METHODOIST APPROACHES TO POWER EVANGELISM AMONG THE SHONA PEOPLE OF RURAL ZIMBABWE

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This research was carried out at Cliff College, Calver
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ABBREVIATIONS

NRSV  New Revised Standard Version

ZAOGA  Zimbabwe Assemblies of God, Africa
ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to ascertain the approaches of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe to power evangelism among the Shona rural people. The thesis also tries to discover why the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe is so controlling and does not have a theological position on issues relating to divine intervention and supernatural evil.

The researcher defines 'power evangelism' as the destruction of the so-called polluted objects: i.e., witchcraft, charms, fetishes, evil spirits, demonic possessions and barrenness. Power evangelism is the power of the Holy Spirit that is conveyed through God's message. As a result it brings the unsaved to God as they encounter the God of the supernatural. These demonstrations of God's power are focused on destroying Satan and his hosts. Hence, White thinks there is a special anointment given to those doing power evangelism.¹ Therefore, the research endeavours to find out the approaches used by the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe in addressing the above.

The researcher feels that the Methodist missionaries withheld some Wesleyan spirituality, as it seems that John Wesley recorded numerous miracles of healing, exorcisms and demonic encounters. Therefore, the research also revisits early Methodism. In dealing with these issues, the Methodist Church seems to take a circular approach rather than a spiritual one, employing education and medicine to eradicate the supernatural evil, because the approaches used were not relevant in meeting the needs of the people. Members turn to visiting the traditional doctors, African Initiated or Pentecostal churches when western medicines fail. Consequently, there is a call for power evangelism, following the footsteps of Jesus Christ, Church tradition and early Methodism, in an attempt to meet the needs of the Shona African people according to their world-view.

The conclusion of the research indicates that Methodist members are so open to power evangelism, and that power evangelism is not a subject of debate but a reality, especially among the Shona people.

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INTRODUCTION

To begin with, MacNutt observed something very important about African Christians. He says:

Many of the clergy not only do not exercise the deliverance ministry to which they have been called, but do not even believe in it. In Africa, I found that when someone was sick in a Christian hospital, the family was often allowed to call in a witch doctor to perform incantations over the patient.²

This fascinating statement shows that when the Church fails to provide what it is called for, its members resort to seeking help from outside the Church. It also indicates that the Church had lost its power to heal and exorcise, as mentioned in the Scriptures: '... while God added his testimony by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, distributed according to his will' (Heb 2:4). There is a need for the Church to practise what it is called for. Unless the Church takes a balanced approach in their services, Christians continue to live by double standards. Hence, O'Donovan echoes these sentiments: ‘There is a great need in Africa today for Christians to repent of all non-Christian beliefs and practices and to destroy the objects associated with these beliefs.’³

It is, therefore, of paramount importance to know that the Church that exists without giving some attention to the physical needs of its people is often helpless if it does not provide answers to problems, particularly of ill-health and supernatural disturbances, sought within a religious context.⁴ Hence, if not dealt with, Christians will continue to live by syncretism, as stated by Daneel regarding a woman who belongs to an Ethiopian Church:

When I am sick I go everywhere, to the nganga when I'm bewitched through a foot-trap, to the prophet if I wish to find out who poisoned me, and to the mission hospital for normal symptoms of illness.⁵

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² F. MacNutt, Deliverance from Evil Spirits (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen, 2009), pp. 62-63
The above statements prompted the writing of this thesis; hence the thesis title, 'Methodist Approaches to Power Evangelism Among the Shona People of Rural Zimbabwe.' The aim of the research is to endeavour to ascertain Methodist approaches to power evangelism among the Shona people with regard to early Methodism which the researcher feels is, or was, surrounded by power encounters. Since these issues are taking place in Africa, Zimbabwe is no exception, and neither is the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. Therefore, it is necessary to find out if the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe encounters the same problem of Christians going to traditional healers to seek help and the approach of the Church in response to the problem.

A full definition of power evangelism will be given in Chapter 3 of the thesis, since 'power is the key concept behind an understanding of healing in Africa.' However, in short, power evangelism is the ability in Christians to destroy the so-called polluted objects, that is, witchcraft, magic, spells or curses, demons, sorcery, or evil spirits. Shorter acknowledges this by saying, 'God is a God of power who enables the believer to live in strength: sickness and weakness have no place because they are directly linked with the powers of evil.' This shows that the power of God cannot be replaced by anything. On the other hand, whilst admitting that God is the God of power, it does not deny that it may be God's will for a Christian to suffer, especially when considering Paul's thorn in the flesh in 2 Corinthians 12:6-10.

**Significance of the Study**

The study of power evangelism, from an African perspective, is almost a virgin area because very little extensive academic work has yet been carried out, not only within the African context but even within the Methodist Church in general. Up to this date only a few books and articles relate to power evangelism and these are written by scholars from different fields of thought.

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In this respect, therefore, the first contribution this study makes is to attempt to offer an African flavour to the ongoing academic study on power evangelism and related issues by breaking the silence and provoking informed debate, especially in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe but also worldwide. The study will arouse the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe to revisit its origin, thereby penetrating and invading their sacred closed structure.

Eusebius says, 'Every sort of thing must necessarily be referred back to its origin.'⁹ What is meant by 'Methodism'? What is its origin? John Wesley mentioned that signs and wonders are even now wrought,¹⁰ meaning that 'Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever' (Heb 13:8).

There is a need to bring about an awareness that power evangelism is not just a phenomenon of John Wimber (1934-1997), the founder of the Association of Vineyard Churches, or one that is only associated with Pentecostal churches. Wimber emphasises power evangelism in which signs and wonders would occur, accompanied with 'spontaneous laughter and animal noises, such as barking and roaring, [which] erupted from the congregation, sometimes during sermons.'¹¹ Hence, the researcher feels that power evangelism resonates well with early Methodism and the supernatural experiences around John Wesley's work which, relevantly, links with the African Shona religious world-view, if what Ranger says is true that early missionaries often denied that Central Africa had a religion. Much missionary history tends to explain African reactions exclusively in terms of political or economic motivations or else in terms of a conspiracy of functionaries—witch-doctors, diviners, etc.—to protect their vested interests. The result was a history that was badly distorted on both sides.¹²

The inward-looking view of African Shona spirituality, which has been negated by the mission churches, needs to be addressed. The mission churches no longer inhabited the

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¹² D. Wrigley, Methodism and the Future Church: A Call to Action (Manchester: Renewal Publications, 1980), p. 3
world of spiritual cause and effect; for most the age of miracles and even of exorcism was dead.\textsuperscript{13} Besides, the African Shona world-view is deeply ingrained in the biblical story of both the Old and the New Testaments. In general, the growth of the churches in Africa may be attributed, to a greater extent, to the subject of power evangelism. Hence, this study seeks to answer the question of why the Methodist Church discourages and controls power evangelism when its people want that kind of enthusiasm in their services. Ranger gives a testimony to support this argument:

The touching strains of a Methodist hymn greeted us, sung by hundreds of women swaying and clapping hands. In the midst was a long line of women, sitting on the ground. All these women were barren. The prophetess, Mai Chaza, went along the line, touching, praying, squeezing their bellies. Headman Chiota claimed that sixty-eight once barren women were now expecting. All those who went for healing had to confess their sins, sometimes the acquisitive sins of the new middle class. On enquiry, Methodist missionaries found to their horror that Mai Chaza was a bloused Ruwadzano member from Kwenda circuit.\textsuperscript{14}

In fact, she wanted to make Methodism more African but this resulted in her leaving the Methodist Church and starting her own church. Nevertheless, it appears that the mission churches were not prepared to exercise spiritual power to combat the fear of barrenness or witchcraft.\textsuperscript{15} This aspect of understanding African Shona spirituality, within a given context, contributes to the study which, as previously mentioned, is a virgin area with regard to the study of power evangelism.

The research will assist in understanding why Methodist missionaries withheld some of the truth about the Wesleyan spirit as they spread the word of God as, if one reads the journals of John Wesley, there are records of miracles of healing, demons being cast out, people falling down, cries and groaning being heard, dreams and visions occurring, and many other things, all of which accompany power evangelism. Hence, there is this fear that, if something is not done, the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe will also decline, become more institutionalised and less dynamic, like the British Methodist Church.\textsuperscript{16}

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{13} Wringley, \textit{Methodism and the Future Church}, p. 12
\item \textsuperscript{14} T.O. Ranger, \textquote{Christianity and Central African Religions'} in T.O. Ranger & J. Weller (eds), \textit{Themes in the Christian History of Central Africa} (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975), p. 4
\item \textsuperscript{15} Ranger, \textquote{Christianity and Central African Religions'}, p. 12
\item \textsuperscript{16} Wringley, \textit{Methodism and the Future Church}, p. 13
\end{itemize}
This study, therefore, assists the Methodist Church to regain its dynamic heritage, thereby attempting to reconstruct a theology of power evangelism within the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe which has been 'lost' and which can also be used by other mainstream missionary churches who have failed to abandon the foreign theology they received around the twentieth century. Its liturgy is still more foreign rather than free worship. In *Methodism and the Future Church: A Call to Action*, there is a provoking statement which says, 'Perhaps we should rediscover a belief in miracles.' The comment was made at the Luton Conference, 'If we refuse to believe in miracles there won't be any.' Furthermore, through the researcher's reading for this study, he has discovered that power evangelism played a great role in John Wesley's ministry, whilst the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe seems to be far removed from it. Biologically speaking, the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe is a baby of the British Methodist Church; therefore, the research continues to refer to it. To make matters worse, on reading some of the books written by British Methodist theologians, it is evident how worried and concerned they are—even in the titles of their books: for example, *Can British Methodism Grow Again?; Can Methodism Be Destroyed?*

This study enables the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe to develop a rational analysis of the general argument, understanding and dilemmas involved, and to create a background from which approaches that are relevant today can be constructed. Some of the missionary approaches are fast disappearing: the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe—that is, its members—have now become more mobile than they were before, mixing with people from other denominations who are exercising power evangelism, and the effects of such mixing and mingling of church members cannot be overlooked. On the other hand, the ecumenical meetings are increasingly becoming melting pots of diverse knowledge, approaches and concepts. Therefore, claims, such as, "This is not Methodism" (*Ichi handi chiwhisiri*), "The Methodist Church does not believe or do things this way" (*Izvi hazvimo muhwisiri*), raise concerns that this study endeavours to explore and, consequently, it makes a contribution to knowledge, thereby causing the

17 Wringley, *Methodism and the Future Church*, p. 12
Methodist Church in Zimbabwe and other mission churches to realise that the belief that is, or that was, that of the western mission churches—which often dismiss supernatural happenings as mere superstition in the minds of uneducated people—has passed its day and that it is better to face the realities. As Peaden says:

Missionaries did not believe that illness could be caused either by ancestors or magic concoctions of an enemy. Such an idea was completely foreign to the Westerners who not only could not accept it themselves but could not imagine that anyone else could hold it with sincerity.

