22.

While writing about the 58 Dalit families, in 1979 in Kanchipuram who tried to embrace Islam, he mentioned that there was a reason.

“They wanted emancipation from the age-old social, economic and political tyranny perpetrated on them by the higher caste.”⁷²

The Dinamani a Tamil daily news paper published Chief Minister Jayalalitha’s speech in Satankulam Tamilnadu during her political campaign. She mentioned that only Christian Literature and Living www.christianliteratureandliving.com 283
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people who commit mistake must be punished. “All religious people can speak of one’s religion boldly; can embrace the religion of their desire. The government will not forbid anyone.”⁷³

Impact of official restrictions on A.G. Churches:

☞ Church members were not allowed to distribute tracts in certain villages. The First Assembly of God church in Madurai, believers went to a near by village to distribute tracts but were not allowed to enter the village.

☞ Conducting open air meeting was forbidden.

Singing, preaching, distributing tracts and praying for sick and needy people have been a century old method accepted by all people. After the Anti conversion bill was passed, the religious fanatics forced the church people to go from the place where they had open air preaching and instigated others to attack them. One of the A.G Bible college lecturers who had an A.G. Church in Simmakal at Madurai was attacked by a man while he went for open air evangelism.

☞ Anti Christian groups attacked the churches.

A.G churches made in the form of temporary sheds were burnt. One church in Ettayapuram in Virudunagar District was attacked and another church was set on fire in Ramanathapuram. There were many such incidents which took place in many parts of Tamilnadu. In Poraiyar A.G. Church in Nagapattinam district was looted by the hooligans.

☞ Christians were not allowed to show a film or conduct evangelistic meetings in their own premises.

A member of the laity as usual went to a village near Madurai to show a film in the church compound. While people were watching the film, “Jesus”, the anti Christian people threw stones and attacked some of the people. So they had to stop the film show atonce. A religious fanatic attacked a Christian brother in Madurai district. The Christian being a graduate he was calm while he was beaten. When the Christian brother quietly told him that he could also attack him back, but he would not do that due to religious teachings, the attacker said, “That is the plus point you Christians have.”

Fundamentalism:

The word fundamentalism means “The strict following of the fundamental doctrines of any religion or system of thought” compact Oxford Dictionary. ⁷⁴

There was an awakening among the Hindu leaders as a result of western challenge to the Indian culture and tradition. It brought Hindu Revivalism. “Hindu Fundamentalism has its roots in the nineteenth century.” ⁷⁵ The seeds of the Hindu Fundamentalism were sown by the Arya Samaj. “The outcome of this ideology is Hindutva.” ⁷⁶

Fundamentalists are threatened since Christian work has raised an awakening among the downtrodden people. Dalits claim, self respect and equality, which is a threat to the upper class.

Hindutva is an ideology promoting Hinduism by subtle means. It grows steadily and organized to grow all over India. It uses Hindu religious symbols, rites and myths for its ideology and its formulation of nationhood. ⁷⁷

Hindutva is an attempt towards the cultural colonization of India through a well-coordinated movement of a sophisticated network of organizations, the Sangh Parivar: RSS (ideological/cultural), BJP (political), VHP (religious), BMS (trade union), ABVP (student cadre), BD (Volunteer army). As a result this movement is spreading rapidly and through its

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*growing influence gaining control of every sphere of public life: culture, politics, education and religion.*⁷⁸

Fundamentalism is retaliation, against tolerance. Religious pluralism speaks of tolerance toward religions. Fundamentalism instigates religious fanatics, to hate other religious people.

The fundamentalists aim is to deny the rights of minority religions, where they are majority. They want to prohibit their people, from conversion to any other religion.

The fundamentalists attacked churches as well as Individuals. For example Graham stains a missionary from Australia came to Orissa. He was rendering social service among the lepers. His social and spiritual service was accepted by the villagers.

According to the Indian traditional belief parents will not allow their children to mingle with lepers. Whereas Stains family loved the lepers and spent many years with them. One night Graham and his two little sons were sleeping in a jeep. Dara Singh with his people burnt, alive Graham and his two sons. It took place on Jan 23, 1999.⁷⁹

*“The young priest, Arul Doss, working among the Ho tribe, was murdered by a mob allegedly instigated by Dara Singh in the Mayurbany district in Orissa in Sep 1999.”*⁸⁰

Sister Rani Marisa was doing social work among the tribal people. In Feb 1995, the anti missionary forces murdered her in Udayanagar Indore. She was stabbed to death. “This was followed by rape of nuns in Jhabua districts, M.P.”⁸¹

The fundamentalist groups have done so much of havoc to the Christians and the churches. They also blame Christian missionaries and the churches falsely in the public meetings, through the press, books, leaflets and mass media.

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They accuse the Christians, saying that the church is foreign. It is anti national. Christians convert the weaker section of the society such as the tribes and Harijans, by fraud and inducement. Christians are destroying the unity of the nation by instigating communal hatred.⁸²

The fundamentalists' identity is based on Hindutva ideology which believes in exclusivism to promote Hindu Religion and Varnasarama.

Hinduism has been considered as an umbrella or sponge that would take any thing inside. It is known for its tolerance. The religious fanatics have been trying to bring scar to their own religion, by attacking other religious faiths.

Amidst opposition the Good News of Christ has been reaching the people in Tamilnadu and other places since people are not forced to believe in Christ and his teachings.

Casteism, affected the people in India for generations mentally, physically, socially and spiritually. The goodnews of Christ has given them new hope. The word caste derives from the word "Varna" means "colour." People in India have been divided into five groups such as Brahmanas, Ksatriyas, Visyas, Sudras and Panchamas. Their occupation was designed as per their caste. The first three castes were of Aryan blood, Sudras a labouring caste and Panchamas the most degraded one which was called untouchables. Evangelism attracted the lower classes of people, such as Sudras and Panchamas.

For generations the high caste people enjoyed the privileges except the down trodden people. In Bhavat Gita the first four castes were given the description of their

work. Gandhi spoke against untouchability and called the untouchables “Harijans” means the “Lords people.” The untouchables suffered the most, their privileges refused, in all walks of life such as education, dignity, status, etc. The Christian good news played a vital role in helping them. They were given education, work, and was allowed to attend the church services. They became dignified people. The AG churches were built in the remote areas as well as urban areas to reach one and all.

There was a time that the high caste people alone were able to study. Christianity offered education to all classes of people. Female education was introduced. Though it was looked with suspicion in the early days later it became an eye opener for the females to study boldly.

Education enabled the lower classes to get economic boost. It gave them spiritual and economical status. Their families were blessed and were able to walk with respect and dignity.

People who were affected in the society, were able to come out of inferiority complex since Christ’s goodnews gave them dignity and worthy of respect. It has also enabled them to follow the Indian culture, such as, customs, manners, wearing of dresses, art, music and way of life. The Assemblies of God ministry does not stand against the Indian culture. The educational and social institutions of the Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu have been a blessing to the poor and needy. Education has been given to the students regardless of caste distinction. It has given them economic boost and social upliftment.

Hindutva a religious movement originated in 1925. Its main purpose has been to make India a Hindu Nation to follow Varnasrama (caste) and Brahminic rule. Its motive

is to convert the Christians and Muslims to Hindu fold or else to make them live in India without citizenship and privileges.

In 2002 the Tamilnadu prohibition of forcible conversion of Religions ordinance was enforced. The Sangh Parivar and the BJP extended their full support. The official restrictions affected the AG churches in many ways. Church members were not allowed to distribute tracts in certain villages. Conducting open air meeting was forbidden by the religious fanatics. Anti Christian groups attacked the churches, and forbade evangelistic meetings.

The fundamentalists began to attack the Christians and the churches since the goodnews ministry has raised an awakening among the down trodden people. Christian Missionaries the late Graham Stains, Roman Catholic priest Aruldoss and others died as martyrs. Amidst the opposition the goodnews of Christ has been reaching people since people are not forced to believe in Christ and his teachings.

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CHAPTER VI

THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE GROWTH OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD CHURCHES IN TAMILNADU (SPIRITUAL AND MORAL CHANGES)

Concept of Exclusivism:

Exclusivism believes that there is only one faith or one religious belief alone needed for salvation. Assemblies of God believes in exclusivism. It believes neither in inclusivism, nor in syncretism.

Content of sermons preached in Evangelism meetings and church services:

In evangelistic meetings topical and expository sermons are preached from the Bible on topics such as salvation, healing and deliverance.

In the church services, Bible centered topical, textual and expository messages are preached.

Concept of fellowship of the Converts in the Church:

Converts are encouraged to attend the church meetings regularly. They are considered as brothers and sisters in the Lord belonging to the body of Christ. They are also given chances to use their talents, ministry abilities in the church in cell groups, villages and elsewhere.

Concept of Prosperity Doctrine:

Prosperity doctrine rejects poverty, suffering and sickness. It is an unbalanced teaching. Assemblies of God Churches in Tamilnadu believe in balanced teaching.

It is God who blesses people and makes them to prosper provided they follow the commandments of God carefully. Prayer is offered for various things for people to come out of poverty, suffering and sickness.

People are taught to pay tithes, have a proper budget, work-hard, save some money and believe God for miraculous support.

6:1 Concept of Exclusivism:

There are so many theories such as, pluralism, exclusivism, inclusivism, relativism and syncretism, among the religious people and non religious people. The word pluralism means, belief in all religions or accepting all religions equally. It emphasizes that no religion is superior to any other religion.

Inclusivism includes all religious faiths along with Christianity and it believes that, God's revelation is found in other religions as well. Inclusivism tries to bring harmony with other religions and it does not accept the fact, that Jesus Christ is the only saviour of the universe.

Relativism means "The view that accepted standards of right and good vary with environment and from person to person".¹ People who believe in relativism evaluate Christian faith equally with other religions.

Syncretism believes in uniting all Religions under one umbrella. No validity is given to any particular religion. The Greek word (συν) "sun" means "putting together"). Syncretism tries to mix all religions together.

The word "Exclusivism" indicates, seclusion from other ideologies found in various religions. The exclusivists believe that there is only one way. Salvation is found in Christ alone. Other religions have segments of truth and Christianity has the absolute truth.

Ken Gnanakan defines "exclusivism" as:

"Exclusivism" strongly underlines commitment to Jesus Christ as being the full and final revelation of God and that salvation is available only through him".²

The Evangelicals believe in exclusivism. John Stott and the Lausanne delegates in 1974 affirmed regarding the uniqueness and universality of Jesus Christ. Their affirmation is given below as a summary:

- Jesus Christ is the only saviour and he is our ransom.
- Christ does not speak by other religions and ideologies.
- There is no other name for salvation.

- God's silence is, for all people to be saved through faith and repentance.³

Hogg was a missionary in Madras Christian College in Chennai. He had sympathy for people of other faiths. He came to the point that Hindus too have similar salvation in their religion. He was an inclusivist. He was with the view that people must progress in their own religion, rather than converting to another religion.⁴

Stanley Samartha believed in pluralism and rejected exclusivism:

*All religions that make exclusive claims will have to critically reexamine their position, in the first instance perhaps within their own communities of faith and later on together with neighbours of other faiths, so that commitment does not lead to fanaticism or opens to swallow friendliness. An exclusive claim is like a bit of rock in a handful of peanuts. It may break a few but will never provide nourishment to the body.*⁵

For S.J. Samartha the Christian claim of exclusivism is biting a small stone amidst a handful of peanuts. The Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu believes in Exclusivism as given below:

- **Salvation is only through Jesus Christ.**

There is no salvation outside Jesus Christ. The Bible scripture is used for such belief "I even I am the Lord and besides me there is no saviour" Isa.43:11(NKJV). In the New Testament, Peter proclaimed in the book of Acts that there is no other name given for salvation. "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." Acts 4:12 (NKJV).

- **Other religions have segment of truth.**

There are major religions and minor religions found in the world. People from different places began to seek the superior one or the unseen God. Disease, danger, death and the quest for what happens after death were some of the reasons. As a result many religions became a dominant factor to teach people, ethical teachings and spirituality. In every religion one can find certain aspect of truth such as living honest life, helping others and so forth.

- **Christianity has the unique truth.**

Though other religions have segment of truth, Christianity has the absolute truth which is found only through Jesus Christ. Jesus has become the centre of the salvation of mankind. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." John 14:6 (NKJV).

A.G Churches respect other Religions and adapt Indian culture:

The Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu believes in exclusivism. It respects other religions. Students who come to the Bible College in order to prepare them for the ministry they learn world Religions. In evangelism class they are taught, how to approach people of other religious faith and to deal with nominal Christians. Pastors are advised not to attack any religious faith though religious fanatics attack Christianity in many ways. Prayers are offered for other religious people for their salvation. When people come for good news meetings or church meetings, they are given respect and offered prayers for healing and peace of mind. The people who attend the church follow Indian culture, in wearing dress, the way of sitting, usage of Tamil language, wearing of ornaments and other customs.

6:2 Content of sermons preached in Evangelism meetings and church services:

In evangelistic meetings, topical sermons are preached from the Bible on topics such as salvation, healing and deliverance. For healing meetings expository messages are preached. In the church services, Bible centered topical, textual and expository messages are preached.

Case – I: Salvation

Text : (Luke 19:1-10) Luke 19:10 – **"Today salvation has come to this home"**.

Topic : A searching sinner and a seeking saviour

Theme: Steps for salvation

During the time of Jesus, Romans ruled Palestine. Publicans collected tax and paid certain amount to the Roman Government. The Jews considered the publicans as sinners, worse than dogs. The Jews believed that "Gahanna" (Hell) was ready for them. The publican would use every means to get money from the citizens. He would ask tax for the cart, axle, wheel and things. Common people used to beat their chests after paying so much of tax. These publicans had no association with the society.

The name Zaccheus means “pure or innocent”. He lived contrary to his name. He was considered as an outcast or sinner hated by the Jews. Matthew was a tax collector, where as Zaccheus was a leader for tax collectors. To the Jews publicans were considered as “traitors”, since they collected tax for the Romans. The Jews didn’t want to pay tax to the Romans.