It is this belief in the supernatural as a cause of illness, which calls for power evangelism, that is appropriate to the Shona people and, when applied, it becomes a point of conflict instead of one of continuity, since power evangelism links up conveniently with African Shona spirituality. Showing how Samkange was used by God, Ranger writes about the following incident:

People flocked to his prayers for the sick. He even received an unsolicited testimony from a Presbyterian clinic manager—the last person one might have expected to be impressed by the healing powers of Methodist prayer—who wrote to tell him that his wife, incurable by medicine or by Presbyterians, "became very well after your strong prayers to God."

This became a point of conflict and not progress, and, as has been seen, resulted in Mai Chaza leaving the Methodist Church to start her own church. However, Samkange remained as, according to Ranger, he had a strong character, different to that of other ministers who left the Methodist at that time to start their own churches.

In view of the above incidents, it seems that the Methodist missionaries were ignorant of power evangelism and would stop such activity, whereas the Shona people needed the power of God to deal with such issues as barrenness and illness, not knowing that these manifestations of power evangelism, exercised by the lay person as well as the clergy, were offensive to the missionaries as well as the Methodist Church and contrary to their

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19 Asamoah, 'Health and Healing', p. 145
22 Ranger, Are we not also men?, p. 61
beliefs. Hence, this is in complete opposition to the early Methodist Church. Similarly, John Wesley said that on 1 March 1746:

I took my leave of Newcastle and set out with Mr. Downess and Mr. Shepherd. But when we came to Smeton, Mr. Downess was so ill, in fact he could go no further. When Mr. Shepherd and I left Smeton, my horse was so exceedingly lame and I was afraid that I must have lain by too. We could not discern what it was that was amiss; and yet he would scarce set his foot to the ground. By riding thus seven miles, I was thoroughly tired, and my head ached more than it had done for some months. (What I here aver is the naked fact; let every man account for it as he sees good.) I then thought, "Cannot God heal either man or beast, by any means, or without any?" Immediately my weariness and head-ache ceased, and my horse's lameness in the same instant. Nor did he halt any more either that day or the next. A very odd accident this also!\(^{(23)}\)

Thus we can see that, when compared, these similarities make a contribution to the scholarly world. Therefore, it will help the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe to critically analyse its theology of evangelism on a continuous basis so that it makes sense to every generation of its people.

An account of the background to the Shona world-view will be mentioned in Chapter One in order to explain the reason for the inwardness of the Shona culture, of which the missionaries were not aware. In addition, this research will help to liberate the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe by breaking this fear of the unknown by accommodating what is biblical instead of its traditional doctrines of worship. In this manner, the researcher challenges both sides. In the first place, it challenges the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe to do away with foreign evangelistic ways which deny the existence of witchcraft, spiritual possession, hysteria and many others as mere superstitions. Secondly, it challenges the western world-view, which also shuns the spiritual and supernatural realities of the Shona world-view. This is not to say that the Shona world-view is an accurate reflection of reality but that it provides us with models of reality within a given context. Hence, Hiebert says, 'Our worldview shapes our perception ... and serves as a map for guiding our behaviour.'\(^{(24)}\) Moreover, Peaden says


\(^{(24)}\) P. G. Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), p. 29
that, "The natural result of attempting to suppress by force deep-rooted customs held dear by the people was to drive the practice underground." What is more, it causes the Shona people to meet secretly with those who, they assume, are able to defeat evil powers. The researcher, therefore, hopes to highlight situations that are unique to the Shona people in terms of power evangelism within their own context. For instance, power evangelism as a practice presents a challenge to the status quo within the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe because of its religious missionary background; hence, power evangelism is a feature of the Pentecostals or African Initiated churches. On the other hand, there is another group which is becoming impatient with the existing structures and which feels that the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe should not quench the work of the Holy Spirit by denying or controlling power evangelism.

Furthermore, this research is going to investigate power evangelism within the realms of Methodism, especially early Methodism and John Wesley. What was their understanding and response to the supernatural world or to these phenomena? If John Wesley was regarded as a charismatic, in what way was he? What are the things that surround his charismatic ministry? The researcher is aware that Methodism came to Zimbabwe from its founder after a hundred years. Did the Methodist missionaries exercise power evangelism? If not, why not? Was power evangelism a part of their theological training or thinking? What was their approach to power evangelism within the two phases of growth of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, before and after autonomy? What were the causes of so many breakaways within the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe from 1891 to 2010: the likes of Mai Chaza—founder of the Guta ra Jehova; Esau Nemapare—founder of the African Methodist Church; Matthew and Misbeck Zwimba—founders of the independent church White Bird (Shiri Chena); Paul Mwazha—founder of the African Apostolic Church? Is it that these leaders were too charismatic to be part of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, which Ranger seems to portray? 'But the spirit was not so easily subdued. Mai Chaza left the unsympathetic

25 Peaden, Missionary Attitudes, p. 21
Methodists to found a great independent church. A comparison between what happened to Mai Chaza and John Wesley shows some similarities. When John Wesley was preaching, many signs and wonders occurred; but Whitefield objected to his preaching. Wesley says:

I had an opportunity to talk with him of those outward signs which had so often accompanied the inward work of God. I found his objections were chiefly grounded on gross misrepresentations of matter of fact. But the next day he had an opportunity of informing himself better: For no sooner had he begun (in the application of his sermon) to invite all sinners to believe in Christ, than four persons sunk down close to him, almost in the same moment. One of them lay without either sense or motion. A second trembled exceedingly. The third had strong convulsions all over his body, but made no noise, unless by groans. The fourth, equally convulsed, called upon God, with strong cries and tears. From this time, I trust, we shall all suffer God to carry on his own work in the way that pleaseth Him.

This was the beginning of Whitefield's experience of signs and wonders. In the first place, he objected to it because it had not been a part of his ministry before. Similarly, the missionaries objected to Mai Chaza's supernatural gift of healing, maybe because it was not a part of their gifts.

Therefore, this research is going to investigate such questions regarding the approaches of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe to power evangelism, thereby contributing to the field of knowledge. As revealed by these new findings, the researcher feels that it might be a misconception to attribute power evangelism so much to Wimber and the Pentecostals since it can be argued, even at this stage, that the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe seems to rely more on medicine and science than on the power of Jesus Christ. Why? They had received the teaching from the missionaries that:

... medical missions would break the power of the nganga because it would demonstrate to the Shona that there was no connection between illness and desire of ancestral spirits for an offering, or with witchcraft.

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27 Ranger, Are we not also men?, pp. 61-62.
29 Peaden, Missionary Attitudes, p. 17
Hence, this background suggests that power evangelism plays an important role among African Shona beliefs and their expectations from the Church.

**Structure of the Thesis**

Chapter 1 is an introductory chapter which gives a synopsis of the thesis. As cultural context is one of the Church's formative factors in performing power evangelism, it is imperative that there is a clear understanding of the African Shona world-view from the outset, discussing the methodology and the suitability of each method.

Chapter 2 deals with the understanding and interpretation of power evangelism from three points of view: scriptural, theological and historical. This chapter aids in understanding the role played by power evangelism from these three points of view.

Chapter 3 is a narrative of power evangelism within Methodism, from early Methodism and John Wesley. It shows the relationship between power and holiness and Wesley's reaction to extraordinary physical manifestations (people falling down, 'slain in the spirit') and those under demonic possession.

Chapter 4 describes how this research is going to use mixed methodology to investigate the approaches to power evangelism used by the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe among the rural Shona people of Zimbabwe. On considering the strengths and weaknesses of mixed methodology, it appeared to be the method fit for the purpose of the research.

Chapter 5 deals with the data presentation, analysis and discussion/interpretation.

Chapter 6 refers to power evangelism and the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, the history of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, post-independence and present practice. It investigates the missionary approaches to power evangelism, since the Shona people believed in witchcraft, magic and sorcery which were to be eradicated. It then presents a theological reflection.

Chapter 7 includes a summary, the recommendations and the conclusion to the study.
CHAPTER 1

THE SHONA PEOPLE

The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe came to fruition as a result of missionary activity and is just over a century old. The British Methodist Missionary Society came to Southern Rhodesia, now known as Zimbabwe, in 1891. The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe became autonomous in 1977, three years before the country gained independence from British colonial rule in 1980. Notable is the fact that the missionary workers came at the same time as the colonisers, and they settled in what is known today as Zimbabwe.

Geographically, the country of Zimbabwe is divided among two great tribal groups: the Ndebele people and the Shona people. However, the population of Zimbabwe is also composed of people of other nations who now regard themselves as Zimbabweans; these being Malawians, Mozambicans, Europeans (or white Zimbabweans) and Asians. The Shona people are the largest tribal group and constitute 69% of the population, followed by the Ndebele who account for 17%, whilst the remaining 14% of the population is made up by people of other nations. In view of the fact that there are people of different backgrounds living in Zimbabwe, for the purpose of this study the researcher has dealt with the Shona people, being the largest group and accounting for the majority of the population.

The Shona people themselves are also composed of people having differing dialects but, generally, most of their cultural and traditional practices are the same. The said dialects consist of the Karanga, Zezuru, Manyika, Korekore, Ndau, Nyanga and Shanga. It is from among these Shona dialectical groups that the first converts to the Methodist

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32 Johnstone, Operation World, p. 199
33 D.N. Beach, The Shona and Zimbabwe, 900-1850 (Gwelo: Mambo Press, 1980), p. 18
Church came in 1891. These Shona people had their own religious beliefs which were also different from those of the Ndebele people; hence, the researcher has identified just the one tribal group. However, Methodist missionaries and missionaries from other denominations evangelise among all tribal groups and have mission stations in all areas in Zimbabwe. Notably, the word 'Shona' was first used by the Ndebele people, referring especially to the Rozwi people. The missionaries found that the Shona background differed from their own.

Consequently, there is a need to explore the religious background of these people so that the research finds its proper place. Even though unevangelised, the Shona have their own world-view and religious tradition, of which the Methodist missionaries might not have been aware. The researcher feels that this is of paramount importance in order to understand the approaches of the Methodist Church to power evangelism, which is associated with supernatural forces (Eph 6:12).

**The Shona World-view or Religious Beliefs**

The Shona people held religious beliefs before the missionaries visited their country. Why would the researcher want to know about this? It is very important to note that the Shona people were very religious people, as opposed to the view of some early missionaries to Zimbabwe who thought that the local people were 'in dire ignorance, without literature, and without a religion or culture' since they could not see any shrines depicting their kind of worship.

In fact, the Shona worshipped God through their ancestral spirits (vadzimu). Their faith was so strong that they would not do anything without first consulting their ancestral spirit. In times of illness, death, drought and other strange phenomenon, the Shona would endeavour to find out the cause. The God of the Shona people is named Mwari. The ancestral spirit (Mudzimu) is the mediator for the Shona people; in a way, Mudzimu

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35 Beach, The Shona and Zimbabwe, p. 18
36 S. Madhiba, Struggles and Strides (Harare: Methodist Church Publications, 2000), p. 19
stands in the place of Jesus, who is the mediator for the Christians. Hence, Gelfand says, 'The principles of the Shona faith are broadly similar to those found in the Western religious teachings.' It is surprising that Gelfand, although a medical doctor, is one writer who was able to come close to an understanding of the religion of the Shona people, thereby revealing the adverse criticism made by many superficial researchers of the Shona faith. When the western missionaries came to preach the gospel, the Shona were ready to receive it because of their belief in God. Even though they did not understand Jesus, they had a connection with God as the creator of human beings (Musikavanhu).