Jericho was a cursed city. It was a fertile land, called city of Palm trees. Deut. 34:3. It became a place of curse. People in that city followed their own way of worship and sacrificed even the children to gods. Once it was a great city having the oldest walled town in the world and was the capital for priests. Cosmetics were sold in Jericho and it was a place of fragrance. Jesus went to the cursed city.

From the life of Zaccheus, I want to preach to you, the following steps for salvation.

- **He heard:**

He heard of Jesus through some one, the miraculous ministry His love toward all people and forgiving nature. Rom. 10:17 - “Faith cometh by hearing and hearing through God’s word”. The blind Barthemeus didn’t have eyes to see yet he heard of Jesus through some one else Mark 10:46-47. Barthemeus was externally blind and Zaccheus was internally blind. Barthemeus met Jesus when Jesus left Jericho where as Zaccheus met Jesus when Jesus came to Jericho. Jesus came to change curses into blessing. Whatever the curses you have in your life or family, God wants to set you free today.

- **He desired (He sought): V3**

We do not know through whom he heard. But Luke tells that Zaccheus wanted to know who Jesus was, “He sought to see who Jesus was”. People want to seek Jesus and they get many opportunities to seek Him while they are alive. After death there is no chance. The Bible says, “*It is appointed unto men once to die and after that the judgment*” Heb.9:27. A soul can never be happy unless it reaches God. Zaccheus had status and money but no peace.

- **He attempted: V4**

“So he ran ahead and climbed unto a sycamore tree to see Him for He was going to pass that way”.

He went alone to see Jesus. All of us were born alone and will die alone. In between life and death, we will come across, parents, brothers, sisters, relatives, friends and foes. God is interested in each one of us. One cannot think 'What will others think or say about me'. Since Zaccheus was short, he climbed a sycamore tree. "Zaccheus used to come to water the tree where he found Jesus" Tradition.

- **He obeyed: V6**

"So he made haste and came down and received Him joyfully".

In verse 5- we read that "*Jesus came to the place*" where Zaccheus was. Jesus comes to the place where you are since He loves every one.

When Zaccheus heard the voice of Jesus for the first time, he obeyed without any reservation. He set aside, doubts, fears, criticisms, since Jesus called him by name. The Bible says that God knows all of us. And He can call us by name.

The invitation Jesus gives to all the people is "Come unto me all ye that labour and of heavy laden. And I will give you rest" Matt 11:28.

- **He confessed:**

"Look Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor, and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold" V9.

When Jesus passes by and whoever He meets or whoever meets Jesus, a change will take place. Jesus is the lover of souls. Zaccheus knew the Old Testament, especially the teaching in Torah. Exod 22:1 - If a man stole a sheep he had to pay fourfold. He was willing to return fourfold. He got the conviction through the Spirit of God. Conviction comes before confession. Conviction comes through the Holy Spirit of God. Jesus alone can remove the stains in your life.

- **He got saved: V9**

Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he is also the son of Abraham. V10 - For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost".

Jesus came to the house of a sinner. People called Zaccheus a “sinner” V9 and murmured saying that Jesus went to stay in his house. Whenever Jesus comes to your house which is your heart (mind) there is salvation, satisfaction and reconciliation. You need not bother what people think of you or speak of you.

Jesus alone can make your life delivered from sinful nature and give you inner peace and security. Jesus does not bother what people say about you. You are a precious soul before God. Jesus came and said, “Him that cometh to me in no wise I will cast” John 6:37.

He had to die on the cross to save you from the penalty of sin. If you allow Jesus to come to you, he will save you and give you peace. Remember Zaccheus a rich and a man with status, heard of Jesus. He wanted to see Him, and he attempted. Jesus did not pass by him. He never called him saying “sinner, come down” when he heard the friendly voice of Christ; Zaccheus accepted him and got salvation experience.

A young man and his fiancée attended a meeting like this. The young lady with tears wanted, to go forward to surrender her life to Jesus. She asked the young man to follow her. But he refused to go with her. She pleaded with him again and again. Suddenly she said ‘If you don’t want to go with me to Heaven I don’t want to go with you to Hell’. At once she went forward and gave her life to Jesus.⁶

Case – II: Sanctification

Text : Psalms 119:1-8

“Blessed are the undefiled in the way that walk in the law of the Lord”

Psa.119:1.

Topic : Are you not sanctified by God’s word in ever day life?

Theme : Sanctification through God’s word.

“Bible is the inspired word of God. A revelation from God to man, an infallible rule for faith and conduct”. The Assemblies of God doctrine regarding the inspiration of the Bible.

GK – Βιβλος (Biblos): The inner bark in which things were written βιβλια (Biblia) means: roll, book written volume. 2nd century Christian used βιβλον (Biblon) for writings. The book that was written in papyrus called “Βιβλος” Biblos.

(A.D) 347 – 407 A.D. Christotham the church father mentioned “Bible”. It has 66 books O.T. 39; N.T.27 (R.C. has more than 80 (66+14 or 15) apocrypha).

Augustine: “The N.T. is concealed in the O.T. and O.T. is revealed in the N.T”.

“Bible was the most widely read book in the middle ages”. (K. Luke, companion P.7.) – Hand written copies of the Bibles were in circulation known as “manuscripts” P.25 Luke (2001).

B.C. 280 – 150 in Alexandria 70 people (elders’ translated the Bible into Greek LXX (A.D.) 383 – 405 A.D. Jerome translated into Latin (A.D) 300 – whole Bible was compiled as 66 books. The complete Hebrew Bible – by Soncino press 1488 by Abraham Hayyim – Luther used this Bible for German translation. Ibid., P.7.

Bible speaks of:

1. God’s love – John 3:12; Gen 1:1
2. Man’s separation – from God – Rom 3:23 (sin).
3. Christ’s death – John 1:16 - Jesus came to save
4. Repentance – faith and confession.

I. The briefing of God’s word:

In Psalms 119 the following words are used for the ‘word of God’. Scoffield

Bible:

1. Law : “Instruction or teaching” – VI. Pro 19:7
2. Word : “Speech or utterance” – V(a)

A general word for disclosure of God’s will.

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3. Ordinance : V13 -“legal pronouncements rules of divine administration”.
4. Commandments : V6 -“authoritative order (Psa.19:8) for religious principles”.
5. Precepts : V4 -“relate to man’s moral (Psa.199:100) obligations as enjoined by God”.
6. Testimonies : V2 -“God’s own declaration (Psa.19:7) of His nature and purpose”.
7. Status : V5 -“refers to civil and religious (Lev 26:1) appointments of the Mosaic Law”.
8. Judgments : V7 -“Judgments and Ordinances Lev 18:1; ordinances are the translations Psa.18:4; 19:8 of the same Hebrew word. The above words in (Psa.119:1-8). Bible was written by 40 different writers with in 1500 years”.

“I believe the Bible is the best gift God has ever given to man. All the good from the saviour of the world is communicated to us through this book” Abraham Lincoln.

The Decalogue and the Jewish confession of faith are known as “Shema” literally, “Hear Audi” (K. Luke, Companion P.27). The summary of Jewish faith – Deut.6:4-9; 11:13; Num. 15:31-41.

II. The blessings of God’s word:

1. It purifies V9 – Heb 4:12 Human body’s.
Purification through medicine. God’s word purifies the spiritual man.
2. It helps a person to avoid sin – V11.
It is a treasure – “I have hidden your word” those who are born of God don’t sin.
An African, who was reading the Bible, told an infidel, he would have eaten him, had he not read the Bible.
3. It helps to claim from God – needs V49.

- Reminds God – ‘Call unto me’ – ‘ask of me’. Salvation – the greatest gift – you have ever received. Remember one word, one experience – of God’s grace.
4. It guides a person perfectly – V65.
A lamp to guide V105 – ministry, marriage, mission – man will misguide, but God will never. He guides through the word.
 5. It gives peace of mind – V165.
Peace through the word, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.
 6. It gives joy – V174 joy in all situations. “Joy of the Lord is your strength” – Disciples were joyful when they were hated by the Jews - Acts 13:52.
 7. It helps to avoid vain thoughts – V113.
Mind – treasure or thoughts, negative, positive, good, and bad.

III. The Beauty of God’s word:

1. Pray to God to open your spiritual eyes – V18 wonders
2. A treasure – great value – v17
3. Meditate – all the day – V97, V148
Love it, think, memorize, and speak of it

Mary Jones and her Bible. Place – Wales – west of England. Born in 1792, daughter of a weaver. Father Jacob Jones. She attended the prayer meeting with her parents, appreciated by her pastor. Her desire for Bible stories. She being a poor girl, could not own a Bible. A farmer’s wife, who purchased eggs, encouraged her, gave her some education and she allowed to read the Bible in her home. Mary Jones saved money to buy a Bible through the sale of eggs, gathering of wood, and mending cloths. She memorized Matt Ch-7 and came home late. Parents were much worried. The reason was that she spent the time reading the Bible. She told the parents that she brought Matt Ch-7. Their parents got annoyed. Mary replied that she memorized Matt Ch-7. Since she wanted a Bible she walked on bare foot – 25 miles to buy a Bible, carried her shoes, feet with blood by thorns. Pastor Charles refused and her cry. Charles appeal in London for

Bibles, presenting the need. 1804, 7th March. Britannica Universal Bible Society was established, as a result of her desire to own a Bible. She lived up to 80 years. Her Bible is kept in the Bible museum in England. Mary Jones paved the way so that today all of us have a printed Bible. Do you read your Bible every day? Have you felt God speaking to you while reading? Are you not sanctified every day as you obey His word? Thank God for the living word which is your guide in every aspect of your life. Read it, memorize the scriptures. Live according to the word of God.⁷

Case – III: Soul winning

Text : John 9:1
Topic : “While it is day”
Theme : ‘Soul winning’

John’s gospel has more of Jesus’ direct speech. Jesus words such as “I am the bread of life. I am the door. I am the life, I am the shepherd, I am resurrection, I am the truth and I am the way”. The following chapters – we read of Jesus Christ and His words:

Chapter 1: ‘Jesus Christ the word became flesh’

Chapter 2: Jesus turned the water into wine.

Chapter 3: Jesus spoke to Nichodemus, “*You must be born again*”.

Chapter 4: Jesus asked the Samaritan woman, “*Give me to drink*”.

Chapter 5: Jesus commanded the sick man (Lame man) “*take up your bed and walk*” –

Chapter 6: Jesus the Bread of Life, He fed - 5000 people.

Chapter 7: Jesus at the feast of Tabernacles spoke of the – river’s of living water.

Chapter 8: Jesus spoke to the sinful woman, “*neither do I condemn thee*”.

Chapter 9: Whose sin? Jesus announced the disciples the reason for the blind man’s blindness. “*The glory of God to be revealed*” Jews believed for two

reasons, why a person was born blind:

- Sin of parents – Past life.
- Punishment in anticipation of future sins.

After He answered the disciple's question, Jesus spoke to the disciples - regarding the work of God which is to witness to people regarding God's love shown through Jesus Christ.

I. Day time that God has given us;

“While it is day”

The late Jawaharlal Nehru kept a plaque on his table with the words, ‘While it is day’. Thomas Dickson wrote on his watch ‘While it is day’. He planned his life – even for 100 years. Day has ‘12’ hours – People work ‘8’ hours not every one – Today’s trend among workers, “come late go early” – work if boss is present. If contract fast work daily labor – dragging. In soul winning one has to spend the time wisely while it is day.

Day speaks of light – Confidence, Courage, and Cheerfulness... no fear... guidance Eph 5:14-15. Day speaks of young age, strength, service mindedness, etc. 12:1-9

Day speaks of – Opportunities:

- Strength in the body
- Open door – before rapture
- It is the day to remember the Creator Ecc.12:1
- Today is the day of Salvation – day of grace
- It is the day of rejoicing – ‘This is the day’
- It is the day to witness

“He who wastes money is a fool. He who wastes time is a dame fool”. Some one said, “Yesterday is dead – forget it. Tomorrow does not exist don’t worry. Today is here use it”.

II. Duty that God wants us to do:

“I must work” Greek “We must work”. We are partners in God’s program.

Disciple’s question – “What must we do to do the works of God?” What were the works Jesus did? Jesus came to do His Father’s business – He recognized even what it was at the age of 12 Lk.2:12. It was God’s will for him. It was his food (John 4:38.) to tell people the good news.

He preached: regarding the Kingdom of God – which is Present and future:

Repent : Conviction, Confession – health to body and mind. Salvation a free gift based on repentance.

Believe : against unbelief

Follow me : Discipleship

Come : Salvation – rest, peace, joy

Abide : To bear fruit

Learn : meekness

Wait : Prayer life and Holy Spirit baptism

Go : Command - Commission

Make : Disciples

Observe : Commandments

He healed : Inner healing – external healing – inner healing prerequisite for external healing.

Cast out

Demons : Demons play different roles in the lives of people such as, oppression, possession, bondage, blindness, unconsciousness, and darkness.
Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil.

➤ We are saved to save others. Jesus came for that purpose.

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- He chose disciples for that purpose.

“Follow me.” I will make you fishers of men. When we catch a fish it will die after it is taken out of water. When we catch the dead people who are dead in sin and trespasses they become alive – in Jesus.

- God sent Holy Spirit for that purpose.

Glorifies Christ, gives boldness to speak, gives opportunities to meet, guides toward needy souls, and gives power to testify. Jesus wanted His followers to do the following:

- “Go to your home” – Parents Children relatives – Mark 5:19; Lk.8:39
- “Go to Individuals” – Mark 16:15
- “Go to Nations” – Acts 1:8 formula Matt 28:19

How many spiritual children have you? The command of Jesus is to preach the Gospel to every one it is the duty of:

Evangelists, Pastors, leaders– witnessing is every one’s work. Laziness, negligence, make you dull, and sick.

Εὐαγγελιον: “Evangelion the Greek word meant victory in the battle, birth of the King, accession to the throne, oracles from deities, victory over demons”.