Another difference of the Shona people is that they do not need to be repentant to belong to their religion; in fact, they are born into it—just like the Jews in Judaism. The Shona people were constituted righteous by means of their teachings and family rituals. They also believed in evil. A good example of how evil is understood and dealt with is given by Aschwanden:

This is evil: a child has grossly offended his father or mother without asking for forgiveness. Some time after the father or mother's death, misfortunes overtake the Son: his children fall ill or die, his cattle, or some other disaster occurs ... The Son, rich or poor, begins the Kutiza or Kutanda botso (meaning, to drive away evil) dressing in old and ragged clothes and covering his head with ashes. He goes from house to house, village to village, and everywhere he accuses himself, "I beat my mother, I beat my mother." Children attack him by throwing stones and beating him. But he must not defend himself. No friendly household may shelter him for the night, he sleeps rough. Anyone pitying him will give him a handful of millet or maize. Days later (the humiliations may go on for a week) and when he has been given enough millet or maize, he returns home, starts brewing beer and presents an animal for sacrifice at the coming ceremony. The relatives of his dead mother are invited; the penitent confesses his misdeed to them and asks for their forgiveness.

The ritual for reconciliation is then carried out by offering beer and an animal, as well as prayers offered by the relatives on behalf of the penitent. The process appears to be so humiliating, yet it brings the genuinely remorseful person complete forgiveness.

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39 Gelfand, *Ukama*, p. 37
40 Aschwanden, *Symbols of Death*, p. 25
Conversely, it can be seen that Shona beliefs are surrounded so much by fear. They believe that the ancestral spirit *Mudzimu* is there to protect them as God is a little far away from them. They fear disease, illness, witchcraft, sorcery, alien spirits and death; consequently, in every village or community such things are the talk of the day. There is only one person among the villagers who can dispel such fears and help people to have faith in God (*Mwari*), this being the traditional doctor (*n'anga*). The traditional doctor knows the medicine to heal. Also, he can exorcise bad and evil spirits, and can even send them back to the one who sent them, who is usually the witch. Among the Shona people, this type of exorcism is called *kurashira uroyi*. Hence, if someone's death is caused by means of witchcraft, or any other mysterious way, they literally refer to it as: "the ancestors have broken the cradle sling, on which the child is carried on a person's back" (*mudzimu wadambura mbereko*).

There are many other things surrounding the faith of the Shona people. However, the purpose of this research is to present the relevant background and to provide reasoning to support the arguments whilst revealing the soil on which the gospel propagated by the expatriate missionaries fell. It is this same background in which the British Methodist missionaries found themselves.

Hence, this thesis has been stimulated by people who at times make such statements, in passing, as: "*Muwhisiri hamuna mweya, uye hamuna simba*" (There is no Holy Spirit and there is no power within the Methodist Church). What they actually mean is that there is no power: power to heal, power to exorcise, power to overthrow witches, power to receive visions and dreams. Furthermore, the subject of health is something that is very close to the religious beliefs of the Shona people and it will be difficult to understand the researcher's line of reasoning without including health in this background.

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41 Gelfand, *Ukama*, p. 38
Health Issues

Health, or wholeness, is something that is very important and of real concern to the Shona people. When people pass greetings to one another, the purpose of such greetings is to find out about the other's health. When the Shona say, "Good morning. Mamuka sei?" (How did you awake?), the concept is deeper than that conveyed by the English word. It is more to do with one's health. Mamuka sei? It is a question, demanding how one feels on that day. Hence, it is normally in the exchanging of greetings that one makes a formal inquiry into how another is feeling.

Thus, illness and death are not taken as being natural. In fact, the Shona people normally use proverbs to emphasise their abnormality, such as: "Chiripo chari uraya zizi harifi nemhepo," meaning that there is a cause to the death of an owl—it does not die naturally or because of the wind. Their view of illness is that it is caused by the supernatural: either through the agency of God, spirits or ancestors; or, through human agency by means of bewitching or cursing. Hence, in all circumstances the traditional doctor takes on the role of both doctor and priest, thus combining religion and medicine. As a result, all sorts of people consult the traditional doctor for all manner of reasons. As stated by Maxwell, 'in practice it does seem that some guerrillas sought out n'anga [traditional healers] for magical aid,' which means that the freedom fighters for the independence of Zimbabwe would seek the n'anga for magical means. We strongly believe in witchcraft; we consult n'angas because they help to see and solve our problems while the only thing the Church has to offer in this respect is to pray hard. When the spirit of a deceased person is invited back to its home village, it will always assist me/us in our problems. It is dependence on outside churches that hampers the church here to respond to culture.

Therefore, the traditional doctor is understood to have knowledge of the physical, as well as the cultural, environment in which they exist. In other words, the traditional doctor understands how the Shona live and what influences their lives from childhood to the

42 Aschwanden, Symbols of Death, p. 37
44 F.J. Verstraelen, Zimbabwean Realities and Christian Responses (Gweru: Mambo Press, 1998), p. 29
grave. Thus, this appreciation of their background is very important in being able to understand and carry out research in connection with power evangelism within the African Shona context.

It is this African Shona world-view that needs to be recognised; its existence and the belief that evil spirits are active in causing illness. In this regard, there are ways to drive out evil spirits or weaken their operation within the community and this is why they need every explanation possible for the causes of their illnesses. However, they refer to the traditional doctor for more than the explanation: when consulted, the traditional doctor can also deal with their problems. Hence, the Shona people have a hope of deliverance because their physical, mental, spiritual and social troubles, and all other kinds of evil, are recognised.

This is the background that the researcher has attempted to reveal and explain; one which the expatriate missionaries could not understand as, for them, all illness was explained in western medical terms and the traditional doctor was perceived as being the chief enemy of the Christian faith.\(^{45}\) Furthermore:

\[\ldots\] the missionaries did not believe that illness could be caused either by ancestors or magic concoctions of an enemy. Such an idea was completely foreign to the westerners who not only could not accept it themselves but could not imagine that anyone else could hold it with sincerity.\(^{46}\)

There is another issue that influenced the researcher: after reading *The Works of John Wesley*, one wonders what was meant as they seem to contrast with the above-mentioned statements:

Of the power of evil spirits to afflict the minds of men, none can doubt, who believe there are any such beings. And of their power to afflict the body, we have abundant proof, both in the history of Job, and that of the gospel demoniacs.\(^{47}\)

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\(^{45}\) Peaden, *Missionary Attitudes*, p. 16
\(^{46}\) Peaden, *Missionary Attitudes*, p. 16
John Wesley further asserts:

... it is true, likewise, that the English in general, and indeed most of the men of learning in Europe, have given up all accounts of witches and apparitions, as mere old wives' fables. I am sorry for it; and I am willing to take this opportunity of entering solemn protest against this violent compliment which so many that believe the Bible pay to those who do not believe it. I owe them no such service. I take knowledge; these are at the bottom of the outcry which has been raised, and with such insolence spread throughout the nation, in direct opposition not only to the Bible, but to the sufferings of the wisest and best of men in all ages and nations. They well know (whether Christians know it, or not) that the giving up on witchcraft is, in effect, giving up the Bible.48

In comparing the Shona background with the background of early Methodism, there is a total contrast between the missionaries and the early Methodists, after reading The Works of John Wesley. More about Early Methodism will be discussed in Chapter 3.

Social Life

In addition to Shona beliefs and health issues, there is also the background to the social life which, if left out, could weaken the research. Therefore, as part of the background study, it is also important to know how the Shona lived in their society.

The Shona people lived in groups that are normally marked by totem. A person inherits a totem (mutuppo) from the paternal side. Maybe a good definition of 'totem' is the one given by Beach: 'The Shona, like many other people, have a system of totemism in which each man or woman inherits a totem (mutuppo) name from the father.' Such names are based on animals or parts of the body: such as lion, eland, vervet monkey, heart, leg, and so on. In this book, the totem essentially acts as a label to aid the identification of groups led by a dynasty of that totem; it being understood that, in any territory, only some people will be of the ruler's totem.49 In other words, these people lived together and often belonged to one big family. It is their line of descent. Their totem can also be part of their family name. The reason for mentioning this point is that when the gospel was being preached, sometimes it was possible for the whole clan or family to turn to

49 Beach, The Shona and Zimbabwe, 900-1850, pp. 65-66
Christ because their ruler's, or father's, response is taken positively. The response of the ruler calls the children to do likewise; as is what happened to the jailer: 'And they said, believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house' (Acts 16:31). Muzorewa said that, 'when tribal leaders were converted to Christianity, it often followed that headmen and their villages professed the new faith in large numbers.'\textsuperscript{50} It is also cited by Zvobgo when he gives an account of the conversion of 'headman Chiremba, his wife and their son and daughter in 1899.' As a result of his conversion, the Epworth Community was converted to Christ.\textsuperscript{51}

This, again, can be a fertile ground for power evangelism. For instance, illness can be regarded as a community issue in that when a person is ill it is usually the head of the family who calls others to visit a traditional doctor and whatever the traditional doctor says, goes. Normally, it is done by the whole family for the healing of that one individual. It is the same when the gospel is preached: normally, the whole family responds after the conversion of one individual.

As highlighted in this background, one is able to notice that Shona life is health orientated; hence, one finds that preaching relating to issues affecting the physical, social or psychological aspects of life is received with eagerness. This has been echoed also by Maxwell when he says that poverty, illness and demon possession are what constitute the ministry of one of the Pentecostal churches, the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God, Africa (ZAOGA).\textsuperscript{52} Power evangelism is often manifested through healing and exorcism that is dealing with the whole individual and is culturally orientated, and this is a part of their cultural beliefs as religion, for the Shona people, is not seen as a set of beliefs but as the totality of life.

Thus, the Shona African world-view is a complete whole and cannot be subdivided or split. Yates amplifies this unitary nature of the African world-view in his preface to \textit{The

\textsuperscript{52} Maxwell, \textit{African Gifts of the Spirit}, p. 96
Primal Vision. He points out clearly that the self cannot be isolated either from the other selves or from its wider relation with the cosmic reality. The African way is to seek harmony and reject dualism, the separation of the inward from the outward, the cerebral from the intuitive.\(^{53}\) Life should be viewed as a whole. Religion affects and is present in all aspects of life. Hence, when the Pentecostal and African Initiated churches preach, their message takes a holistic approach whereby the physical and the spiritual needs are inseparable. Sickness affecting the body may be regarded as being the result of individual or communal sin or of the activities of evil spirits. Hence, Asamoah says, ‘the historic Western mission denominations have often dismissed supernatural causes of ill health as psychological, delusions in the minds of non-literate peoples.’\(^{54}\)

It is, therefore, of paramount importance to know that evangelism, without giving some attention to the physical health needs of these people, is often meaningless if it does not give ‘answers to problems, particularly of ill health and supernatural disturbances, sought within a religious context.’\(^{55}\) This research highlights something very significant in that there is some expectation among the African Shona people on how the gospel would encounter evil, whereby the emancipated mind is able to destroy the works of the devil:

... those who believed would have it come to be that vision shall relate the supernatural powers that descend in God's holiness to erase all evil spirits, cast out evil, cure all types of disease, open the eyes of the blind, raise the dead and loosen all satanic bonds to leave the believer free and ready to receive all deliverance.\(^{56}\)

The researcher, being a Zimbabwean and also a Methodist minister within the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, is presented with a great challenge; hence, he is seeking to find answers by means of this research. He has attended many conferences where it has been reported that many members have dual membership (they go to the Methodist Church as well as the Pentecostal or African Initiated churches to seek healing). Furthermore, members and ministers who practise power evangelism are treated with suspicion, disciplined, or even stopped from practising power evangelism altogether. As a result


\(^{54}\) Asamoah, ‘Health and Healing’, p. 145

\(^{55}\) Asamoah, ‘Health and Healing’, p. 145

members are leaving the Methodist Church and joining other Pentecostal or indigenous churches, or they are Christians by day and follow their cultural beliefs at night-time. Hence, many church members ask the question: Why is the Church controlling the ways, means and methods of power evangelism? Moreover, Jesus' ministry is filled with themes relating to overcoming and defeating evil powers and curing debilitating conditions that afflict people.

**Review of Related Literature**

Even if little has been written on the subject of power evangelism from an African perspective, there is much that has been produced by western scholars. In a way, this shows that power evangelism knows no culture; therefore, the researcher will use the work of much western scholarship to reason on and substantiate the arguments.

Furthermore, even though there are no published books exclusively focusing on the subject of power evangelism or the approaches used by the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe with regard to power evangelism, literature does exist which focuses on the history of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe and is relevant to this study. Therefore, it this literature will be examined.

As a result, in the following chapters the researcher will use a significant number of works from authoritative and prominent western scholars in trying to define what power evangelism actually is. Therefore, in this section the researcher will give a brief literature review in order not to avoid continuous repetition and overemphasis of issues which are discussed later.

Although the specific subject of power evangelism can be argued to be a universal one, some of the theological and methodological issues vary in different contexts. The African Shona world-view is different to the world-view of those regarded as being proponents of power evangelism, such as John Wimber, Peter Wagner, Donald Bridge, Reinhard Bonnke and others. The definition of power evangelism will be given in Chapter 2. To date, with the exception of one or two chapters with related subject matter, but by no means in-depth studies, no major works have yet been produced from an African perspective.
It is important to understand Bonnke's work in Africa as not much has been written about it in substantial academic references. Bonnke's ministry in Africa was powerful and his major attractions were signs and wonders accompanied by his powerful preaching, with emphasis on healing and exorcism. Hence, Synan commented that, 'the healing ministry of German evangelist Reinhard Bonnke who demonstrated his dynamic ministry was attracting millions of converts in his African crusades.'\(^{57}\) This was accompanied by bonfires as converts brought their magic amulets, charms and their powerful objects. The new converts would destroy everything that had tied them to the service of the Devil. According to the reports, even the dead came back to life.\(^{58}\) Furthermore, Bonnke was able to detect and confront believers who were still clinging to their old ways, and also point out believers who would be suffering from certain types of illness. 'By a word of knowledge, Reinhard called a woman out with a tumour in the womb and the tumour instantly disappeared.'\(^{59}\) Even the blind are said to receive their sight. As a result, millions came to Christ through Bonnke's ministry. His crusades in Africa reached Zimbabwe in 1986, as he travelled with the motto that 'Africa shall be saved.'\(^{60}\) Even though Bonnke was performing signs and wonders, there were those who criticised his style of ministry and even refuted that any of the above ever happened. They argued that Bonnke was deceiving the poor Africans and that he was 'popular in Africa because he taps into the continent's old religious superstitions.'\(^{61}\) On the other hand, these criticisms could be true as it resulted in people up attributing healing and miracles to Bonnke rather than to God, thinking that it was Bonnke who saved the sinners. However, to deny that these things ever happened is also to limit and manipulate God's power. It might be that his style of evangelism and his claims may not be good, but God used him. Hence, the writer still argues that power evangelism has contributed to the growth of the churches in Africa.


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60 http://www.istor.org/discover, accessed on 3 September 2012
Church in Zimbabwe, focuses on the story of a single family: that of the Samkange. Its focus on Thompson Samkange, who is one of the earliest indigenous Methodist ministers, becomes relevant to the study as it mentions, in passing, the ministry offered with other indigenous leaders of his time and why the expatriate Methodist missionaries were against it. Hence, this is what this research seeks to uncover.62

Upon reading the preface to Banana's work, A Century of Methodism in Zimbabwe, 1891-1991, there is much anticipation since it introduces the birth of Pentecost within Methodism, which will be explained later in Chapter 3.63 However, it simply relates how the Methodist Church was established but does not relate anything about power evangelism. It focuses more on centenary celebrations, although it will help to build up a picture of the historical background of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. Whilst it was written by leaders of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, it seems that they have left out much with regard to power evangelism, which also needs to be researched.

Zvobgo's book, The Wesleyan Methodist Missions in Zimbabwe, 1891-1945, is one work that has been written by a Zimbabwean Methodist scholar and which was also written as a contribution to the centenary celebration of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. The work is also relevant for this research, in order to understand the subject of power evangelism, because it gives the background to the fundamentals of the denominations under which the Wesleyan Methodist Church operated. It gives a detailed expansion of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. Zvobgo's work does not contain archival sources, which show that it might be lacking in some ways. His work does not mention the approaches to power evangelism; hence, the need for the research.64 Furthermore, it does not even focus on evangelism, although it does give the history of the expansion of the Church in general.

Maxwell's work, African Gifts of the Spirit, explains the growth of African Pentecostalism, with much focus on ZAOGA which is one of the fastest growing

62 Ranger, Are we not also men?, pp. 7-16
63 Banana, A Century of Methodism, p. vii
churches in Zimbabwe. However, this book has little to do with the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe but has more relevance to the subject of power evangelism. Maxwell provides great insights for this study since it highlights similarities between what is happening in ZAOGA and what might be happening within the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. This will assist the researcher in making relevant comparisons since, geographically, they fall upon the same soil. Another difference is that ZAOGA history only started in 1950, showing that Pentecostalism is new to Africa, whereas the Methodist Church has been established in Zimbabwe since 1891.65

The above works, from an African context, are informative studies attempting to address the issues of power evangelism within African spirituality. In other words, the study, as it is, is still in its infancy stage: no significant work has yet been done. A few reasons can be cited: for instance, the issue of power evangelism is connected with Pentecostal churches and African Initiated churches so any such traits within the mainstream missionary churches were discouraged, controlled and banned. Among those who are renowned African scholars, the subject seems to be at the periphery of their concern, possibly because they did not view it as part of their theological training and, hence, there is this strong division between missionary churches and the Pentecostals. This explains why there are very few academic studies on the subject. Thus, this study seeks to carry out more objective research in order to treat the subject of power evangelism on empirical, scientific evidence in a quantitative manner. The researcher feels that this has not so far been done, even by those who are proponents of power evangelism.

CHAPTER 2
REDEFINING POWER EVANGELISM

Power Evangelism – Definition

The term 'power evangelism' was coined by Wimber and his proponents, and he defines it as:

... a spontaneous, spirit-inspired, empowered presentation of the gospel. Power evangelism is that evangelism which is preceded and undergirded by a supernatural demonstration of God's presence.66

However, from an anachronistic view, the occurrences that surround power evangelism could be defined in a single term: 'the supernatural.' According to Glover:

The supernatural is not just the providence of God, it is also very much where Satan does his "best work." It is part of our function to be able to distinguish who is behind the supernatural activity.67

The term 'supernatural' refers to the divine intervention of God which is beyond scientific explanation, and despite the term 'power evangelism' being associated with Wimber, the phenomenon was in existence before his time. Glover's definition has influenced the writer as an African world-view is a belief in the supernatural evil. The first thing the Shona people in Africa do when they experience sickness, poverty, barrenness, marital problems or bad luck is to visit a traditional doctor (n'anga) who, in turn, offers a solution to the physical disorder usually believed to be caused by witchcraft. So the fear of such things as witchcraft, accidents, demon possession, magic, harmful medicine (chitsinga), barrenness and so forth, hold a grip on millions of people, even Christians. Thus, Jenkins acknowledges:

In many parts of the world, the feared forces of darkness include witchcraft. An observer of African Christianity soon realizes not only that evil forces are seen as threatening realities, but also that human

beings are allied to those forces. Under whatever name we choose to describe it, witchcraft is believed to pose a pervasive threat, and that problem has not diminished with time ... In the city, people are worried about how to keep their jobs, and the fear of witchcraft is on the increase.68

From an alternative world-view, especially the western one, this could be regarded as mere superstition.69 Walls reinforces this point by saying:

Western Christianity has effectively been disabled from helping in the desolating situation of witchcraft by the fact that its worldview had no real place for the objective reality of witchcraft.70

However, from an African world-view these things are real and, if not dealt with, will continue to breed syncretism among many Shona Christians.

Hence, there is a need to redefine the term 'power evangelism.' Why? Firstly, Wimber's definition does not consider the context as being something important. Secondly, it seems that Wimber is writing from an apologetic point of view, trying to convince the westerners. His definition emanates from the 'clinical teaching' at Fuller Theological College. Therefore, a more appropriate definition is arrived at after considering the context in which these things happen on a daily basis. Power evangelism is more than 'signs and wonders;' it is God's love being poured out according to the needs of the people and thereby authenticating the presence of God. It is not only limited to preaching followed by signs and wonders. Instead, signs and wonders happen whether or not any preaching takes place and might be by other means, even pastoral care or praying for the sick.

Considering that the Shona people are part of the African traditional religion and that many of them actively practise it, there is a great difference compared with those who join or who are converted to a religion. The Shona people are born into their traditional religion; they do not repent or get converted to it. Their religion is more concerned with the welfare of the people; their health, success and protection. So, for the Shona folk, if

someone comes along who can offer something that demonstrates 'God's power,' they are in a position to follow that person. On the other hand, those who do not demonstrate any power are less impressive in winning them over to God. Jenkins says, 'Members join or convert because they acquire beliefs about the supernatural realm and its relationship to the visible world.'\textsuperscript{71} This is why many in mainline churches leave these churches to seek those who demonstrate God's power, which means that many Christians become so without totally renouncing their former religion. They still believe in magic and witchcraft, and even visit their traditional doctors by night. It is not just a demonstration of power that is needed but a demonstration of power that shows that Christianity is a religion more powerful than what they have seen from their magicians, witches and traditional doctors. Furthermore, it is a demonstration of power that meets the needs of the people that trouble them on a daily basis. Hence, there is an exodus of members from the mainline churches to join the Independent and Pentecostal churches because these churches demonstrate the power that destroys witchcraft and its fears. The Shona people are always aware of being struck by a demonstration of any power. However, one thing Wimber is not aware of is that such people look for demonstrations of power. An example of this is in Acts 8:9-24: Simon the Sorcerer's power in the city was great but Peter demonstrates that God's power is greater than Satan's. By indicating that Simon the Sorcerer had the 'great power of God,' it shows that most of the Samaritans probably did not even realise that they were actually subject to the power of Satan. Therefore, the supernatural demonstrations of God's power open the way for evangelism and enable people to follow Christianity without being syncretistic. Many people try to drive the traditional practices underground because Christians could also come under demonic attack, as demons, witches and sickness have no respect for one's religious affiliation. Horrobin says: 'To pretend that Christians are not being healed through deliverance and to continue to preach and teach that Christians can't be demonized is naive to say the least.'\textsuperscript{72}

\textsuperscript{71} P. Jenkins, \textit{The Next Christendom} (Oxford: University Press, 2007), p. 91
\textsuperscript{72} P. Horrobin, \textit{Healing Through Deliverance} (Lancaster: Sovereign World, 2008), p. 278
Power evangelism should not be taken to be one single event; it is continuous, even after conversion and helps people to renounce their occult practices and their need to receive deliverance from all demonic attacks. For example, the sick need healing. Will they be healed by magic, or by the traditional doctor, or by Christ? The demonised need exorcism or deliverance. Will the traditional doctor perform his/her demonstration of power, or will the missionary do it? Power evangelism supports the belief that Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:9). In fact, power evangelism effectively meets the needs of the Shona people whose world-view is shaped by the supernatural, healing and deliverance.