Gospel or Good news – Power of God unto “Salvation”:

Warning to Preachers, “*Woe unto me if I do not preach*” Religions have segment of truths – ethical moral, search for the unknown. Christianity – gives the absolute truth Religious leaders have suffered or died for their teaching – Jesus gave his life and rose again.

A communist’s challenge:

The Gospel is much more powerful weapon for the renewal of society than our Marxist philosophy, but all the same it is we who will finally beat you. We communists do not play with words. We are realists and seeing that we are determined to achieve our object. We know how to obtain the means. Of our salaries and wages we keep only what is strictly necessary and we give our free time and part of our holiday. You however give only a little time and hardly any money for the spreading of the Gospel of Christ. How can any body believe in the supreme value of the Gospel if you do not practice it, if you do not spread it and if you sacrifice neither time nor money for it.

The Late Dr. Oswald J. Smith said, “Go or send, go or give.”

III. Darkness that God warns us:

- ❖ “Night comes that no man can work”.
- ❖ There are princess of darkness – Satan brought darkness Gen 1:2 He fought against God. Satan works at night in darkness.
- ❖ So much of evil is done at night
Adultery, fornication, theft, murder, casting of spells....
- ❖ Night speaks of weakness in the body
Old age – opposition, closed doors.

The emperor of China was given a big wall clock – by Maurturio ricci, and he used it as an instrument to preach the gospel, to the emperor.

- ❖ Holy Spirit will be taken away
Saints will be raptured. Famine for God’s word repentance will be very hard.
A family of many members while seeking for peace of mind, came near a house church, entered and got saved – in Malaysia. This is the time for conversion. Later it will be too late, since the Holy Spirit will be taken away.

In 1955 five young missionaries went to the jungle of Ecuador in South America. They tried to reach the Auca village tribe who were anti white and others. People who went to the jungle for oil, rubber, gold or mere adventure never returned. The missionaries sang a song in the morning before the departure “we rest on thee our shield and our defender” They knew psalm 91. The first missionary name Pedro a Jesuit was murdered by them with spears in 1667. During 1875 – 1925 the rubber hunters, burned their homes, raped ladies, tortured others and captured them. The Auca Indians hated the white people.

The five young men by a helicopter went around the village, threw food, and clothing. Among the five were Jim Elliot aged 25 brought up in spiritual background. His father read the Bible to his 4 sons told them to read and live by it. In the College he kept the Bible along with books. He was an artist, and a boxer. He translated the Bible from Greek to an unwritten language. He prayed for 10 days before going to Auca village. Another young man Peter a M.A. literature graduate was converted while he was 13 years. A blind man’s testimony led him to Christ. The 5 people caught a young man, made him to stay with them, gave food, shelter... stayed by the other side of the river... sent him to his village. People in USA were waiting for news. The five wrote in their diary, the daily events. One day the news came – they all were dead.

It was a shock... 5 widows 9 children in tears along with family people. Other hated the tribe, criticized the missions. Opinion arose to destroy the whole tribe... unchangeable people. In 1958 the wife of a missionary and one sister went to the same village. They took matches and Aluminums pots which were new to the tribe. Today they have N.T. in Auca language. There are Christians, churches and pastors. In 1980 one of the tribal men who killed the 5 missionaries came to Edinburgh to attend the conference who is a pastor now.

Follow the 5 “L” while talking to people about Jesus Christ:

Listen to the one – Who questions you or responds to your talk?

Learn – from that person

Lift - Jesus Christ

Lean upon – upon the Holy Spirit

Lead – the person to God

Having concern for souls and witnessing to them is important. Because

- It is the will of the Father.
- It is the ministry of Jesus Christ.
- It is the mission of the Holy Spirit.

May God give a passion in your heart and use you in reaching souls with the good news of Jesus Christ.⁸

Case – IV: Second Coming

Text : Matt. 24:44

Theme : The second coming

Title : Are you ready for His coming?

The coming of Christ is a joy, comfort, and hope to the believers who died in Christ or who are living for Him amidst trials. But it is a tragedy to people who died ungodly or who live wickedly without Him. Our Christian doctrine and faith are based on 4 great events:

(a) The virgin Birth: It was prophesied by God’s people before His birth. His birth was unique. 1 John 1:1; 4:1; 1:14.

(b) The sufferings and death of Christ: it was predicted by the prophets as well as by Jesus Christ. He died for the ungodly, sinners, weak people, transgressors, enemies. Gal.3:13. To set us free.

(c) The resurrection of Christ: Predicted by Jesus 1 Cor.15:20; 2 Tim 2:8. He rose, and He is our elder brother, we will rise too – Phil.3:10; 1 Thess.4:16; 1 Cor.15:13-23. None of the leaders said that they would resurrect. Even if they said that they never rose again.

(d) The second coming: None of them said or gave promise about their new life after death. Before they died they made confession or asked loved ones to do certain things.

The coming of the Lord is predicted more than 1000 times in the O.T. In O.T. and N.T. totally it is said 1845 times. (2 Peter 3:10-12; Titus 2:11-13; Acts 24).

Luke writes : ‘He will come as He went up’ Acts 1:11.

Paul writes : ‘He will come as the HOLY ONE’ – ‘Every knee shall bow’. He will come with the shout of an archangel. 1 Thess.4:16.

James writes : ‘He will come as the ‘Master’ (judge). James 5:8-9.

Peter writes : ‘He will come as the ‘sinless’ – ‘He will come as the thief’. 2 Peter 3:9-10.

Jude writes : ‘He will come as the Judge with His thousands of saints’. Jude 1:15.

John declares: ‘He will come as the King of Kings. He will come in the clouds’. Rev.1:7.

Second coming: Jesus was the only one who rose again. No one gave promise before their death. Whereas Jesus said, ‘I never leave you comfortless’. ‘I will come again’. John 14:1-3; 14:18. ‘I am preparing a place.’

Second coming: Paul says ‘Master’ James says “King of Kings”. John declares in Rev “sinless”. Peter says “Judge.”

Second coming: (a) Jesus will come as “King” to rule the earth.

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- (b) He will come to judge the world.
- (c) A world of peace – 1000 years Reign.

- O.T: 1000 times about the coming of Christ 1845 time in the Bible.
- N.T: 318 times in 260 chapters one time.

The need for His coming:

The expectation of the church is 'bride'. The Jewish problem; they are wandering, restless and expect the Messiah. The creation travails Rom 8:19-22.

Witness about His coming:

- (a) Enoch : Testified. He was the 7th generation after Adam (Jude 14-15) Gen 5:21- 24.
- (b) Moses : (Deut 33:26) – Moses was seen with Jesus on the Mount.
- (c) Prophets : Isa.62:11.
- (d) Angels : Acts 1:10-11.
- (e) Jesus : What ever he said they all came to pass – 'Judas will betray me', 'Peter will deny me'. 'I will be crucified, I will rise again'. 'I will go to my father, I will send the comforter', '*I will come again*' (*Holy Communion*)
 "Do this in remembrance of me till I come. 1 Cor 11:26
- (f) Apostles : Phil 3:20-21; Jas 5:7; 2 Pet 1:16, Paul, Peter and John.
- (g) The church: early church expected His coming. Stephen saw Christ before martyrdom. Through the centuries people expected and today believers await His coming.

Jesus' predictions about others: "Who touched me?" There was a lady with an issue of blood. "No more fruits" – The tree became barren the self same hour.

“Follow me – I will make you” – He did it – History. “Catch a fish” – There was a coin – (money).

About Himself: “I will be betrayed”, “denied”, “scourged”, “mocked”, “and crucified”. It all happened. ‘I will be in the grave for 3 days’. ‘I will rise again’. He rose – ‘unless the wheat dies’. ‘I will give my life’. He gave His life.

About us : ‘Blessed are those who believe in me’. ‘I have all power, I will be with you’. ‘Go, preach, heal, cast, I give you power and authority. I am preparing a place, I will come again. I will send you the comforter’.

God’s warning – before His coming: Gen 6:8-9.

Noah: He was a righteous man – walking before God. We need God’s righteousness: (a) walking with Him (b) leading a perfect life. God’s grace was upon him since he obeyed him.

Lot: A just man in the wrong place. It was his choice, though escaped, lost family lineage result – Ammonites and Moabites. They were not allowed in the presence of God. Sodom looked like ‘Eden’ to the backslidden man.

The sins of Sodom: Apart from homosexual sin, there were other things such as eating, drinking, planting, building, buying and selling. Ezek.16:49. Pride, fullness of bread, abundance of idleness were the sins of Sodom. Today haughtiness, abomination, over eating, a life against God’s laws, living against conscience, family, friends and society can be seen everywhere. Lot, he allowed the lust of eyes – chose the wrong place, sat in the wrong place – Psa.1:1.

He was vexed in his heart seeing the filthy things - 2 Peter 2:8. God removed Lot before destroying Sodom which is an indication of God's grace – Luke 17:29-30; 21:36; Rev 3:10.

The events before His coming:

I. The chaotic condition of the world:

1. False Christs: (Matt 24:5; 1 Thess 2:18; 4:1-3. Each century there have been people who claimed to be 'Christ'.

132-135 B.C. Bargoba, 434 B.C. Moses Kritton King, 525 Tunol, 529 Julian, 727 Tsarinas, 1137 a French man, 1157 a man from Spain, 1167 an Arabian – 'BOB' 18th century. 1500 an Austrian (a Jew). Father Divine in Philippines – Sai Baba in India, and different people calling themselves 'CHRIST'.

2. Wars and rumors of wars: Matt 24:6.

Wars of the empires – Church History reveals – The '*Romans*' their fall, defeat by – Burgundian's, Visigoths, Huns, Angles and so forth. The conquest of Islam, the crusades, the church war, 1914 1st world war, (1914-18) people could not bury the dead bodies.

2nd World war 1939 – 1945, the modern wars: India – China, India – Pakistan, the Arab war (Iran and Iraq), Russians – Afghan's, Vietnam War, Korean War, ('Falklands') British Vs Argentina – Cargill war 1999.

3. Famine: (Matt 24:7; Rev 6:5-6)

1920 London Times December 15 news: Cili 60,000 that year total death 13 ½ million. Somalia 1997 12 ½ million people died of famine. The famine in China (1928) the famine in India (1967).

4. Pestilences: (Lk.21:11; Rev.6:7-8)

1918 London Times Dec 18, 6,000,000 people died.

5. Earth Quakes: (Matt 24:7; Lk.21:11)

1038 – 1904 – 866 yrs 36 Earth Quakes. 1905 – 1923 Earth Quakes in 18, 16th century 250, 17th century 350, 18th century 650, 19th 2000. 1999 –Turkey, recent earth quake in Gujarat.

6. Signs in the sky: (Lk.21:25 new changes: sun, moon, stars)

Modern news in Russia people saw words in the sky about His coming ‘flying saucer’ in the 70’s. The change of climate. The whole world has climatical changes.

The increase of knowledge: Dan.12:4.

1. Television – Satellite – live telecast.
2. Telephone – Cables – Direct call to U.S.A.
3. Fast travel – 8 hrs to Britain 24 hours to U.S.A. 100 years ago or 50 years ago, 1 month voyage by ship or 45 days. 6 months – 9 months in 17th century. In 1850 travel from Madras (Chennai) to Madurai, 15 days by walk or carried by palanquin.
4. Modern Technology: robot, computer, music, everything.
5. Records, gramophone, tape recorder, video, cassettes, CD, DVD –etc.
6. The increase of evil – homo sex, lesbianism, divorce, rape, (the tree of evil).
7. The Denial of the faith – Theologians, pastors, and nominal Christians.

II. The commission of Christ and its fulfilment:

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From 1989-2003

The command of Christ: (1) 'Go every where.' (2) 'Go to all the creatures.' (3) 'Go to every one.' (4) 'Go to your people.' (5) 'Go to the Israelites.'

Holy Spirit coming : To witness in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost.

Jerusalem : Home town, own people, the place of religious activities, chosen people, temple, priests, king, and royal families.

Judea : Neighbors, friends, language people, the place of the elite, the upper class, and the high society.

Samaria : Enemies, mixed people, people who are disgrace to society, the low class, hippies, gangsters, prostitutes, and drug addicts.

Every where : To reach all races, all nationals, all ages, all beliefs, all temperaments, and all kind of professions.

Missions : 1st century – Disciples in Jerusalem – Thomas - India, Peter – Rome. Persecution – Samaria, Paul's missionary journeys. Severe persecution 'Polycorp.' 86 yrs – 6th century, In Rome Gregory saw the British children sold in the market and he sent missionaries. 590 – 604 A.D. Gregory's 1st missionary adventure in England. 16th – 17th century missions – to Asia, Africa and other places.

Notable people:

David Livingston – found Zambassy River, Moffat – Africa translated the Bible,
C.T. Studd – Cricket player went to Africa and Coonoor (India).

Hudson Taylor – China - inland mission.

William Carey – North India '*Father of Missions*' – 1793.

Francis Xavier – 'what shall it profit' – Ignatius Loyola quoted from the Bible which led Xavier to accept Christ and he came to India, (Malacca and China) – His social work among the 'lepers'.

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Ziegenbalg: South India – ‘The morning star’ 1706 July, 9 he came to India. He translated the New Testament in Tamil.

Morrison and John Betty Stam, to China.

Robert Sparkle Hutchings: founder of St. George Church in Malaysia, compiled Grammar in Malay, dictionary, elementary school books, and translated NT into Malay (Malaysia).

Amy Carmichael: South India – She rescued orphans and small girls left in the Temples for prostitution. She wrote the history of Tirunelveli.

Florence Nightingale: Red Cross. She was responsible for making nursing profession a dignified one for ladies.

Elizabeth Fry: She transformed the living condition in jail – before it was like a den. Women and men were kept together – Scouts and its use among students.

10th Century: Universities, Hostels established, and History written by Fathers. Monasteries and social work done by Catholics.

Methodology: Language culture Learning and Teaching – making languages, establishing churches, building Schools, medical colleges, agricultural, industrial, and educational institutions.