The story below, recorded by Taylor, highlights what the writer means by redefining power evangelism:

A married woman, a communicant member of the Anglican Church who was childless, was suddenly seized by the muzimu of the prince Luyidde Sou of Kabaka Mulando, whose shrine stands on a hill not far from her village. From her body, which was stiff and numb, two voices spoke, one repeating, "I am Luyidde," and her own saying, "I am a Christian; I cannot go." For days the psychosis continued, no one seemed able to help her, and eventually her brothers and her husband, also a communicant, agreed that nothing could save her but to let her go. She is living now at the shrine on the hill, separated from her husband because she belongs to Luyidde. Once in a while she is possessed [okusamira] and speaks with his voice, but otherwise she is quite normal, regularly attends Church, and is still a communicant.73

This is the kind of scenario that has not been addressed by Wimber: that of dealing with those who are already Christians. Commenting on the above incident, Walls says, 'Yet nothing in the Church's armoury availed her in her illness or gave her peace of mind.'74 Hence, Walls noted that the prophet healing churches do take such incidents seriously. Therefore, 'it demands a more complete break with "the world" than going to church by day and to the diviner at night.'75

74 Walls, The Missionary Movement, p. 98
75 Walls, The Missionary Movement, p. 99
Power evangelism ends when a person surrenders everything to Christ. Before that, it is an ongoing process. Power evangelism can be considered to occur in different stages: the first stage is opening doors for evangelism; secondly, it wrestles with supernatural evils until their total surrender. However, as previously mentioned by Walls, this aspect of dealing with the supernatural evil is foreign to non-Pentecostals, who failed to meet the needs of the woman in the incident recorded by Taylor because they entered into the territory of the supernatural evil without being suitably equipped themselves.76 Hence, Jesus, who had the power when he entered into the enemy's territory, gave the following response to John's disciples: 'Go and tell John what you hear and see, the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the poor have good news brought to them' (Matt 11:4-5).

The Role Played by Power Evangelism

From the African world-view it can be seen that power evangelism is dealing with the so-called polluted objects, the eradication of the 'supernatural evil power' in the name of Jesus Christ. Why? Because many Africans look to Jesus as a healer, as Jenkins records: 'I look at (Jesus) as a healer, and think many Africans do. The most powerful image of Jesus is Jesus the healer. He can take away our diseases.'77

Power evangelism enables people to break with the supernatural evil when facing challenges and Christians stop practising witchcraft, making offerings to ancestors and visiting traditional doctors behind closed doors.78 Instead of banning Christians from practising these things, it is necessary to call on supernatural divine intervention because suppressing evil through natural means moves Christians to practise it underground.79 This shows that, 'The Son of God was revealed for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil' (1 John 3:8). Hence, McDowell and Stewart argued that:

76 Taylor, The Growth of the Church, p. 211
77 Jenkins, The New Face of Christianity, p. 114
78 Peaden, Missionary Attitudes, p. 21
79 Peaden, Missionary Attitudes, p. 21
There are those who would like to demythologize the accounts of the devil, demons, and demon possession. They contend that the supernatural references in the Scriptures are from a pre-scientific, superstitious worldview. However, if one takes the supernatural out of all the Scriptures, all the meaning goes out with it.\[^{80}\]

Bridge points out the emphasis on the supernatural as being one aspect that was used during the Great Awakening:

> The Lutheran Churches in Europe and the Anglican and dissenting churches in Britain had sunk into an intellectual, rationalistic, non-miraculous approach to the faith, before the Revival broke. The Awakening produced a swing back to confidence in the supernatural, especially as evidenced in conversion, answered prayer and divine guidance.\[^{81}\]

Bridge also highlights that the arrival of the Wesley brothers brought in a new phenomenon: ‘People began to fall down unconscious or go into hysterics under the hammer-blows of their preaching. Signs of demon-possession they met and dealt with as best they knew.’\[^{82}\]

Power evangelism addresses the world-view of the people and transforms individuals. It helps them not to be in fear of the evil supernatural realities, although they do exist, and Christians have the conviction that the power of God is able to conquer these forces, according to the clear testimony of the Scriptures. Those who believe in Jesus and in the evidence of his power over the supernatural evil (1 John 4:4; 5:4-5), do not need to practise syncretism. The fear of witchcraft, barrenness, illness, accidents, evil spirits and untimely death moves many to seek answers for the causes of such calamities from the African traditional doctors or from self-proclaimed prophets. Conversely, power evangelism enables even those individuals with supernatural evil powers to be converted to Christ (Acts 8:9-13). It can turn individuals away from consulting those who practise supernatural evil, and demonstrates that even if witches have got powers, God’s power is far greater. On the other hand, those preaching the gospel confront those who possess

\[^{82}\] Bridge, *Power Evangelism*, p. 132
supernatural powers, as did Paul in Acts 13:4-12. According to Bridge: 'Evangelism is robbing the strong man's house' (Matt 12:29). Hence, Jenkins says:

Supernatural approaches can be valuable in moving societies away from pernicious traditional superstitions. For instance, offering distinctively Christian solutions to witchcraft helps disarm the sometimes bloody practices of anti-witchcraft rituals.\(^8^3\)

These supernatural approaches are able to force evil spirits into submission. Furthermore, by means of these experiences, people are given hope and are able to see that God can provide them with what they desire from him.

Issues of barrenness can be explained from a medical point of view and those from the West would understand this. However, from an African Shona perspective, barrenness brings instability to many married couples as they believe that marriage is not marriage until bonded with children. In fact, it breeds accusation from both husband and wife, each accusing the other of being unable to reproduce.

In this way, power evangelism sets people free and provides assurance and hope, enabling them to live in the confidence that God is working for them. Simply relating the biological inadequacies of individuals does not work in this context; they need more, and that is provided through power evangelism which is able to erase evil spirits, cast out demons, open the eyes of the blind and raise the dead. In many circumstances, when someone requires healing, they go to see a doctor; if they are demon possessed, they go to see a psychiatrist; are bereaved, they call for a grief counsellor. The intention is not to be derogatory towards such professionals but, instead of nursing feelings of hopelessness, Christians should call for divine intervention in their lives and in the lives of others. The Shona people, being aware of the presence and activity of evil, need only to be confronted by the supernatural power of God and to believe that it is impossible for an ordinary person to challenge such evil powers without the extraordinary power of God that is able to surpass them. Power evangelism challenges and denounces these supernatural evil forces in the name of Jesus (1 Cor 5:4).

\(^8^3\) Jenkins, *The New Face of Christianity*, p. 99
Failure to meet these demands leads many to leave the missionary churches or mainline churches. Porterfield highlights this fact:

Protestant missionaries’ lack of interest in healing miracles contributed to the dissatisfaction many converts felt with missionary churches. Along with the frustration of having to submit to the missionary authority, that dissatisfaction led to the formation of independent, African-led churches that incorporated spiritual healing and ancestor veneration, as part of Christian practice.  

The reason for this was that indigenous forms of healing resonated well with biblical healing; hence, the truth lies in what Roome said many years ago:

How does the African live? What is his normal state of existence? What are the influences surrounding his life from childhood to the grave? If we are to understand the problem of his evangelisation, we must appreciate the atmosphere, or environment, that fixes his ultimate destiny. There is no hope of deliverance unless some potent influence from without transforms his life—grants to him power over the evil spirits by which he is surrounded. The African in all-pagan districts is an Animist. Every act, thought and influence of life is connected in some way with the power of evil spirits. He is not a free agent. Malign influences are ever seeking his destruction. Every sound in the forest has a subtle meaning to him. Every force in nature touches deep-seated questioning in his soul. Animism, or fetishism, makes him a prey to every form of unscrupulous agent. Those may be his fellow beings or the forces around him. He readily becomes the victim of the witch doctor, or the diviner.

Instead of exercising power evangelism to deliver the African from these influences, the ex-patriot missionary used medical missions as these 'were regarded as means of weaning the local people from magic, witchcraft, superstition and worship of ancestors.' Hence, Peaden acknowledges that the European medicines failed to cure many illnesses. Jenkins quoted Fr. Peter Wasswa Mpagi’s remarks that, 'Many sicknesses cannot be cured medically.' It is true that some diseases were being cured by western medicine and, whilst not helping the people spiritually, it did become the vehicle for evangelisation, as mentioned by one of the medical missionaries:

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86 Madhiba, Struggles and Strides, p. 24
87 Peaden, Missionary Attitudes, p. 18
88 Jenkins, The New Face of Christianity, p. 110
If, by skilful treatment, a sick native is relieved of pain or cured of his disease, he must wonder why it has been done, and is far more prepared to receive and respond to the gospel message than if this is presented to him with his pain unrelieved.  

However, the writer believes that this was not a solution for the African person, especially the Shona people, because it did not solve their problems. Yet, many of them were joining other independent churches because their needs had not been met. The writer's argument could be understood more easily by considering what Kurewa says:

A pastor in Zimbabwe shared a conversation with his colleagues about a woman who had left her church (one of the mainstream denominations) to join an independent one. On being asked why she had left, the woman replied that she had a problem. After living with her husband for many years, she still had borne no child.

Jenkins echoes the same sentiments when he quotes Kathryn Hauwa Hoomkwap from the Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria:

Childlessness, the fear of spirits, witchcraft are real concerns which are very often laughed at, dismissed as imaginary and non-existent in our church circle. But to the suffering African woman, these problems are real. So real are these issues, in fact, that people drift to independent churches where they are taken seriously ... or they will seek help in traditional practices.

The gospel clearly states that the sick and possessed were brought to Jesus (Mark 1:32-34). However, despite the Church having a history of healing the sick and demon possessed, this has long been forgotten and ignored, and has even been dismissed as not being relevant today.

Power evangelism is an inclusive term in its nature; hence, the writer tends to call it 'supernatural evangelism.' It is evangelism that includes power encounter, power healing, power exorcism, spiritual warfare, signs and wonders, and deliverance. Why? Because it is evangelism that does not seek opportunities to exercise demonic deliverance, nor to perform signs and wonders, but it does respond to the above-mentioned needs. A good example of this is Paul's actions in the following instance:

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91 Jenkins, *The New Face of Christianity*, p. 111
One day, as we were going to the place of prayer, we met a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners a great deal of money by fortune-telling. While she followed Paul and us, she would cry out, "These men are slaves of the Most High God, who proclaim to you a way of salvation." She kept doing this for many days. But Paul, very much annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I order you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour (Acts 16:16-18).