Today: Revival, charismatic movements, missions, ‘Asia Awakes’ deceptive teachings (lukewarm ness of the Church). Fight for the right, political involvement, social justice, salt and light experience – liberal view.

III. The crisis to the whole world – God’s peoples’ identity and growth:

Matt 24:32; Isa 30:26; Amos 9:12; Jere.24:1-7. B.C. 1936 (2000) God’s call to Abraham 12 tribes of Jacob, Hebrew people, ‘Jews’ 10 tribes called Israel (Jeroboam Leader), 2 tribes Jews (Rehoboam Leader). Now the country is called ISRAEL people are called ‘JEWS’. The sign of the fig ‘leaves’ Mark13:28, 29.

First destruction in 70 A.D by Titus Caesar 2, 50,000 Jews fought with 120 million Romans in 66 A.D. Thousands died, 1000's went as captives to build the 'ARENA'. The crusades in 7 yr 1045 – 1270, 1244 Palestine in TURKH hands till 1869 wandered without their own land; scattered every where. 1906 the King of TURKEY gave citizenship to stay permanently, After the First World War 1914 – 1918 (27 countries participated in the war). The Turkish in 1917 Dec 9th gave Palestine to the British (which they enjoyed for 600 years).

During the war when the British were in shortage of gun powder since German captured the place where the British had gun powder. There was a Jewish scientist helped the British by inventing T.N.T. gun powder – He found the clue from the book of Job. In 1917, Nov 2, Palestine became the property of the Jews. When Alan-by captured Palestine. He gave this to the Jews. In 1948, May 14, The Prime minister of Israel established his country. In 1949 March 22, 46 countries recognized Israel. In 1949 May 11, accepted by UN in 59th place. Before the 1st world war there were 500 Jews in Palestine. In 1948, 1, 50,000 came from 70 countries, their country is 7993 square miles population, in 1966, 25 million Jews, now more than 28 millions. Today almost all the Arab nations, communist countries are against them; in 1951 they planted 6 million trees in remembrance of the massacre by Hitler. Their official language is Hebrew. Their flag has Blue + White colour which was the color for the dress to enter the Holy of Holies by the High Priest. They do have the Star of David on the flag. They have 17 magazines.

In 1967, Jews captured the whole Jerusalem. In June 5th 12 nations fought against them. And in June 8, 1967 they captured the whole of Palestine. Their aim is to build the temple, and they bring stones from U.S.A.

Terrorism: Innocent people are killed for no reason by terrorists in many parts of the world. In Sep 11, 2001 – 2 towers in U.S.A lowered down by terrorists – 3000 people died. The pentagon was attacked. This incident shook the whole world.

IV. The carelessness of the people:

Bible speaks of 3 types of people: (1) Jews (2) Gentiles (3) Believers 1 Cor 10:32. The Israelites will go through tribulation – especially those who didn't accept Christ. Noah's time: Matt 24:38-39 floods speak of God's judgment + tribulation, 8 people when God saved.

Enoch: He was taken before the flood – He is a type for people who will be taken up before judgment. Who lead a life with Him and will be taken away at rapture. Gen 5:24.

Noah: He was saved in the flood, the redemption of the saved among Israelites. The unbelieving people (crowd) those who mock, sin, disbelieve will be destroyed in tribulation. Lot Luke 17:28. God saved 'Lot' a just man Jesus indicates 2 incidents about 'Lot and Noah' which speak of Rapture.

The time of Noah – God found one righteous man – He walked before the Lord.

The reasons for the Delay:

1. He wants all to repent – 2 Pet 3:9; Acts 3:19-20; Acts 17:30.
2. The gospel must be proclaimed – Matt 24:14.
3. The church needs to be perfected - Acts 13:52.
4. God's time has not yet come – Ps 90:4; 2 Pet 3:8.

How he comes and when?

The way He went, He will come again Acts 1:11. We don't know the actual timing, date and year - Acts 1:7; Matt 24:42; Matt 25:13; Mark 13:35, 37; Matt 24:36.

He will come as the Bridegroom (Hos 2:19). 2 Cor 11:12; Matt 16:27; 1 Tim 6:16; Luke 9:29 - In God's glory, His own glory and with angels Luke 9:26; Matt 28:3

The second coming:

1. Jesus will manifest Himself on the earth – Zech.14:4-5; Rev.1:7.
2. He comes after the rapture – 7 years after the rapture.
3. He will come with the church.
4. He comes after the great tribulation.
5. He comes as the King of Kings.
6. There will be signs of His coming – after 7 years.
7. People will see Him openly.
8. His coming will be upon the mount Olives – Rev 19:11-16.
9. He comes with the church and there will be an Armageddon war and casting of Antichrist and the false prophet in the lake of fire. Christ will destroy antichrists' army by the sword of His mouth – Rev.16:13-15; 2 Thess 2:8; Rev.19:15. ⁹

Before the second coming of Christ you have heard that there will be chaos, the fulfillment of the great commission of Christ, crisis and carelessness of the people. There will be a rapture (secret coming) to take the believers before the second coming. Are you ready?

6:3 Concepts of fellowship of the converts in the church

In the Assemblies of God churches there are three types of people who attend church services.

- People, who were non Christians or atheists, when they experience salvation in Jesus Christ, join the church.
- A.G believers or Christians from different denominations attend the church, since they are in a particular place due to some reason.
- Children who were born to A.G believers in the local church, attend Sunday school, church services and when they are converted, become members of the

local church. The late Dr. Megavaran wrote regarding the growth of the church as (a)biological growth, (b) transfer growth and (c) conversion growth.¹⁰

The Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu play an important role in moulding the lives of the converts. They are asked to attend the morning prayers, weekly prayer meetings, and all night prayer meetings. It helps them to pray to the Almighty God, collectively and personally. Their prayer includes adoration, praises, singing, thanks giving, confession, intercession and supplication. Apart from prayer life, believers attend Bible study, and other services.

- **Believers are considered as God’s children.**

Since all are created in the image of God, the believers are considered as God’s children. Believers when they talk with another believer, a male person will call another person “Brother” and a female will call another lady “Sister”. The Bible clearly confirms this. “Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us?” Mal 2:10a (NKJV). In the New Testament times, first the believers were called followers of the way or life. It was in Antioch the word Christian was first used. Acts 11:26 “And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch” (NKJV).

- **They are treated equally regardless of their caste.**

People from various caste attend the church and they enjoy fellowship, love and care, regardless of their caste distinctions. Every Sunday believers are asked to testify for 2-5 minutes. In big churches their written testimonies are read. During the communion time, some churches practice, drinking from one communion cup and eating the bread pieces. Big churches practice communion by giving each one a separate cup, for hygiene reason and to save the time. Pastor, assistant pastors visit the houses of believers for various reasons such as pastoral visit, wedding, funeral, birthday, sickness and prayer meeting.

- **They are used in singing, praying, conducting Sunday school and social work.**

In all services, singing is a main item. There was a time, when pastor had to lead the singing, preach the message and pray for people. The trend has changed and believers are asked to help in every possible way. A brother or sister who is able to sing and lead the song service is used. In big churches believers are chosen to sing in the choir and are given practices at least once a week.

During the prayer time, elders, ladies, young people are asked to offer a prayer. Prayer meetings are conducted by pastor's wives or ladies from the congregation. Ladies play a prominent role in conducting prayer meetings. There are Sunday classes for all age groups. An adult quarterly magazine was used as a guide to teach the elders. There was a Sunday school quarterly magazine for different age groups. Once in a year Vacation Bible School for all age groups are conducted for 10 days. Majority of the teachers are ladies only, who take special interest in children ministry.

Regarding social work, both men and women visit hospitals, to pray for the sick, to speak words of comfort to the needy patients and help them when needs arise. Certain churches invite beggars to the church premises once in a month, speak to them and give them a lunch after praying for them. Pastors advise the believers to give their used clothes or unused ones to give to the poor and needy. During the Tsunami period pastors and believers went in vans, buses with food items, mats, vessels and clothing and gave to the victims, showing Christ is love in action.

- **They are given training to conduct cell group meetings.**

Training materials are prepared and the church pastor does give them instruction on how to conduct the cell group and care cell meetings. In the New Testament times church services were conducted in the homes and today the same method is followed in the name of cell groups. In the first century, the apostles, disciples and the members of the laity were used in the church and outside the church. Believers who live in different parts of the city or towns are given responsibility to cover certain areas, to invite their relatives, friends and others for cell group meetings. In each cell meeting conducted once a week, songs, prayer, testimonies preaching and fellowship are the main items. Cell groups have enabled to use the church members to proclaim the good news and as a result the Assemblies of God churches have grown rapidly.

- **They are used in witnessing.**

Jesus told the disciples regarding the coming of the Holy Spirit after His ascension to Heaven. He promised that the Holy Spirit would be with them and give them power to witness, starting from Jerusalem to all over the world. The apostolic church used the members of the laity in witnessing. Later Evangelism was followed by leaders of the church. Later church members who had burden to witness followed this method. In the Assemblies of God churches, members are encouraged to witness to people in their homes and outside wherever they meet people. An A.G pastor's, daughter in Kodambakkam a college graduate, used her free time witnessing to the people in the huts. Now she is married to a pastor and helps the church along with her husband.

Another believer, he drives the autorickshaw of the church. Whoever he meets in the autorickshaw or outside; he witnesses to them. Believers witnessing to people in their homes, work places and where ever they go have enabled for the growth of the Assemblies of God churches.

6:4 Concept of Prosperity doctrine:

Prosperity doctrine originated in the 1980's in the west and it attracted people who wanted to become rich without doing anything. Preachers who preached prosperity doctrine used certain scriptures, motivated the people emotionally and told people to give for the ministry of the evangelist and God would return to them many fold. Pastors too began to follow prosperity doctrine and asked the congregation to give and in return they would receive many folds. It has made certain leaders or preachers rich as they have convinced hearers to give. It has brought confusion among the hearers and made people to believe certain scriptures of the Bible only.

Pastor Caesar Castellanos has a large church in Bogotá Columbia. He writes in his book, *Successful Leadership* that, “Renowned leaders who fulfilled great visions never had as a motivation the economic aspect. On the contrary many of them died in poverty, but not until their dreams became reality and their names passed on to greatness”.¹¹ He believes that “when the vision has its priority the monetary aspect, than it is not a pure vision from Him because the Lord said that the economy aspect comes as a by-product of the vision”.¹²

The preachers of the prosperity doctrine use certain scriptures as their basis. e.g. “Beloved I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers” 3 John v2 (NKJV). “And concerning the works of my hands, you command me.” Isa. 45:11c.

John Wesley the founder of the Methodist denomination advised the people to work as much as they could, save as much as they could and give as much as they could. John Wesley was a great preacher; he didn't save any thing when he died except his preaching dress and a spoon and fork. When he died his last words were, “Above all God is great! Praise Him Praise Him”.¹³

The prosperity preachers ignore the warning regarding riches. They ignore especially the teachings and the humble lives of the leaders of the Christian churches. John Wesley warned the Christians regarding riches.

*I fear, wherever riches have increased, the essence of religion has decreased in the same proportion. Therefore I do not see how it is possible, in the nature of things for any renewal of true religion to continue long. For religion must necessarily produce both industry and frugality, and these cannot but produce riches. But as riches increase, so will pride anger and the love of the world in all its branches.*¹⁴

John Wesley gave precaution to the people regarding saving treasures on earth. “To lay up treasure on earth is as plainly forbidden by our Master as adultery and murder”.¹⁵

St. Augustine the great theologian didn't believe in acquiring of worldly goods. “We do not realize how much we are attached to the good things of the world until they are taken away from us”.¹⁶

Preachers, pastors and evangelists use the following sentences in order to bring interest in the hearts of the hearers regarding prosperity.

*He is! and He has! say heralds of the gospel of success. Any one can and should believe and achieve... confess and possess... claim and obtain... one is limited only by one's lack of faith. You can have anything if you believe it.*¹⁷

They also use words such as, “God's hands are filled with dollars and diamonds for his kids. He never meant them for the Devil's offspring. So release your faith and help yourself”.¹⁸

The Assemblies of God international does not agree with the prosperity doctrine, preached during the past thirty years (1970 - 2000). The Tamilnadu Assemblies of God rejects this doctrine for the following reasons.

- **It is over emphasized:**

The protestant and Catholic churches have a calendar planned for the whole year. Pastors or priests follow the text for a particular week and preach accordingly. Pastors who follow prosperity doctrine emphasize prosperity often. A doctor from Kodaikanal goes to Chennai often and used to attend a church on Sunday evening. She got disgusted since the pastor was preaching every week regarding giving money to the church to receive prosperity. Preachers use words such as “You are king’s child, so you must live like a king”. In Europe people who attended seminars and were upset since prosperity doctrine has been over emphasized and they don’t want to attend conferences any more. “A growing number of Christians today... recognize that the doctrine that equates redemption with rags... to riches is seeded with deception”.¹⁹

- **It is unbalanced:**

Preachers who emphasize prosperity doctrine follow certain verses from the Holy Bible to drive their thoughts in the minds of the hearers. Any teaching from the Bible must have a balanced teaching. “The rags to riches prophets dangle the promise of material blessings as an enticement to follow Christ, and prosperity as the birth right of all Christians”.²⁰

The Old Testament teaching on prosperity is conditional. In the Garden of Eden, God blessed Adam and Eve and told them to till the ground and have dominion over the earth. Blessing was given and prosperity was based on obedience, effort and work – Gen 2:15. God blessed Isaac. The Bible says, “Then Isaac sowed in that land, and reaped in the same year a hundred fold, and the Lord blessed him” Gen 26:12 (NKJV). In order to have a good yield, the soil, the seed, the sower, the season and the Sovereign act of God are needed. The right type of soil, preparing the ground, good seeds, the sower to sow the seeds properly and to take care of it, the season and the sovereign act of God bring the good results. Preachers they use one portion of the scripture to receive hundred folds which is unbalanced.