The aim is not to deal with supernatural evil but to turn people to God by meeting their needs: 'To open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God' (Acts 26:18). Without the supernatural it is difficult, or even impossible, to contextualise the gospel message as portrayed in the Scriptures, especially among the Shona people.

**The Scriptural Understanding of Power Evangelism**

The writer's intention is to define what is meant by power evangelism from a scriptural point of view. In the Old Testament, with its stress on monotheism, there was direct confrontation of the power of God with evil spirits. In fact, the biblical world-view does have some similarities with the African world-view in terms of these evil powers. The use of magic, charms, fetishes, sorcery and witchcraft is still being practised in Africa, just as it was being practised in biblical times.

Throughout the Bible there is conflict between the worshippers of God and those who carry out evil practices. Various biblical texts give confirmation of the reality of these supernatural evils, such as magic for instance (Ex 17:11-12; Deut 18:10-12). At the same time there is direct warning (Deut 18:9-10) and direct confrontation (Ex 7:10-12), both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, which resulted in the victory of those serving the God of the Bible. It is notable, for instance, that genuine supernatural power is at work in the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18), but the prophet Elijah possessed far greater supernatural power which came from God. Also, Murphy comments on Jesus' response when John the Baptist's disciples asked Jesus, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' (Luke 7:20):

> Jesus answered, not with logical proofs, but by a demonstration of power in the curing of the sick and casting out of evil spirits. So much is clear. Yet when I read the passage as a missionary in India, and sought to apply it to mission in our day, I had a sense of uneasiness. As a Westerner, I
was used to presenting Christ on a basis of rational arguments not by evidence of His power in the lives of people who were sick, possessed and destitute. In particular, the confrontation with spirits that appeared so natural a part of Christ's ministry belonged in my mind to a separate world of the miracles—far from ordinary everyday experience.  

Porterfield thinks that among the many activities that Jesus performed, healing and exorcism were prominent. She says, 'Even more dramatically, Jesus confronts and expels demons and "unclean spirits" that possess people and drive them to distraction. (Mark 1:24, 32, 34; 3:11; 5:2-10; 9:17-18, 20-22)' Additionally, in the New Testament Peter confronted Simon the Magician who wanted to buy the gift of God with money: 'But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain God's gift with money!"' (Acts 8:20). In Acts 16:16-18 Paul cast a demon out of a girl who was able to predict the future.

From an African point of view, such direct confrontation is necessary and is what is meant by power evangelism and Kraft alludes to this when he discusses power encounters:

A typical power encounter would involve a priest or chief, speaking on behalf of his people, publicly denouncing their allegiance to their gods in the name of Jesus and challenging the gods to do something about it. When the gods could not respond, the victory belongs to Jesus and a large number of the people usually converted.

There is a need to publicly demonstrate the power of God in destroying all the so-called polluted objects. A biblical example is in Acts 19:18-19. Another good example concerns Bonnke's crusades in Africa, where it is said: 'Locals brought sacks full of witchcraft items to the crusade grounds for burning each night.' Thus, African Christians, especially the Shona people of Zimbabwe, are power-oriented people who would also require some form of proof of power in order to be convinced. In addition to this, they are in a position to give tangible testimonies to their faith, as well as publicly

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93 Porterfield, *Healing in the History*, p. 21
95 Jenkins, *The New Face of Christianity*, p. 112
renouncing and rejecting the works of the devil. A positive outcome of such 'signs and wonders' is that they 'frequently result in the conversion of families or deliverance as demonstrating the presence and power of God.'

This is not to say that power evangelism does not have its negatives. As Scripture itself is clear, Satan also performs signs and wonders, counterfeiting God's work. The Bible warns us against such (Matt 7:15-16). There is a need to test everything in the light of the Scriptures. On the other hand, positive aspects of power evangelism seem to address the needs of the people. Hence, this shows that evangelism does involve the supernatural as well as the natural. O'Donovan thinks that this is an important approach in order to curb syncretism. He says:

Many African Christians fall into the temptation of syncretism today when they claim to follow Christ but continue to go to the witch-doctor for help, or to use fetishes, magic, charms, divination and even sorcery in times of personal crisis.

Why is this the case? It is because the needs of the African Christians have to be met. In fact, the failure of mainline churches to demonstrate power over evil has weakened some of these churches, as Walls notes:

What the independent churches have done time and again is to challenge the half-Christian who goes to church respectively, but then in secret, and with guilty feelings, goes off to the diviner to seek the cause of sickness and the way of healing.

They have failed to demonstrate the supernatural divine power of God and failed to bring a permanent end to syncretism. So power evangelism, from the scriptural point of view, is preaching the word of God in a way that totally overthrows supernatural evil. It is not about human philosophy, political ideologies or enlightenment, but rather that which frees the African Christian from the fear of witchcraft, magic, evil spirits, sorcerers, illness and curses, thus helping the African Christian to live, not in fear, but according to the Scriptures (2 Tim 1:7).

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96 Kraft, 'Power Encounter', p. 775
97 O'Donovan, Biblical Christianity, p. 256
98 Walls, The Missionary Movement, p. 117
The Theological Understanding of Power Evangelism

Power evangelism, from a theological perspective, reveals that the power of God is at the centre of preaching and teaching and that God's manifestation of his power cannot be limited to any particular time. Paul says:

My speech and my proclamation were not with plausible words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the spirit and of power, so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God (1 Cor 2:4-5).

It is not the power of an individual but the power of the Church. It is spiritual power since it comes from God and can be exercised in the name of Jesus. For example, among the Shona people, when faced with illness, barrenness, marital problems, poverty or accidents, their first instinct is to consult a traditional doctor or witch-doctor, so as to acquire 'medicine' to defend themselves against these evils. Therefore, the only way to prevent this practice among Christians is to show that Christians have power over these supernatural evils. They need to call on God who has the power:

We cried out to the Lord, the God of our ancestors; the Lord heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. The Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with a terrifying display of power, and with signs and wonders (Deut 26:7-8).

This shows that God has called his people into an exclusive relationship with him. On the other hand, power evangelism is not against the use of medical treatment. This does not mean that power evangelism prohibits, or is against, the use of modern medicine but does mean that God is still at work, performing miracles, and is able to meet the physical needs of the people even without modern medicine. Hence, Cobb says, 'Thank God for the doctors, and all they are doing in fighting disease; but, at its best, medical science is a very poor substitute for the Healing of Christ through His Church.' These beliefs still exist, even in the face of scientific explanations of illness and accidents. Additionally, power evangelism is not against non-Christians who consult their diviners and traditional

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doctors. However, power evangelism prevents Christians from being syncretistic. Hence, McKinney suggests that:

... if Christianity is to become truly relevant and transformative, it must address the same issues as the primal religion. This means the Christian missionary must understand the local primal religion and its means of dealing with specific issues, then together with local Christians search the Bible for a Christian perspective on these issues.\(^\text{101}\)

However, overemphasising power evangelism, in the long run, can end up being syncretistic itself. When power evangelism becomes the focus and miracles become common, they no longer remind us of God and their value; no longer hearing God speaking to us both in the natural or supernatural. Oftentimes, Christians revert to the practice of traditional religion in order to meet their needs if the Church fails to provide for them, for example with illness or barrenness. Therefore, the Church should be concerned with the everyday needs of human life and should minister to those needs in both personal and corporate ways. However, it is still a debateable issue whether the Church will be able to meet all the needs of the people, given the demands of time.

On the other hand, power evangelism gives an assurance that Christians have the power to overthrow the kingdom of Satan (Mark 16:17-18; Acts 1:8). It is exclusively spiritual and cannot be manipulated by human forces. Theologically, power evangelism demonstrates that Christ came to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:9). As a result, power evangelism helps Christians to stand firm in the faith and acknowledges that nothing is impossible with God: 'Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful' (Heb 10:23). For example, the Roman centurion exercises remarkable faith in Jesus to perform miraculous healing even from a distance (Matt 8:5-13). In another incident, the father of a young boy possessed with an evil spirit uttered to Jesus: 'I believe, help my unbelief' (Mark 9:24). Power evangelism demonstrates the continuous presence of God and the ability of believers to bind, loose and work miracles, as confirmed by Mark in his parting words: 'And they went out and

proclaimed the good news everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed
the message by signs that accompanied it' (Mark 16:20, in the disputed ending of Mark).

From another perspective, power evangelism confirms that God's power is far greater
than the works of the devil. O'Donovan says:

The Bible recognises that spells and curses and people such as witches
and sorcerers do have power. However, their power is nothing in
comparison with the power of the Almighty God (Is 47:9).

Whereby the power of witches and sorcerers seeks to gain advantage over people, God's
power is based on love. In fact, it is not only sorcerers who abuse that power; even some
ordinary people pretend to possess that power in order to manipulate others. The power
of God must never be used to give glory to human personalities or institutions. The
ultimate power is of God and it is used to defeat Satan; it must only give glory to God.

Hence, power evangelism becomes an indispensable element in the communication of
the gospel truth. Hence, Long says, 'Power is the key concept behind our
understanding of healing in Africa.' He goes on to say that, 'healing power is also
central to the ministries of the indigenous or independent churches in Africa. This
shows that power evangelism is the central concern of our day. Many times Christians
would seek to show to the world that their God is superior—by means of power
encounters, demonstrating his ability to heal and cast out demons—confident that when
non-Christians see these they will believe. However, these expectations are not part of
the Scriptures. Hiebert points out that, although power evangelism is good, not many
encounters in the Bible were followed by mass conversion. Therefore, the Church
needs to guard against a distortion of the biblical view of power.

102 O'Donovan, Biblical Christianity, p. 311
103 Van Rheenen, 'Theology of Power', p. 777
104 S. Ndoga, 'Power Evangelism' in J. Corrie (ed), Dictionary of Mission Theology Evangelical Foundation (Nottingham: Inter-Varsity
Press, 2007), p. 305
105 Long, Health, Healing and God's Kingdom, p. 120
106 P.G. Hiebert, 'Healing and the Kingdom' in J. Coggins & P. Hiebert (eds), Wonders and the Word (Winnipeg, MB: Kindred Press,
1989), p. 133
Finally, power evangelism should not be limited to any denomination, context or period. It has to find a place in the preaching work, otherwise the gospel that is preached is defective, robbed of its power.  

The Historical Understanding of Power Evangelism

When Christ sent out his disciples he not only instructed them to preach but also gave them the power to cast out demons and heal all kinds of diseases (Luke 9:1, 2; 10:9, 17; Mark 3:15; Matt 10:1, 8). Therefore, as evidenced in the Scriptures, there are miracles of healing, exorcism and deliverance. Hence, Kelsey points out that:

One of the reasons for the coming of Christ in Paul's theology was the rescue of men from this domination and set them free both from evil forces and from illness—moral, mental and physical—that came in their wake.

The book of Acts says: 'God did extraordinary miracles through Paul' (Acts 19:11). The writer's believes that this practice has not ceased, as some would suggest, and is not out of date. Although it is not part of this research to debate the issue of cessationalism, the aim is to give an overview of what has been happening with regard to power evangelism, or the divine supernatural, in the history of Christianity. These extraordinary or supernatural events were spoken of as 'miracles,' 'works of power' or 'signs and wonders.' Emms confirms this by saying, The word miracle means "power" or "a work of power". Therefore, miraculous signs are defined as: 'the supernatural phenomena believed to have a divine origin.' Consequently, this study deals with the divine origin of supernatural power versus the supernatural manifestation of evil forces, such as witchcraft, sorcery, spirit mediums and Satanism.

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107 Ndoga, 'Power Evangelism', p. 307  
110 Kelsey, Healing and Christianity, p. 110  
From the time of the Early Church Fathers there is evidence of occurrences of the supernatural after the name of Jesus has been used. Justin the Martyr (AD 100-165), in his apology, says:

For numberless demoniacs throughout the whole world, and in your city, many of our Christian men exorcising them in the name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, have healed and do heal rendering helpless and driving the possessing devils out of the men; they could not be cured by all the other exorcists and those who used incantations and drugs.\textsuperscript{113}

In this quotation, Justin the Martyr is indicating that demons were being driven out in the name of Jesus. Furthermore, in his dialogue with Trypho, he mentions that gifts once used by the Jews had been transferred to the Christians, acknowledging that Christians now had the power to perform wonders.\textsuperscript{114}

Tertullian (AD 160-220), in his writings, says:

What nobler than to tread underfoot the gods of the nations – to exorcise evil spirits – to perform cures – to seek divine intervention – to live to God? These are the pleasures, these the spectacles, that benefit Christian men – holy, everlasting, free.\textsuperscript{115}

To authenticate this, Tertullian quotes scriptures, such as the following:

Be strong, ye weak hands and ye feeble knees, then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall hear; then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall articulate (Is 35: 3-5).\textsuperscript{116}

Tertullian's argument is that as long as God is there to heal, even if Christians were to step on scorpions and serpents, he would heal them. Hence, Tertullian later joined the Montanists, who were regarded as heretics, possibly because they believed in miraculous healings. As Bruce says, it is not mentioned why Tertullian became a Montanist but


there should be 'something of solid worth in Montanism than is generally supposed, since it appealed to such an intelligent man as Tertullian.'

Origen (AD 185-254), one of Tertullian's contemporaries, writes:

The name of Jesus can still remove distraction from the minds of men, and expel demons, and also take away diseases, and produce a marvellous meekness of spirit and complete change of character.

This shows that a lot of people were being freed from grievous calamities and countless cures by invoking the name of Jesus Christ.

Tertullian, when writing to Scapula, writes:

The Clerk of one of them who was liable to be thrown upon the ground by an evil spirit, was set free from his affliction, as was also the relative of another, and the little boy of a third. How many men of rank (to say nothing of common people) have been delivered from devils, and healed of diseases.

Jenkins sums up by saying:

For Justin or Origen, the truth of Christianity was proved every time an ordinary Christian cast out demons, not through great occult learning, but through prayer and simply invoking the name of Jesus. As Tertullian boasted, "All the authority and power we have over them is from our naming of the name of Christ."

Even Cyprian (AD 200-258), in his address to Demetrianus, makes a statement of how demons feared Christians: 'You will see that under our hands they stand bound, and tremble as captives whom you look up to and venerate as Lords."

Gregory Thaumaturgus (AD 205-265) was regarded as a successful evangelist bishop of the town of Pontus in AD 240. It is said of him:

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120 Jenkins, *The New Face of Christianity*, p. 103
... and so well did he discharge the duties of his office, that while there were said to be only seventeen Christians in the whole city when he entered it as bishop, there were said to be only seventeen pagans in it at the time of his death. 122

Terry says that Gregory 'exposed pagan miracles as frauds and performed so many wonders himself.' 123 And Jenkins reasons thus: 'Let Gregory's surname "Wonder Worker" recall the chief basis for his name, as a singularly gifted exorcist and healer, who repeatedly overcame demons and pagan deities,' showing that Gregory, as far as his name was concerned, was gifted with the power of making miracles. 124

St. Augustine (AD 354-430) testifies that so many miracles happened during his ministry that he could not record them all. 125 He also thinks that miracles were performed so that the world would believe and that they have not ceased since. He even explains how Christians gain victory over evil, saying:

It is true piety that men of God cast out the hostile power of the air which opposes godliness. It is by exorcising it, not by propitiating it, and they overcome all the temptations of the adversary by praying, not to him, but to their own God against him. 126

During this period of the Early Church Fathers there were two other important figures: St. Martin (AD 316-397) and Jonas whose preaching was accompanied by miracles. 127 Comby writes that normally, 'after performing miracles, they destroyed the places of pagan worship, or had them destroyed, in order to discredit traditional religion completely.' 128

Between the sixth and seventh centuries Gregory of Tours (AD 540-594) exorcised a boy who was possessed with demonic powers. 129 His contemporary Gregory I (AD

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124 Jenkins, The New Face of Christianity, p. 99
126 Goetz (ed), Saint Augustine, Book 10, Chapter 22, p. 363
128 Comby, How to Understand the History, p. 16
540-604) was devoted to miracles and relics, and he had personally received healing which he attributed to God's power.\textsuperscript{130}

Neill confirms that people like Boniface (AD 680-754) used power encounters to demonstrate God's power to the superstitious Hessians. It was through power evangelism that Christianity became a dominant religion in the area.\textsuperscript{131} And Rudnick declares that before the death of Boniface there were more than one hundred thousand German Christians as a result of his ministry.\textsuperscript{132}

Between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries a number of prominent Christians performed signs and wonders in different ways. St. Francis of Assisi (AD 1181-1226) healed blind people, people with shrivelled hands and those paralysed. He also performed exorcism and deliverance on demon-possessed people. It is believed that St. Francis had to be buried hurriedly to prevent his body from being dismembered by people who wanted even the smallest relic that still carried the healing power he possessed in life.\textsuperscript{133} It could be that people had a misconception of where the power was coming from; that is, whether it was from St. Francis or from God. However, traces of this nature can be found in the Old Testament through the mantle of Elisha (2 Ki 2:14) and the bones of Elisha (2 Ki 2:14) as well as in the New Testament regarding the handkerchiefs that had been in touch with St. Paul's body (Acts 19:12), showing that people looked for such power.

It is noteworthy that Martin Luther (AD 1483-1546) did not believe in miracles and thought such things had ceased by the end of the apostolic era.\textsuperscript{134} However, towards the end of his life he accepted signs and wonders as a valid practice, quoting, and giving instructions based on the New Testament: "This is what we do and what we have been

\textsuperscript{130} Kelsey, Healing and Christianity, p. 228
\textsuperscript{132} M. L. Rudnick, Speaking the Gospel Through the Ages (St. Louis: Concordice Publishing House, 1984), p. 71
\textsuperscript{133} Kelsey, Healing and Christianity, p. 232
\textsuperscript{134} P.C. Wagner, Signs and Wonders Today (Altamonte Springs: Creation House, 1987), p. 60
accustomed to do, for the cabinetmaker here was similarly afflicted with madness and we cured him by prayer in Christ's name.\textsuperscript{135}

Another important figure is George Fox (AD 1624-1691) who knew the power of God through miracles and had also written a 'book of miracles,' though unpublished.\textsuperscript{136} However, having traced the existence of miracles through the history of the Church, there is a common trend that there were certain people against this, even within the Church, and those who thought all these gifts had ceased since then.\textsuperscript{137}

After giving a definition of power evangelism in this chapter, it is therefore relevant to address power evangelism within early Methodism as this would help in understanding the background of this argument and also in making a relevant comparison. Chapter 3 will discuss the traits of power evangelism from within the Methodist Church from its founders.

\textsuperscript{135} Kelsey, Healing and Christianity, p. 233
\textsuperscript{136} Kelsey, Healing and Christianity, p. 234
\textsuperscript{137} W. De Arteaga, Quenching the Spirit (Lake Mary: Creation House, 1992), pp. 255-263
This chapter will give evidence that demonstrates the existence or traits of power evangelism within early Methodism, thus helping the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, and Methodist churches in other countries, from rejecting or dismissing the supernatural as mere superstitious belief. Such evidence will help to authenticate the existence of power evangelism and highlight Methodism's rich heritage. However, the writer acknowledges that this evidence will not prevent those who are sceptical about power evangelism either from dismissing it or disapproving of it, despite there being plentiful evidence. Therefore, it can be seen that it is not only about the quantity of proof required to help people to believe in power evangelism, it is also necessary to deal with the subject from a scholarly point of view by thorough investigation to meet the level of proof needed to confirm its existence; but this, again, will not stop critics from airing their views. In order to meet a sufficient level of evidence requisite to establish a particular claim, that evidence must be commensurate with the claim being made. The investigation, therefore, begins by examining some of the incidents found within various journals, diaries and hymns, and also the views of other Methodist theologians.

This research does not attempt to disprove those who do not believe in power evangelism; rather, it endeavours to expose something previously left out or sidelined within the Methodist Church. The researcher considers that the academic field has put much emphasis on other aspects of theology at the expense of power evangelism; so much so that the subject has become a taboo among those whose theological background is as limited as his. Assuming that the evidence will not prove ambiguous to the reader, this study aims to conduct a thorough investigation of it so that there are no signs of deficiency, not only to give evidence but to show that God has 'not just made himself known in biblical times and then disappeared. There is continuous and documented
evidence of his disclosure throughout the history of the Church. Furthermore, it strives to prove Dunn's assertion that:

... the earliest Christian community was essentially charismatic and enthusiastic in nature, in every aspect of its common life and worship ... The fact is that ecstatic and physical phenomenon have been a regular concomitant of religious awakening and revival movements within the history of Christianity.

Although it could be argued that this evidence will not automatically restore the life and power existent in early Methodism, nevertheless it could bring about a revival of what it was before, as Sowton echoes: 'It happened to John Wesley. It can happen to you.'

In researching the aspect of power evangelism within early Methodism, it seems proper to introduce what the researcher believes to be the two most important dates when it all began and these are with regard to John Wesley's ministry. The most important date is Wednesday, 24 May 1738 when Wesley received an extraordinary call:

In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God made in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation. And an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.

This is a very significant period for both John Wesley and his brother Charles, for it was at about the same time that Charles was made a partaker of the same blessing. This was the day that marked the change of everything in John Wesley's evangelical preaching. He began to preach justification by faith in Christ, preaching the things he had seen and felt. Rattenbury also echoes the same sentiments:

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140 S. Sowton, It Happened to John Wesley (London: The Epworth Press, 1938), p. 95
142 Wesleyan Methodist Church, The Works of John Wesley, Vol. 1, 24 May 1738, p. 103
143 Rattenbury, Wesley's Legacy, p. 64

54
All that the Wesleys said of permanent value to the human race came out of their evangelical experience. All their distinctive doctrine was discovered in the realm of the spirit which had been supernaturally opened and revealed to them in May 1738.144

Hence, the writer considers this to be a significant date with regard to power evangelism; a distinctive date marking the beginning of power evangelism in Methodism.