Jesus in his teaching said, “to, consider the birds of the air, and the lilies” Matt.6:26, 28. The lilies have the bulbs (root or seed looks like a bulb, which has the potentiality to produce its kind and the birds have to work each day to gather food) from this God warns His people to use their potentiality and work hard following the above examples.

Apostle Paul, he gave up everything to follow Jesus Christ. He suffered poverty, famine, nakedness and countless suffering in his life - 2 Cor 11:27. He was a tent maker to meet his needs. "Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities" Acts 20:34 (NKJV). He admonished the Thessalonica church believers not to eat if a person would not work. "If any one will not work neither shall he eat" 2 Thess 2:10 (NKJV).

Struggles in life and prosperity go side by side. This is the scripture teaching and the followers of prosperity doctrine hold only prosperity but not the struggles or poverty in life.

- **It misleads people:**

Prosperity doctrine misguides people for no reason. The world has no answers for the quest "why the righteous suffer?" The book of Job gives the answer for such question. God blessed the later life of Job and he received two fold blessings. Before that he had to lose 11,000 animals, 10 children (7 sons, 3 daughters), his health, and happiness. He was ridiculed by his friends and was asked by his trusted wife to curse God and die. Job chap-1. People misunderstand the Bible teaching regarding poverty and prosperity which are given in the Holy Scriptures. People who believed in prosperity doctrine and gave their property and later when they didn't receive the expected prosperity; they have gone away from their faith. Dr. Victor F. Frankls suffered a lot in the concentration camp in Germany. He believes that there is a meaning and purpose in suffering. "To live is to suffer, to survive is to find meaning in the suffering. If there is a purpose in life at all there must be a purpose in suffering and dying".²¹

- **It gives false hope:**

A person should not preach the good news or messages from the Bible, telling people that if they accept Christ or believe prosperity teaching, would become prosperous in no time. In a prosperity meeting hold in a hall in Kodaikanal on a banner it 'was written, "come and attend this meeting, you will receive prosperity instead of poverty". A non Christian went inside the hall with a hope to receive a financial blessing. The preacher asked the congregation to give free will offering, for a van he needed for the ministry. The non Christian left the hall at once with a sad face, saying, "How can he help me when the preacher himself is asking for donation?"

- **It brings disastrous results:**

People are diverted from their faith from God's word. It leads them to faith confession which rejects praying to God for the needs. Jesus taught to pray for the daily bread. God's word is spiritual food for the soul "man shall not live by bread alone but every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" Matt.4:4. Healing is children's bread Matt.15:26. God's blessings are needed even for one's daily bread for which Jesus said to pray. So when people don't respect God's word, it will bring disastrous results. Families have been separated.

Faith in the Lord Jesus has been diverted. Prosperity preachers become the idols, leading people toward themselves than the God of the Bible. The Assemblies of God Tamilnadu believes Bible teaching on prosperity provided people follow the commandments of God carefully. God's blessings in the scriptures are conditional. Prayer is offered for various things such as to come out of poverty, suffering and sickness. People are taught to pay the tithes, have a proper budget, work hard, save some money and believe God for miraculous support.

There are so many theories such as pluralism, exclusivism, inclusivism, relativism and syncretism, among the religious and non religious people. The Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu believes in exclusivism, which believes in only one faith or religious belief. However the A.G of Tamilnadu respects other religions and adapts Indian culture. It also believes that there are ethical truths found in other religions and the unique truth is in Christ alone.

In evangelistic meetings topical and expository sermons are preached based on the Bible, such as salvation, healing and deliverance. In the church services sermons are preached from the Bible. Topical, textual and expository messages are preached. It includes sanctification through the scriptures, soul winning and second coming. It is to build the believers in Christian maturity, witnessing for Christ in words and deeds, and preparing oneself for the second coming of Christ.

In the A.G churches, people who were born to believers, people who work in a particular place due to transfer and people, converted through the good news attend the church. All are considered as God's children, calling one another 'brother and sister'. They are treated equally regardless of their caste background. They are used in singing, praying, ministry among children, and involvement in social work. They are also given training to take care of cell groups and witnessing.

It is a doctrine originated in the 1980's. Certain evangelists and pastors preach to the people about prosperity and healing. They over emphasize positive confession and prosperity. The Assemblies of God international and AG Tamilnadu do not accept this doctrine. It is over emphasized and unbalanced. Preachers use one portion of the scripture to achieve the goal. It misleads people toward frustration and unbelief when things go contrary. It gives false hope and brings disastrous results. Prosperity in the Bible is conditional. The A.G churches use the scriptures to advise people to keep His commandments, work hard, pay the tithes and expect God's blessing in their personal and family lives.

End Notes: (Chapter VI) Theological Analysis

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4. *Ibid.*, P.41.
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7. *Ibid.*, P.5-8.
8. *Ibid.*, P.9-13.
9. *Ibid.*, P.14-20.
10. Amirtharaj Nelson, *A New Day in Madras* (California: William Carey Lib, 1975), P.192.
11. Caesar Castellanos, *Successful Leadership through the Government of 12* (Hydrabad: Caxton Printers, 1998), P.21.
12. *Ibid.*, P.21.
13. Skerington wood, *John and Charles Wesley, Dowley, Eerdman's Hand Book to the History of Christianity*, (England: Lions publishing, 1977), P.447.
14. R. Stanley, *Better Everyday* (Vellore: Blessing, 2004), P.75.
15. *Ibid.*, P.75.
16. Florence Bulle, *The Many Faces of Deception* (Secunderabad: OM Books, 2005), P.24.
17. *Ibid.*, P.26.

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18. Ibid., P.24.

19. Ibid., P.24.

20. Ibid., P.24.

21. Dr. Victor. F. Franks, *Man's search for Meaning* (Washington: Square Press, 1963), P.13.

CHAPTER VII

COMMUNICATION ANALYSIS OF EVANGELISM OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD CHURCHES IN TAMILNADU

This chapter deals with the communication analysis of evangelism. Communication has played a prominent role in evangelism and church growth. Preaching, teaching, witnessing, singing, using television, radio, video programs, drama, love feast and counseling are used to communicate the good news to people effectively.

Ken states the following regarding communication:

*The uniqueness of the Christian gospel rests in the fact that God communicated to humans through the Lord Jesus Christ. This being true, communication is one of the basic issue to grapple with for every Christian. Whether it be preacher in the pulpit, a pastor speaking to his people, an evangelist to his audience, a parent to children, or even a musician or an artist this becomes an integral part of one's ministry.*¹

7:1 Preaching:

It is a spoken communication based on the Bible to lead the hearers toward Christian maturity and successful living. Preaching is the main item in Sunday services and other meetings throughout the year. Jesus told the disciples, "to preach the gospel" Matt 28:19a. Paul wrote to Timothy, to "preach the word." 2 Tim 4:2a. In the Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu, believers and new comers attend to listen to preaching of the word. Preaching on salvation, healing, baptism in the Holy Spirit, sanctification, second coming and soul winning are the main topics. During the 1960's, Sunday evening was used to preach messages such as salvation and divine healing. Once or twice a year evangelistic meetings were conducted in the church campus or on open ground. Nowadays Sunday morning services are mainly for believers and sermons are preached according to the season and need. Throughout the year an A.G pastor preaches

more than 110 messages. Big churches have two to three services each Sunday and certain churches have five services. Pastor preaches the same message since different people attend each service. Pastors have been taught in the Bible College to prepare the sermons systematically, according to the occasion, and need.

Rev. Adam Durai has been pastoring the A.G church in Koilpatty for more than 40 years. He preaches well prepared sermons and people like his messages. He preaches the messages after much prayer, reading of scriptural passages, books, Holy Spirit's guidance and experience. The sermons are preached at least forty minutes to one hour. People listen and respond to the altar call. As a result, their lives are changed and they participate in various church activities and social work.

7:2 Teaching:

Jesus commanded the disciples to “*preach and teach*” (Matt.28:19a). Teaching is done with a purpose to build the believers in sound doctrine, healthy practices and involvement in ministry.

*A divine means of communication is the teaching and preaching of the word of God. It is God who has taught us to communicate. His method has become our method. Verbal symbols express the thought of God which are to hear and heed. We are to communicate with one another in every good thing. The art of communication is the supreme means of transmitting divine truths into mortal and unilluminated human minds.*²

In preaching people just listen, and in teaching believers are given time to ask questions. A black board or over head projector is used while teaching. A model is given below how notes are given for a particular subject.³

GIFTS

Text : 1 Corinthians 12:31

Theme : God's gifts in a believer's life

Christian Literature and Living www.christianliteratureandliving.com

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5 : 9 December 2009

Lawrence Jayabalan, Ph.D.

Evangelism and Growth of the Assemblies of God Churches in Tamilnadu, India

From 1989-2003

Title : Do you want spiritual gifts?

Ministers' and believers' depression they look at others, who are shining. They worry and ask, why we cannot shine? The word spiritual gifts come from "charisma" from the Greek word χαρισμα - gift. It cannot be earned, but freely given. A sign of relationship with God; which results in good behaviour.

The gifts are not owned by any one. When need comes expect God to manifest. Phanarosis "Παναροσις" – manifestation showing forth, making visible, or making known.

There are two views:

God gives certain gifts or gifts to certain people permanently. They quote 1 Cor.12:29-30. It leads to have pride and stagnation. Bennet The Holy Spirit and You P. 79. A lady said in England, that she had all the gifts. She didn't know that when the pastor preached it was Saturday and got angry said to him, how can you give your testimony on Sunday?

Difference between gifts and fruits:

"The gifts of the Holy Spirit are various ways in which the power of God, works through the life of the believer. The fruit of the Holy Spirit is character and nature of Jesus Christ being shown in the life of the believer." Ibid. P.80.

Gifts Divine – Giver - one person – streams are many – source is one – one river but many branches.

I. branches: What are the Gifts?

Three streams of gifts in the Bible:

- Romans 12:6-8 – Seven gifts – God the Father gives.
- 1 Cor.12:1-11(7-11) – Nine gifts – counselor, the Holy Spirit gives.
- Eph 4:12-13 – five gifts – Saviour Christ gives.

Sl. No	God the Father Rom.12:3-9	Holy Spirit the Comforter 1 Cor.12:1-11	Christ the Saviour Eph.4:12-13
1.	Prophecy – Rom 12:6	Revelation gifts: WORD OF WISDOM –Future, past present.	Apostles - feet
2.	Service – V7	WORD OF KNOWLEDGE – Past, present	
3.	Teaching –V7	Faith – power gifts to stop rain, to walk on water	Prophets – heart
4.	Counseling – V8	Healing – power gifts	Evangelists – hands
5.	Giving – V8	Miracles	
6.	Authority – V8 (Leadership)	Prophecy – vocal utterance. Discerning of spirits	Pastors – head
7.	Sympathy – V8	Tongues, Interpretation – Vocal utterance	Teachers – leg
	God gives	We speak through the Holy spirit	Christ makes.

The seven gifts of God: Explanation – Rom.12:3.

- (1) Prophecy: Inspired preaching - Revealing God's truth – a word from God – Rom. 12:6.
- (2) Service: Working in the background, taking care of little things while no one sees. Like an internal organ. Rom.12:7.
- (3) Teaching: Special gift to explain the scriptures in God's knowledge – Read the text – context. Rom.12:7.
- (4) Counseling: Helping Christians and others, giving them the right advice. Rom.12:8.
- (5) Giving: Ability to make more money in the right way – giving for His ministry. E.g. a believer refused to pray or preach but was willing to sponsor a convention. Lk.8:3.

(6) Authority: Gifted to lead others Rom.12:8– Leadership “Look behind and see whether some one follows you.” Maxwell.

(7) Sympathy: Not only with words, but with personal spirit. Rom.12:8.

Gifts of the Holy Spirit: Divided into three.

(1) Gifts of Revelation - Knowledge – Omniscience of God.

1. Word of wisdom: Bezeliel art – Joseph - Interpretation of Dream. 1 Cor.12:8: Daniel’s – Dream – Vision and Interpretation. Acts 16:6 Holy Spirit warns of danger; Reveals future 20:22; 21:11. God can reveal by word, dream, and prophesy.
2. Word of knowledge: Past, present Acts 10:19; 1 Cor.12:8.
3. Discerning of Spirits: 1 Cor.12:10; God’s spirit – Matt 16:16-17; Man’s spirit - Matt 16:7; Devil’s Spirit – Matt 16:23.

(2) Power gifts: Actions – Demonstration – Omnipotence.

- a. Faith – 1 Cor.12:9 extraordinary – to stop the rain, Acts 3:5, 7 – God uses one’s mind, mouth, and hands.
- b. Gifts of healing –1 Cor.12:9; Acts 5:12, 15; 19:11-12. God uses one’s mouth and hand.

(3) Vocal gifts: speech – inspiration – Omnipresence, called fellowship gifts – the power to say.

- a. Prophesy: 1 Cor.12:10 - In a known language or by tongue and interpretation given to the congregation – present – future. 1 Cor.14:3, 24; Deut 13:1-3; 18:23.
- b. Speaking in tongues: Message known in a foreign language – different than at the baptism of the Holy Spirit. 1 Cor.12:10

c. Interpretation of tongues: 1 Cor.12:10 giving the interpretation in the known language of the congregation. Speaking in tongues and interpretation were not in the O.T times.

II. Why are they given?

- (1) Evangelism: Proclamation of the good news. Personal, mass, indirect – Acts 13:2; Acts 9:20–29.
- (2) Expansion : Church growth, out stations, and daughter churches. Acts 13:2
- (3) Edification: Acts 20:22-23; 21:10-11 Believers to be consoled, warned and led to maturity.
- (4) Eradication: to eradicate the evil from the church. Acts 5:1

III. How to receive them: When? Are they given?

1. Know them: don't be ignorant 1 Cor.12:1. Gifts of God – Rom 12:6-8 (seven gifts), Gifts of the Holy Spirit – 1 Cor.12:1 (nine gifts), Gifts of Christ – Eph 4:12 (five offices).
2. Given for common purpose: 1 Cor 12:7.
Salvation, Holy Spirit baptism, water baptism (immersion) are main key to receive. Moses put the hand in the bosom – leprosy. When he took his hand out, it became normal. Gifts are for common purpose not for personal gain.
3. Gives according to His will: 1 Cor 12:11.
4. Seek the important gifts: 1 Cor 12:30-31.
Know your ministry, need etc. Apostles – multiple gifts, Teacher – word of wisdom, Pastor – word of knowledge. Prophet – discerning of spirits, Evangelist – miracles. Certain leaders are given many gifts.
5. Love is the greater key: 1 Cor 13:1; 12:31.
Salvation, Baptism of water and spirit – prerequisite
6. Gift operates while praying or going for prayer: Acts 3:1

Seeking God's presence. Make prayer a daily routine.

7. Gift operates while, fasting, worshiping and waiting for ministry: Acts 13:1

Learn to listen to God.

8. Gift operates while preaching: Acts 13:9-12 or witnessing.

9. Gifts a divine function – an office: Acts 21:10-11.

Given while laying on hands, no organization leaders, committee can give. It is from God alone. Education, status, money is not the prerequisite.

IV. Gifts of CHRIST – Five Offices: Eph 4:11-12, 13, 14, and 15.

They are like five fingers.

☞ Faith in Christ – knowledge of Him – in depth

☞ Perfecting of Saints – maturity

☞ Ministry of the gospel – proclamation

☞ Edification – correction

☞ Right teaching – doctrine – no childishness

1. Apostles: “Feet” Represent the feet

Apostolos ἀποστολος – sent out for a particular place, time, and purpose. To preach the gospel, establish, uphold – Rom 1:1. Definition - 11:13 to gentiles. Sign of an Apostle – 2 Cor 12:12; 1 Cor 4:9; 15:9.

False Apostles:

Doing things contrary, blaming true Apostles - 2 Cor 11:12, 13; their end – 2 Cor 11:5; Acts 15:24; warning – Rom 16:17 bring division, hindrance, they work for the sake of money. Test them – Rev 2:2; 4-5 precaution.

2. Prophets – προφητης – Chosen called “Heart” “represent the heart”

Christian Literature and Living www.christianliteratureandliving.com

5 : 9 December 2009

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Evangelism and Growth of the Assemblies of God Churches in Tamilnadu, India

From 1989-2003

Man of God - Deut 33:1. God's word in him 2 Kings 3:12. Holy man 2 Kings 4:27 Ready to die for God. Bridge builder, e.g. Isaiah, Jeremiah – Minor Prophets – Deut 18:15. Prophet like Moses chosen of God, trained of God, and used of God – Josh 1:1, 2, 5; Matt 10:4; 2 Kings 5:13. Prophet speaks, and it happens. Luke 24:19.

False prophets:

Jeremiah 23:11 hypocrisy, 13 - foolishness, work for money – Micah 3:11; 2 Kings 5:26; 1 Kings 17:9; 2 Pet 2:1. Jesus' warning – Matt.7:15-22; 24:11; Lk.6:26.

3. Evangelists: “Hands”: Matt 28:19-20.

Preacher of the good news – Mark 16:15; 1:1. Greek “ε'ναγγελιον” – victory in the battle, Kings birth, accession to the throne, oracles from deities, deliverance from demons. Good news to all – Gospel to each one. Preach, Baptize, Teach – out come – 1 Thess 1:9, 10.

(a) True worship, (b) Repentance, (c) Serving God, (d) Expect 2nd coming.

Philip a layman, believer, soulwinner, and evangelist – Acts 8:12. Kingdom, Jesus – Faith, Baptism, Deliverance, Joy V7-8; Acts 21:8 Evangelist's reward 1 Cor 9:14, 16. 2 Tim 4:2-5 – WORD, JESUS, CROSS – second coming, Holy Spirit, Holy Life.

4. Pastors: Shepherd “Head” Ποιμην

The work of a good shepherd one who cares, a true leader – Psa.23: a guide, provider, protector, judge, and rewarder.

True Shepherd endures all trials – 2 Cor.6:4-10. Good Steward – 1 Cor 4:1-2; with many qualities – 1 Tim 3:1-5; 4:12, 16, Follows Christ – John 12:26.

False Shepherd - Ezek 34:2-4.

5. Teachers: “Leg” One who expounds, Teaches the word.

A Pastor could be both, best teacher Jesus: Matt28:19; Mark 1:22; Matt 5-7; Holy Spirit anointing needed– John 14:26; 1 John 2:27; V20.

Warning: Jam. 3:1; 1 Tim 4:1 – 3.

False Theology – denying the Bible truths.

God not only saves people but also gives them His power to live for Him and lead others to Him. God the Father gives seven gifts and Jesus the Son of God gives five offices and the Holy Spirit gives twelve gifts mentioned already. If you are a child of God, you can go to the throne of grace, and ask God to give you His gifts to use you in the harvest field. You do not need any recommendation to receive the gifts from the Triune God.

7:3 Witnessing:

It is one person telling another person the Good News of Jesus Christ. D.T. Niles said, “It is one beggar telling another beggar where to get food.”⁴ Witnessing method is used in house visits, hospital, and while meeting people in various places. It is carried through testimony, encounter or dialogue. It requires at least two people the witness and the listener. As the witness presents the good news, a listener may, listen or may not respond.

Certain guidelines are given to those who witness:

*** Allow the listener to speak:**

A witness may approach a person with a smile or greeting. Witnessing should not be a one way process. One must spend time to listen. It helps to understand a person.

*** Appreciate the listener:**

If the listener speaks about his or her religion, appreciate the good things found in any religion. Then explain what Christianity offers to the whole world through Jesus Christ.

*** Allow the Holy Spirit to minister:**

It is God who can convince a person through the power of the Holy Spirit. While using the word of God along with the testimony or incident, the Holy Spirit knows how to deal with any person. So the prime duty of a witness is to sow the seed and pray for the listeners to come to God.

Ziegenbalg a Lutheran, a missionary from Germany came to Tenkasi in Nagapattinam area Tamilnadu in 1706. He translated the New Testament in Tamil, a great contribution, rendered to the Tamil speaking people. “The completed New Testament appeared in 1714.”⁵ He believed in definite and personal conversion. He witnessed to people personally who came to see him in his house. He also witnessed to people wherever he went. Witnessing is done by the Assemblies of God, pastors, cell groups leaders and members of the laity. Seminars are conducted to born again believers, how to witness to individuals, in homes, and other places.

7:4 Singing, T.V, Radio:

Singing:

Singing is a part of any church meeting. King David was a singer and the Psalms of David are used in praise and worship. The words from Psalms are composed as scripture choruses and sung, during Sunday and other services. J.B. Philips says, that “There is a God shaped vacuum in every one of us, a vacuum that only God can fill... worship is a way to fill that place with us.”⁶

The Tamil songs are composed by A.G pastors or believers and sung in Indian tune and style. Praise and worship take place for half an hour at the beginning of the Sunday service. Later after the sermon is over, some time is spent in worshipping God through singing. A particular sister goes to the Rose of Sharon A.G church in Kodambakkam, where more than 3000 people gather for service every Sunday. She travels by there different town buses since she likes the worship service.

T.V:

Today television plays a prominent role in the houses of rich and poor people. There was a time when poor people could afford only Black and White T.V. Through the cable T.V so many Christian programmes are telecast every day. The Dhoor Dharshan telecasts Christian programmes during Christian festival seasons. There was a time pastors and believers were afraid of keeping a T.V at home. Mainly films and T.V stories, have bed scenes, death scenes, crying and laughing, drinking and dancing, hugging and kissing, shooting and looting, violence and vengeance. Certain parents used to direct their children to watch the right type of programmes.

“Jesus” a movie produced by campus crusade, and other movies have made a great impact in the minds of young and old. The A.G pastors, use T.V, preaching good news messages, varieties of singing programmes and other useful programmes. A particular young man gave his life to Jesus Christ, while watching a Jesus movie and now he is studying in the A.G. Tamilnadu Bible College, Madurai.

Radio:

Before the T.V, took prominent place in the homes, Radio was the one, middle class people were able to possess, in the sixties. The Far East Broad Casting Association through the Christian programmes penetrated in the houses of Christians and others. Different language group people were able to listen to good programmes in different hours.

Although there is no Christian broadcasting from stations within India, more than 20 studios prepare programmes for broadcasting by TWR Sri Lanka and Guam (24 languages), FEBA Seychelles (18 languages and 250 programmes a week) and FEBC Manila (4) weekly there are 295 hours of broad casting in a total of 35 languages. TWR broad castes in the early morning have gained an audience of millions.⁷

The Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu, sponsored every Monday morning a Tamil programme named, Paripoorana Jeevan (Abundant life). It was a fifteen minutes

programme. There was a special song and a dialogue between Babu and Raju and finally a gospel message and prayer for six minutes. For more than thirty years (1968 – 98) it made an impact upon the Christians and non Christians.

7:5 Video programmes – Drama – Love Feast:

Video Programmes:

It is one of the effective communication methods used from the 1980's. Christian programmes were shown in the A.G churches among the children, youth and adults. A Catholic father asked an A.G pastor, "If you think that the T.V programmes are filled with filth and violence, what good programmes do you offer to your children in the church?" That question made an impact and the pastor bought video tapes such as, Bible, Ten Commandments, Babel, Esther, Joseph, Joshua, Daniel, Jesus (Karunamoorthy) and other Bible stories. He lent those tapes to churches and homes. People have been blessed by watching biblical stories.

Drama:

Drama is conducted once a year or during special occasion. Before the cinema took its role, Drama was a popular one in Tamilnadu and other states. In the 1930's, a group of young people from a protestant church acted the story of Esther. A Muslim who saw the drama, told the incident in the 1990's to one of the actor's son, how he was blessed by the drama.

The drama named, "Heaven's gate and Hell's fire" by an evangelistic group from Goa, has been making a great impact among the Christians and others in parts of Tamilnadu. In 2004 the drama was conducted in the Tamukam grounds Madurai. Pastors, believers from A.G churches and other protestant churches acted in the drama.

The purpose of the drama is to bring into the minds of the viewers, the meaning of crucifixion and life's condition after death. It makes people to be cautious and determine to live for Christ till death.

The following are the few scenes from the drama given below:

An introductory message is given with in ten minutes:

God created us... in His image. In this world we all face issues in life. Hell was made for Satan and the evil spirits. Heaven has been created for God's people. The drama that you are going to see is about Heaven's gate and Hell's fire.

Scene: 1

Heaven's scene in its glorious light shinning. The white throne and the lamb's book of life are shown. On the earth Jesus carries the cross, and He is beaten and mocked by the soldiers. The mob also joins shouting to crucify Him. The devil is so happy, laughs at Jesus, while Christ is crucified and His death on the cross. The devil thinks that every thing is over. But to his disappointment, Jesus rises again and the devil runs. Jesus holds the keys of hell and heaven.

The scripture from the Bible, "*The lamb's book of life was opened*", is heard through the speaker. The sound system, colour lights, and heaven's scenes make the audience to be spell bound. Every moment is filled with wonder and expectation.

Scene: 2

An old lady with a hunch back, walks with a stick, thanking God in praises and prayer. Suddenly she feels some pain in her heart and collapses. When she wakes, she is in heaven's gate. She looks very young and rejoices, since she is no more a hunch back. Her name is in the lamb's book of life. The angel smiles at her, waves the hand, and the lady enters heaven. Jesus stands before the lamb's book and takes her to heaven.

Scene: 3

Two teen age girls enjoy hippie songs and talk with one another. A young man joins them and tells them not to believe in heaven, hell or lamb's book of life. He shows a small book before them and writes their names. He introduces drugs and the effect of LSD. They both inject LSD and feel as if they are in heavenly place. Suddenly both of them have stomach pain and collapse. They both stand before heaven's gate, cry and regret for not responding to the Good News of Jesus. They cry for another chance so that they could live a holy life. The devil appears and says that he was the one who made them to live a careless life, using the drugs. The young man who gave drugs to the girls pleads with the devil that he obeyed listening to his voice. The devil says that he is the father of lies and he takes him to hell along with the girls.

Scene: 4

Two men are traveling in an aeroplane. Both of them are friends. One person is a believer and another nominal Christian. They both have a time of conversation. While in the plane both die and stand before the throne. One person is seen at the right side and the other the left side. The devil comes to take the nominal Christian to hell since his name is not found in the lamb's book. The believer at the right side remembers the Good News meeting, the altar call, his hesitation and later how he gave his life to Christ. Now with joy he enters the heaven's gate.

Scene: 5

Four people travel in a car and talk with one another. The four persons are from one family such as father mother son and daughter. They discuss about the boy who accepted Christ in the Sunday school and died later. The whole family enters a restraint. At this time another man and his son have a dialogue regarding sports. The boy wants to accept Christ but the father says, "Not now but later." Father is satisfied in the faith of

his wife for the whole family. This discussion takes place when they travel in a car. Meanwhile, the pastor's family too, travels after eating in a restaurant. Suddenly an accident takes place, a head on collision. The pastor's family stands before heaven's gate, and sees angels. They also see the son who died earlier. Jesus welcomes all of them and they enter heaven's gate. Whereas the other man, who was interested only in sports not listening to his son's plea to accept Christ, stands before heaven's gate. Now he remembers his wife's words, especially lamb's book and no hope. The devil takes him to hell.

Scene: 6

Two girls travel in a train. One girl witnesses regarding the love of Jesus Christ. But the other girl argues, criticizes the church people how they go to church on Sunday and go to liquor shop on Monday. The born again pleads with her to accept Jesus Christ. The other girl says that still there is time but not now. Suddenly they both die and are seen in heaven's gate. One girl is so happy since her name is found in the lamb's book. The other girl cries since she neglected her chance that God gave to her.

Scene: 7

A pastor's son who is a drunkard he drives the car in drunken mood, toward the level crossing. Suddenly there is an accident, car hits the train and he dies along with his friends. He goes to hell since his name is not written in the lamb's book.

Scene: 8

A drunkard laments while drinking. He utters his wife's name, who cheated him and ran away with an officer. After lamenting, he shoots himself and dies. He stands before heaven's gate, realizes his folly and doesn't want to drink anymore. He tells the angel that his grandma prayed for him. Though he is a graduate his name is not found in the lamb's book. Now the devil speaks, "I made your wife to run away from you, make

you to drink and shoot yourself. I only taught people to believe that man came from the monkey, and life ends at death.” The devil takes the drunkard to hell.

Scene: 9

Two contractors talk to one another, regarding their family, children and what type of food they eat. One person says that his wife makes very good food at home and now she is pregnant. He also says that his home is a university since he has many children. His friend asks him, that there is a spiritual food, which will be given to those who become the children of God. His friend tells him that he was a drunkard, who used to spend the salary within one day. Since he didn't have peace of mind, a friend took him to a church. The preacher spoke of God's love shown through Jesus Christ and finally, he went forward, confessed his sins and accepted Jesus Christ as his saviour. Finally the other friend who listens to the testimony accepts Jesus Christ, after confessing his sins. This takes place in the place where both do the construction work. Both kneel down and as they pray to God, the wall falls on them and they die and stand before heaven's gate. The angels show them that their names are written in the lamb's book and they enter heaven happily.

Scene: 10

A mother and her small daughter talk with one another, especially the dress bought in a shop by the mother. The girl thanks the mother and asks her to come to church. Mother tells that she is very busy and she will attend the church when there is a special function. While both talk and walk, suddenly they face death and stand before heaven's gate. Mother cries to the angel and asks regarding the lamb's book. She pleads that she has been a good lady, who used to give alms to the poor and needy. The devil takes the mother to hell even though her daughter pleads for her mother. The girl goes to heaven since her name is written in lamb's book.

The climax of the drama, the death and resurrection of Christ is acted. The scripture found in John 3:16 is quoted, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son that whosoever believes in Him, should not perish but have eternal life.” An altar call is given to the people to come forward to accept Jesus Christ. There is a very good response and many go forward for prayer. With this the drama ends.⁸

Love feast:

Love feast enables the believers who are members of the A.G churches and the new members to know one another while they eat and chat. Love feast is given during Christmas or New Year. Some churches give it every month. Whenever a cell group is started in a house, the casual service includes such as singing, testimonies and a short message. Later tiffin or supper is served to all. While eating believers will talk with the new comers and invite them to come next week. It paves the way to listen to their problems, visit their homes and pray for their problems. Since every one is given equal status, while sitting in the home or eating, people like such fellowship which gives them dignity and self respect. When cell group meeting is conducted in a particular home, the family takes the responsibility to provide food for the visitors.

7:6 Counseling:

Persons with problems are counseled by the pastors, church workers and believers. After listening to their problems, counseling is given and prayers are offered. People come out of stress, mental agony and physical ailment, since some one cares for them and gives them Bible centered advice, free of charge.

In a big A.G church people are advised to write the problems on a paper and give to the pastor. When pastors visit the houses of people, they find time to listen to the problems of the family or individual. Some A.G church people who have problems are asked to meet the pastor in his office in a particular time. Today, even family people are

not bothered to listen to one another's problem. People, when they confess their problems to some one who is trustworthy, become free from tension and depression, after counseling and prayer.

An A.G pastor in Chennai visited a particular home and while talking with the lady of the house asked her, "Have you eaten your meal?" At once she began to weep. Pastor asked her the reason for her cry. She said, that her husband never asked her whether she ate or not. Pastor counseled her, prayed for her and then met the husband gave him advise. Now the husband and wife attend the church and are happy at home.

Communication has played a prominent role in evangelism and church growth of the Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu. Preaching, teaching, witnessing, singing, television, radio, love feast and counseling are used for effective communication.

Preaching is a spoken communication based on the Bible to lead the hearers towards Christian maturity and successful living. Preaching is the main item in Sunday services and other meetings.

Teaching is done with a purpose to build the believers in sound doctrine, healthy practices and involvement in ministry. In preaching people just listen and in teaching believers have the privileges to ask questions. It is a two way relationship.

Witnessing is one person telling another person the goodnews of Jesus Christ. Witnessing method is used in house visits, hospital visits and while meeting people in various places. It is carried through testimony encounter, or dialogue. A witness must listen to the person when he responds, and appreciate the good things in their religion. A witness must depend upon the Holy Spirit to convince the listener.

Singing is a part of any church meeting. The Tamil songs are composed by A.G pastors or believers and sung in Indian tune and style. The words from psalms are composed in scripture choruses and sung during praise and worship hour, at the beginning of the service and after the sermon.

Television plays a prominent role in the houses of rich people and the poor people. Through the cable T.V so many Christian programmes are telecast every day. The A.G pastors, use T.V, as a channel, preaching good news messages, producing varieties of singing programmes and other useful items.

In the sixties the middle class people were able to possess a radio of their own. The Far East Broad Casting Association, through the Christian programmes penetrated in the houses of Christians and others. The Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu, sponsored every Monday morning a Tamil programme named Paripoorana Jeevan. For more than thirty years (1969 – 2002) it made an impact upon the Christians and non Christians.

Video programmes are an effective communication method which has been used from the 1980's. Christian programmes were shown in the A.G churches among the children, youth and adults.

Drama is conducted once a year or during special occasions. Pastors and believers from A.G churches have participated, in a drama named, "*Heaven's gate and Hell's fire*", in Madurai and other places. It made an impact in the hearts of believers and others.

Love feast enables the believers who are the members of the A.G churches and non Christians, to know one another especially while they eat and chat. Love feast is given during Christmas or New Year. In cell groups, conducted in houses, tiffin or

supper is served to all. It paves the way to listen to the problems of new comers, counsel and pray for them.

Persons with problems are counseled by the pastors, church workers and believers. After listening to their problems, counseling is given and prayers are offered. People come out of stress, mental agony and physical ailment, since some one cares for them and gives them Bible centered advice, free of charge.

End Notes: (Chapter VII)

1. Viggo Sogaard, *MEDIA in Church and Mission* (Bangalore: Theological Book Trust, 1998), P.1.
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5. Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, (England: Penguin Books Ltd, 1975), P.229.
6. Jack W. Hayford, *Worship His majesty*, (Secunderabad: Ban Publishing, 2000), P.9.
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8. Heaven’s gate and Hell’s fire – *A Tamil Drama* (Madurai: Tamukam ground Auditorium), 10.09.2003.

The researcher saw the drama two times and took short notes while sitting and watching.

CHAPTER VIII

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND RECONSTRUCTION OF EVANGELISM CONCEPTS OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD CHURCHES IN TAMILNADU

This Chapter includes the following:

The analysis and misunderstandings and constraints in evangelism:

- It is regarding the concepts of Christians from mainline churches about the evangelism of Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu.
- It is regarding the non Christians, what they think about evangelism done by the Assemblies of God of Tamilnadu.
- It is regarding what the fanatics think about evangelism of the Assemblies of God churches in Tamilnadu.

The qualitative concepts of evangelism and growth of the church:

- * People's lives have been changed as a result of evangelism.
- * The change of the attitude of an individual as a result of evangelism.
- * The work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the people as a result of evangelism.
- * It enables to love God and love their neighbour.
- * It has led toward growth of the church, as well as nation building.
- * A citizen free from drinking, drugs and debt is an asset to the family, society and nation.

The analysis of high levels of evangelism:

- * Evangelism has moved people toward self realization and self surrender.
- * Examples are given such as the Samaritan woman, and Philip a member of the laity who became an evangelist.

8:1 The analysis and misunderstandings and constraints in evangelism:

During the 1970's as the Assemblies of God churches were slowly growing, the evangelistic meetings were conducted on open grounds. People from various denominations attended such meetings. In the meetings, salvation, and divine healing were mainly preached. After the meetings nominal Christians came forward for born again experience and healing of the bodies. When they experienced God's power, they attended A.G churches for spiritual food. The main line church pastors were upset and in certain places, teachers were transferred or warned that, they would lose their jobs. Certain Christians attended the main line church in the mornings and the A.G churches during the evenings. So the A.G churches were blamed and were called, "Sheep stealers" or "taking the fishes from the boats." On the other hand certain pastors in main line churches did not believe the inspiration of the Bible. Their emphasis had been to fight for the right and to believe that Jesus Christ is present in other religions. In a particular theological seminary in order to contextualize the Holy Communion, idly and rasam (pepper water) were used instead of wafer and grape juice. The God fearing Christians in the main line churches hated such practice and they joined A.G churches.

★ Influence of anti Christian groups on non-Christians. (18.64%)

People who thought that Christianity is a growing force, instigated the non Christians through books, pamphlets, and public meetings.

Just as in the first millennium the cross was planted on the soil of Europe, and in the second on that of the America and Africa, we can pray that in the third Christian millennium, a great harvest of faith will be reaped in this vast and vital continent.¹

Arun Shourie's in his book, "Harvesting our souls" motivate the readers to reconvert the Christians and others into Hinduism.

★ **Christianity as a western Religion. (21.59%)**

Christ was born in Asia and the gospel of Christ was introduced by Apostle Thomas in the first century A.D.² The gospel was brought to India in the 17th century A.D by the western missionaries. India is a soil where many religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism and Jainism, originated. It is a country of people who follow Monotheism, Pantheism, Polytheism, Animism and Atheism. The culture of India is mixed up. Indians who like to go abroad for studies and work, and many are living in foreign countries following their religion and adapting a mixed culture. The anti Christians don't bother people who go abroad and follow a mixed culture. But blame Christianity, as a western religion.

★ **Anti Christian propaganda of political leaders. (18.19%)**

Christians are considered as enemies of other religions and culture. Christianity as the salt has helped for the growth of India in many ways. It was the missionaries, who helped to establish schools, medical colleges, hospitals and social centers. Some of the Christian leaders and missionaries motivated the Indians to fight for independence. An old student of St. Joseph's college in Trichy a non Christian was invited for the college function in 1969. He was a collector in Kerala and had great respect for that college. In his speech he said, *"I will never forget the love, work the Christian fathers."* The political leaders know the contribution of Christianity in India. But for their own gain they use anti Christian propaganda.

★ **Fear of India becoming a Christian country. (21.31%)**

The Christian population of India is not even 5% yet the anti Christian groups fear Christians. On the 18th Dec 2004 there was a meeting conducted in Dindigul by the Hindu Munnani. The theme was *"If Hindus become a minority, what will be the fate of the Tamil people and the Tamil language?"* Certain Christian pastors, use the slogan in speech, song, and banners, "India for Christ", "Madurai for Christ" and so forth. Such

words have brought fear in the hearts of certain non Christians that India would become a Christian country.

★ **Anti Christians think that every Christian endeavour is for conversion purpose. (21.27%)**

They think that every Christian endeavour such as education, medical work and other evangelistic work are used for conversion purpose.

“Conversion is the main activity of church groups, it is their principal business.”³

The anti Christian groups misunderstand the Christian, social and spiritual work. They falsely interpret the reports, found in the magazines. Teaching children in the Sunday school or having an orphanage is misunderstood by them. They think that the seeds of conversion are planted in the children.

8:2 The qualitative concepts of evangelism and growth of the church:

★ **People’s lives have been changed as a result of evangelism. (19.81%)**

People who were not changed by the parents, teachers even the police, were changed by the power of the gospel. This work has been done by the Holy Spirit through the living word of God.

★ **A person’s life style is changed. (19.38%)**

People’s way of life has been changed as a result of evangelism. After accepting Jesus Christ as their personal saviour, people have stopped, drinking, gambling, smoking, and fighting at home.

★ **A fearful person becomes a cheerful person. (19.75%)**

People who have been fearful they became cheerful after finding peace in Jesus Christ. Since they found in Jesus Christ, the concern, care, and protection they are joyful. The indwelling presence of Christ through the Holy Spirit, gives them a sense of hope.

Christian Literature and Living www.christianliteratureandliving.com

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5 : 9 December 2009

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Evangelism and Growth of the Assemblies of God Churches in Tamilnadu, India

From 1989-2003

★ **A person realizes the value of life. (20.31%)**

People who were vexed in life wanted to die. Evangelism has helped them to come out of such foolish thinking. Since Jesus has given them peace of mind, hope for the present and future they realize that there is a life after death. So they consider their lives precious since Jesus gave His life for one and all.

★ **He or she is useful to the family society and nation. (20.75%)**

Jesus came to give life and hope to the world. The good news of Jesus Christ changed discourses people, and made them useful to their family and the society.

A mother who lost her, pancake (idly) business, wanted to jump in the sea at Chennai. She sat with her child, contemplating to commit suicide. She found a pamphlet and read the message and it gave her hope. She found the address of the pastor at the reverse of the pamphlet and met the A.G pastor in Ayanavaram and told her story. The pastor spoke to her about Jesus Christ prayed for her and gave her 50 rupees and told her to start her business again. Later she was able to make money, attends the church regularly and she is prosperous now. A citizen free from drinking, drugs, debt, and guilt is an asset to the family, society and nation.

8:3 The analysis of high levels of evangelism:

★ **Evangelism has moved people toward self realization and self surrender.**

In the Apostolic church the Christians lived an exemplary life. People who forsook their wives, began to live with them without any dispute. People who were greedy of their riches, now shared their goods with others.

“Those who murdered and would not live with men of another tribe now prayed for their enemies. Earnings were placed in a common fund to care for widows, orphans, the aged and the shipwrecked.”⁴

People who were considered as downtrodden, formed their new identity in Jesus Christ. Through the Bible they have found that they are God's children, created in His image and likeness. It enabled them to formulate a new consciousness and identity. Their, "identity was shaped by the relationship with Christ and fellowship with fellow believers locally and universally."⁵

High levels of evangelism – an example from the story of Samaritan woman found in John's gospel chap-4.

Samaria was built by Omri, "a new capital, on a hill 11 km North West of Shechem."⁶ He purchased the land for 2 talents of silver. He named it after its owner Shemer - 1 Kings 16:24.

King Ahab built a house, decorated it with ivory -1 Kings 22:39. His wife Jezebel encouraged Baal worship and King Ahab set up a pillar near the altar. "Samaria itself was long considered by the prophets a centre of idolatry."⁷

The gospel of John states that Jesus had to go through Samaria, a forbidden place for the Jews. Samaria was in between Galilee in the North and Judea in the South of Palestine. It took three days to go to Galilee through Samaria. A Jew would cross, Jordan and go to Judea and it would take six days to travel.

In 720 B.C Assyrians invaded Northern Kingdom of Samaria and captured it. The ten tribes of Israel from Samaria were transported to Media (2 Kings 17:6). People from Cuthah, Ava, Hamath, and Sepharvaim were brought to Samaria - 2 Kings 17:24. The remaining people of Samaria intermarried with foreigners. It was an unforgivable crime for a Jew to marry a non Jew. Funeral service was conducted for such people who intermarried.⁸

The two tribes, Benjamin and Judah were taken as captives to Babylon in 580 B.C. They never lost their identity in a foreign country. During the time of Ezra and Nehemiah they returned to Jerusalem.

They began to rebuild the temple and the Samaritans came to help but were refused. There was hatred between the Jews and the Samaritans in 450 B.C and it existed even during the time of Jesus. A particular Jew married a Samaritan woman and found a rival temple on Mt. Gerezim in the centre of Samaritan territory. In 129 B.C a Jewish general destroyed it. So the hatred between the Jews and the Samaritans became worse.⁹ Jesus who came to seek and save that was lost, met the Samaritan woman who needed the grace of God for her salvation.

There are three levels of evangelism found in the conversation Jesus had with the Samaritan woman:

★ Jesus touched her personality (σῶμα ‘soma’ in Greek “body”) John 4:4-9.

A Jew to talk to a woman on the street was intolerable. “Jewish rabbis were not permitted to speak to woman in the street and considered any conversation with women to be a hindrance to the study of the Torah.”¹⁰

By talking to the Samaritan woman Jesus broke the religious, social and cultural barrier.

She was a lonely woman, rejected by her community. Women usually fetch water in the morning or in the evening and they would go in a group. But she went alone to fetch water at the 6th hour (12, O’ clock) noon time. Jesus asked her a simple thing, “Give me water” John 4. By asking water Jesus made a rapport with her. To the Pharisee Nicodemus Jesus said, “You must be born again” John 3: Jesus approach is the best method people should follow in evangelism. She being a Samaritan woman saw Jesus as a rival (enemy). She atonce replied, “You are a Jew” V-9. Jesus replied her

saying, “Had you known that who asked you water, you would have asked him the water of life.” V-10 (NJKV).

For the Samaritan the word the ‘living water’, she atonce thought of Jacob’s well, which was a blessing to her forefathers and the community over the years V-11, 12. She was a lonely lady, spiritually thirsty, and Jesus said that he would offer ‘water’ that would quench the thirst. She atonce called him, “Lord”, V-15 asking for the water, so that she would “never thirst again.”

★ **Jesus touched her soul (mind) (σουκη “Sukee” in Greek “body”),**

The soul or mind is the place where the three faculties function. The intellect is to reason, emotion to feel and will to decide. Jesus asked her to bring her husband which touched her conscience. She responded immediately saying, “I have no husband.” She was clever. She did not know that “Jesus knew what was in man” John 2:24-25. Jesus explained to her regarding her past life that she had five husbands V-18. The Samaritan woman called Jesus saying, “I perceive that you are a prophet” V-19. When Jesus pointed to her regarding her personal life, she atonce shifted from personal life to spiritual life. She talked about her forefathers worship on the mountain V-20. Jesus began to talk to her about true worship V-21, worshiping God everywhere in spirit and truth.

★ **Jesus touched her spirit V.25-30 (Πνευμα in Greek Pneuma)**

After hearing from Jesus regarding the true worship, she began to enquire about, “Messiah” the Christ V.25. Jesus reveled to her that Jesus was the Messiah one who was talking to her. The Samaritan woman perceived the following:

She understood who Christ was – in the beginning of her speech she started with the word ‘you are a Jew’ V. She went step by step calling him, ‘Lord’ prophet V.15 and finally ‘Messiah, the Christ’ V.25.

She understood who she was – A lady who was bold and clever, left her pot and ran to her village. She spoke to the people saying, “One man has told all about me” V.29.

She understood her responsibility - she did not keep the inner conviction with in her self. Whereas she went and told her people and called them to come and see “Christ the Messiah.” V.29.

Witnessing must bring conviction in the mind of the hearers, and in response they should confess that Jesus is Lord. If we fail to witness God will use an insignificant person to bring others to Christ. “Then they came to Him.” V.28.

Witnessing to souls must be our first most priority than food and other things. Jesus refused to eat the food brought by the disciples and said, “my food is to do the will of my father who sent me” V.34. Witnessing comes to climax when the new convert witnesses for Christ. The Samaritan woman is an example. She brought the villagers to Christ V.39. Jesus laid the foundation for the gospel to be proclaimed in Samaria later Acts 8:4.

An example for the high levels of evangelism:

Jesus Christ told the disciples to preach the gospel to the individuals (Mark 16:15; Matt 28:18, 19) people, nations and every where (Acts 1:8). After the ascension of Christ, the disciples were happy in Jerusalem. The persecution scattered the followers of Christ and they proclaimed the good news wherever they went. Philip the member of the laity was one among them. The ministry in Samaria portrays the high levels of evangelism.

★ **Messenger:** The messenger who carried the good news to Samaria was, “Philip.” He was a man who helped the apostolic church. He was a man of faith, full of Holy Spirit, good report and wisdom - Acts 6:3, 5. He didn’t have any other title. There was no one to go with him to Samaria. He went all alone without any advertisement.

★ **Meeting place and people:** It was Samaria a place hated by the Jews, who had nothing to do with Samaria and the Samaritans. They were a mixed community who had Jewish and gentile blood. Jesus planted the gospel seed in the mind of the Samaritan woman and the people earlier– John 4:4, 39. Jesus told the disciples to be witnesses in Samaria after they were endued with the Holy Spirit – Acts 1:8. But they didn’t witness in Samaria after they received the Holy Spirit. Persecution made, Philip to go there.

★ **Message:** Philip went to one of the cities of Samaria and “preached Christ” - Acts 8:5. He also preached concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Christ - Acts 8:12. His message was biblical and a positive one. He didn’t attack the people. The scripture says that, “the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.” Acts 8:6 (NJKV).

★ **Methods:** He followed open air preaching, a mass evangelistic method – Acts 8:5. God used him to reach the mass with the power of the gospel. He was not satisfied in mass preaching alone. He was willing to go even to one individual. He had a divine guidance by the angel of the Lord and spirit of God – Acts 8:26, 29.

★ **Majesty:**

The majesty of evangelism is seen in the following:

- Unclean spirits came out of people. Acts 8:7a.
- “Many who were paralyzed and lame were healed.” Acts 8:7b.
- “And there was great joy in that city.” Acts 8:8.

- People believed the message preached by Philip. Acts 8:12a
- “Both men and women were baptized in water.” Acts 8:12b.

Philip is the best model for evangelists to follow so that people anywhere, will listen to the good news if it is done in positive method. Philip’s motive was to exalt Christ and obey the command of Christ, among the mass as well as individuals. He didn’t ask money or help from Samaria as well as from the Ethiopian Eunuch. After he baptized the eunuch, the spirit of God took him to another place. In the 21st chap in Acts, Philip is again mentioned, “Philip the evangelist” 21:8. His house became the lodging for the traveling disciples of Christ. “Philip” an evangelist had four young daughters who used to prophesy. The levels of Evangelism are summed up in the following:

The High levels of Evangelism:

*** Change of attitude: (19.81%)**

The Samaritan woman’s conviction and confession show that she was willing to have a change from her fast life. She wanted to experience the life giving water. She did not hate Jesus, when He said that she had five husbands before she had the sixth one.

*** Participation in social work: (20:31%)**

Philip the member of the laity went to one of the cities of Samaria. God used him to bring deliverance to the people who had demonic problem. The family who was affected mentally and socially would have been happy to see their loved ones set free from bonds. When people were healed, it would have set the family members free from financial obligations.

*** Involvement in nation building: (20:75%)**

Every citizen in a country is important, because each one is the son or daughter of the soil. The government has to protect each person, so that they would in turn be used in

nation building. A healthy citizen in mind and body is a great asset to the country. Philip brought joy to the city which would have brought peace and harmony.

Certain political leaders use anti Christian propaganda to gain votes from the non Hindus. Christians are considered as the enemies of their religion and culture. They fear that India will become a Christian country. The Christian population in India is less than 5%. Yet there is fear in them. The Anti Christians think that every Christian endeavour is for conversion purpose. They misunderstand, evangelism and the social work of any kind.

★ **The qualitative concepts of evangelism and growth of the A.G churches:**

People's lives have been transformed as a result of evangelism. It has been done by the Holy Spirit through the living word of God.

A person's life style is changed and as a result he or she has stopped, drinking, gambling, smoking and fighting at home.

A fearful person becomes a cheerful person. Jesus sets them free from the fear of disease, danger and death. It gives them, a sense of protection and hope.

A person realizes the value of life. Evangelism sets people from suicide feeling and gives them peace of mind.

He or she is useful to the family and nation. The good news of Jesus Christ has changed discouraged people and has enabled them, useful to their family society and the nation. A citizen free from, drinking, drugs, debt and guilt is an asset to the family society and nation.

★ **The analysis of high levels of evangelism:**

Evangelism has moved people toward self realization and self surrender. People who have been considered as downtrodden, found their new identity in Jesus Christ. The transformation that took place in the life of the Samaritan woman is an example for the high levels of evangelism. The Jews and the Samaritans had dispute, since the Jews hated the Samaritans who were a mixed race. The hatred existed even in the time of Jesus Christ.

The son of an A.G pastor from Tiruvannamalai, has been pastoring, an A.G church in Karur in Salem District, Tamilnadu. He proclaimed the good news among the high caste and the downtrodden people, since 1990. A particular young lady was very angry with the pastor since her relative accepted Christ and joined the church. He didn't retaliate but prayed for her. Her parents had failure in business and the pastor prayed for them and God blessed their business. As a result the young lady and the children accepted Christ and attended the services regularly. She brought twenty five, relatives to the church and has become an ardent believer in Jesus Christ.

One evening she was watching the T.V programme. There was an advertisement regarding a boy who was lost. His parents were crying since he was the only child. At once the young lady contacted them through the phone and prayed for them. She asked them that they should come and testify since God will answer the prayer. The son was found and he came with his mother to testify regarding the good news of God.

In the 1970's certain Christians from mainline churches joined the A.G churches for salvation experience and spiritual food. The A.G ministry was misunderstood by the mainline churches.

The non Christians, especially the orthodox people misunderstood evangelism done by the A.G churches. They have been instigated by the anti Christian groups through books, pamphlets and public meetings. Christianity is considered as a western religion. It was Apostle Thomas who brought Christianity to India in the first Century. Certain political leaders use anti Christian propaganda to gain votes from the Hindus. Christians are considered as the enemies of their religion and culture. They fear that India will become a Christian country. The Christian population in India is less than 5% yet there is fear in them. The anti Christians think that every Christian endeavour is for conversion purpose. They misunderstand, evangelism and the social work of any kind.

People's lives have been transformed as a result of evangelism. It has been done by the Holy Spirit through the living word of God. A person's life style is changed and as a result he or she has stopped, drinking, gambling, smoking and fighting at home. A fearful person becomes a cheerful person. Jesus sets them free from the fear of disease, danger and death. It gives them, a sense of protection and hope. A person realizes the value of life. Evangelism sets people from suicide feeling and gives them peace of mind. He or she is useful to the family and nation. The good news of Jesus Christ has changed discouraged people and has enabled them, to be useful in their family society and nation. A citizen free from, drinking, drugs, debt and guilt is an asset to the family society and nation.

Evangelism has moved people toward self realization and self surrender. People who have been considered as downtrodden, found their new identity in Jesus Christ. The Samaritan woman is an example for the high level of evangelism. The Jews and the Samaritans had dispute, since the Jews hated the Samaritans who were a mixed race. They hatred existed even in the time of Jesus Christ. Jesus went through Samaria and he had concern to talk to one woman who came to fetch water in Jacob's well. Jesus, by asking her, "*Give me to drink*" touched her personality and made a rapport with her. By

talking to the Samaritan woman, he broke the religious, social and cultural barriers. He touched her mind, made her to think, feel and decide regarding the 'water of life'. Later he touched her spirit, brought conviction in her inner being. Through evangelism, she found out, who she was. She also found, who Jesus was, and had a concern for her people. She brought the villagers to Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ commanded the disciples to preach the gospel to all the people, and all over the world. He promised to send the Holy Spirit, who would enable them to bear witness. The persecution made the believers to scatter every where and 'Philip' a member of the laity went to Samaria. His ministry in Samaria portrays the high levels of evangelism. Philip was the messenger who went to Samaria all alone. He went to one of the cities in Samaria and ministered to the Samaritans who had gentile blood. Philip preached 'Christ', and the kingdom of God which made people, listen to him. He preached to the people in public places. It was a mass evangelism method and he also followed personal evangelism. He was guided by the Holy Spirit to meet the Ethiopian Eunuch. People had been delivered from evil spirits and sick people were healed from diseases. There was great joy in that city. Believers were baptized in water. Philip is the best model for evangelists to follow. He went to Samaria as a member of the laity, later he was called, "Philip the evangelist." He was a person who was hospitable to visiting evangelists, and he had 4 daughters. They were gifted to utter prophetic message.

The Samaritan woman's attitude was changed. She had concern for her own people after meeting Christ. Philip a member of the laity preached Christ to the Samaritans. Through him people had been set free from demon possession and sickness. It was a blessing to the affected ones and the family members. Every citizen in a country is important person. A healthy citizen is an asset to the country. Philip brought joy to the city, which in turn brought peace and harmony.

End Notes: (Chapter VIII)

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