The second important date is 1 January 1739:

Mr. Hall, Kindim, Ingham, Whitefield, Hutchings, and my brother Charles, were present at our love-feast in Fetter-lane, with about sixty of our brethren. About three in the morning, as we were continuing instant in prayer, the power of God came mightily upon us, insomuch that many cried out for exceeding joy, and many fell to the ground. As soon as we were recovered a little from that awe and amazement at the presence of his Majesty, we broke out with one voice, "We praise thee, O God; we acknowledge thee to be the Lord."145

These above two dates are so important as far as this research is concerned: the former showing John Wesley's religious experience; the latter introducing a form of religion that demonstrates the supernatural power and the presence of God, just like Paul's experience on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-17). Paul's preaching was based on his personal experience.

Although the two brothers received the same experience, it seems that John Wesley was the more distinguished one, with regard to the subject of supernatural evangelism, in the way that he preached:

People's lives were changed because Wesley's message somehow rang true in the very depths of their being; they genuinely felt that their lives were being touched and changed by the power of God.146

However, Charles Wesley's acknowledgement of power evangelism can be seen in the hymns he composed, showing he had encountered the same experience:

144 Rattenbury, *Wesley's Legacy*, p. 83
There was nothing in the life of a Methodist he could think of for which Charles Wesley did not provide a hymn. One of the hymns is for the sick:

Hail, great Physician of mankind,  
Jesus, Thou art from every ill.  
Health in Thine only name we find,  
Thy name doth in the medicine.  

This highlights the power of healing that God provides through His Son Jesus Christ. Consequently, it is this experience that the Wesleys shared through the revelation of the Scriptures, and many people who were dead in their sins, drunkards, prostitutes, blasphemers and non-Christians, became subjects of the power of the Holy Spirit.

The researcher believes that miraculous divine power was a part of these religious experiences, although others would regard them as hallucinations, fanaticism and superstition. Hence, it could be argued that those who just label power evangelism as cheap enthusiasm have not had the experience which brings the power of God to rest upon them, so that they could speak with authority and power and then God bless their testimony. Rattenbury says:

An objective spiritual world unrealizable by the senses and cognizable by faith is plainly assumed by the experience of the Methodist. God broke through them as He did on Paul on his way to Damascus. While this can never be exactly demonstrated to people who lack the experience, it is confirmed by millions who have shared it.

As the power that God can use is not in them, they consequently view it as enthusiasm, although not in the right manner but, rather, in a derogatory way, showing signs of disorder which greatly hinders the exercise of reason. Hence, when John Wesley received the experience, he said:

147 Rattenbury, Wesley's Legacy, p. 300  
148 Rattenbury, Wesley's Legacy, p. 301  
149 Rattenbury, Wesley's Legacy, p. 76  
150 Rattenbury, Wesley's Legacy, p. 80  
151 F.J. Snell, Wesley and Methodism (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1900), p.161
And herein I found the difference between this and my former state chiefly consisted. I was striving, yea, fighting with all my might under the law, as well as under grace. But then, sometimes, if not often conquered, now I was always conqueror.¹⁵²

It is similar to someone wanting to have the Christian experience before becoming a Christian. In defence of their being called enthusiasts, John Wesley replied:

Whatever is spoke of religion of the heart, and of the inward workings of the spirit of God, must appear enthusiasm to those who have not felt them; that is, if they take upon them to judge of the things they own they know not.¹⁵³

Lyles echoes that 'if the inspiration which the Methodists alleged to receive did not come from God, it must come from Satan.'¹⁵⁴ Those who were anti-Methodist went on to say:

The apostles, after Pentecost, had been given thaumaturgical powers. Their allegation of inspiration was verifiable by evidence, the miracles they worked. The Methodist had no such powers and worked no miracles.¹⁵⁵

In other words, all those who were anti-Methodist believed that the Methodists were falsifying the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Thus, it can be seen that, although this research is mainly concerned with power evangelism within early Methodism, the background, too, is very important as a reflection in that, even though the supernatural happenings existed during this period, they were not accepted by all as the work of the Holy Spirit. In some instances, even then, the Methodists did not expect such extraordinary happenings.

Wesley defines power evangelism as the demonstration of the truth of Christianity that arises from the prophecies of the Old Testament and the miracles of Christ and his apostles.¹⁵⁶ He also says that the truth of Christianity is 'evidenced by the demonstration

¹⁵⁴ Lyles, *Methodism Mocked*, p. 37
¹⁵⁵ Lyles, *Methodism Mocked*, p. 37
of the spirit and of power.'\textsuperscript{157} He further explains that, 'the demonstration of power must signify the power of God exerted in miracles,' and quotes 1 Corinthians 2:4-5 to support his definition: 'That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God.'\textsuperscript{158} The 'power of God,' therefore, must necessarily be understood to be the miracles performed by Christ and his apostles.\textsuperscript{159} Wesley believed that God was still performing these signs and wonders even in his day: 'So many living witnesses hath God given that his hand is still "stretched out to heal" and that "signs and wonders are even now wrought by his holy child Jesus.'\textsuperscript{160} He goes on to say:

Thence I went to Baldwin Street and expounded, as it came in course, the fourth chapter of Acts. We then called upon God to confirm his word. Immediately one that stood by (to our no small surprise) cried out loud, with utmost vehemence, even as in the agonies of death.\textsuperscript{161}

This incident means that they were under the power of God as Wesley gives profound thankfulness that such wonderful bodily effects had now become part of his ministry.\textsuperscript{162} Wesley shows his belief that God performs the supernatural by asking God to confirm his word.

It is because of this belief that Rack states:

[John Wesley] supported supernaturalists' beliefs with empiricist arguments well beyond what Locke would have allowed in his more limited form of rational supernaturalism which avoided Deism by allowing for the truths beyond but not contrary to reason; such as a biblical revelation supported by miracles and prophecy safely to the past.\textsuperscript{163}

Rack noted that Wesley believed that 'what happened in the Bible could perfectly well happen in his own day.'\textsuperscript{164} Hence, the direct action of God is made manifest 'through events which either wrought judgements on evildoers and scoffers or saved saints or those later to be converts from danger and death;' these events being regarded as

\textsuperscript{157} Wesley, 'A Further Appeal', p. 89
\textsuperscript{158} Wesleyan Methodist Church, \textit{The Works of John Wesley}, Vol. 8, p. 89
\textsuperscript{159} Wesleyan Methodist Church, \textit{The Works of John Wesley}, Vol. 1, 20 May 1739, p. 196
\textsuperscript{160} Wesleyan Methodist Church, \textit{The Works of John Wesley}, Vol. 1, 17 April 1739, p. 187
\textsuperscript{161} Wesleyan Methodist Church, \textit{The Works of John Wesley}, Vol. 1, 17 April 1739, p. 187
\textsuperscript{164} Rack, \textit{Reasonable Enthusiasts}, p. 387
supernatural acts. In Rack's definition of the supernatural, the following were a part of the early Methodist world:

The Methodist supernatural world, officially at least, sanitized and scripturalized what was accepted: dreams, visions, and healing were sanctioned; demons were exorcised; but resort to charms and witchcraft were opposed.

Hence, Wesley was not disturbed by the occurrences since he regarded them to be from God. Although he had it in mind 'to regard extraordinary circumstances too much,' Wesley said, 'perhaps the danger is to regard them too little.' Similarly, Lewis says:

... there are two equal opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them.

In fact, writers like Synan say that the supernatural demonstration 'to the faithful were seen as signs of God's presence and power.' Therefore, for Wesley the 'jerks,' 'holy dance,' trembling, outcries, falling on the ground, holy laugh and the fits were all supernatural and he regarded these as signs and wonders.

Notable are Cennick's remarks about his friend John Wesley and the supernatural, as recorded by Dallimore:

And frequently when none were agitated in the meetings, he [Wesley] prayed, "Lord!" Where are thy tokens and signs, and I don't remember ever to have seen it otherwise than that on his so praying several were seized and screamed out.

The Birth of Power Evangelism (Supernatural)

Firstly, the writer will explain the importance of 24 May 1738. This is regarded as John Wesley's 'New Birth.' Synan explains that Wesley regarded this as an important event as he described it in various ways—'second blessings,' 'entire sanctification,' 'perfect love,' 'Christian perfection' or 'heart purity'—and that Wesley's colleague, John Fletcher, was

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165 Rack, Reasonable Enthusiasts, p. 432
166 Rack, Reasonable Enthusiasts, p. 435
167 W. Wagner, Signs and Wonders, p. 60
the first to call it 'a baptism of the Holy Spirit, an experience that brought spiritual power to the recipient, as well as inner cleansing.'\textsuperscript{171} By this, Fletcher was referring to the New Birth that John Wesley had received. Before 24 May 1738, 'Wesley portrays himself as only formally religious and without any notion of inward holiness.'\textsuperscript{172} Wesley was now a changed person.

Turning to 1 January 1739, this was the birth of Pentecost within early Methodism, as recorded in one of Wesley's journals, and it could be noted that this was the beginning of John Wesley's ministry or evangelistic campaign being accompanied by the demonstration of the supernatural.\textsuperscript{173} As Wesley was declaring the word of God everywhere, miraculous signs and wonders were taking place. Bridge is in agreement with this when he mentioned that:

\begin{quotation}
People began to fall down unconscious or go into hysterics under the hammer-blows of their preaching, signs of demon-possession they met and dealt with as best as they know how.\textsuperscript{174}
\end{quotation}

So this date (1 January 1739) marked the beginning of supernatural impartation, when they would preach the gospel and follow their preaching with the demonstration of the spirit and power of God. They needed power from on high for this to happen. Warner points out that:

\begin{quotation}
Revival is not simply organised evangelism; it is a mighty visitation of the spirit of God. And where God comes powerfully among his people there are always physical signs of his presence ... where there is revival and the spirit is outpoured in power, strange and strong manifestations can be expected.\textsuperscript{175}
\end{quotation}

This could be true, as Drummond explains how the power of revival took place in New England where people were 'falling to the floor under the grip of the Holy Spirit.'\textsuperscript{176} Also, White suggests that revival movements were accompanied by strange

\begin{footnotes}
\item 171 Synan, The Century of the Holy Spirit, p. 2
\item 172 Rack, Reasonable Enthusiasts, p. 70
\item 173 Wesleyan Methodist Church, The Works of John Wesley, Vol. 1, 1 January 1739, p. 170
\item 174 D. Bridge, Power Evangelism and the Word of God (Eastbourne, Sussex: Kingsway Publications, 1987), p. 132
\item 175 R. Warner, Prepare for Revival (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1995), p. 44
\item 176 L. Drummond, Eight Keys to Biblical Revival (Minnesota: Bethany House Publishers, 1994), p. 170
\end{footnotes}
phenomena.\textsuperscript{177} It can be said that the 'supernatural' elements in the ministry became obvious after 1 January 1739.

When Wesley tried to explain to Whitefield that signs and wonders were part of the ministry, he [Whitefield] quickly dismissed this. On 7 July 1739, Wesley wrote:

I had an opportunity to talk to him of those outward signs which had so often accompanied the inward work of God. I found his objections were chiefly grounded in gross misrepresentation of matter of fact. But the next day he [Whitefield] had an opportunity of informing himself better: for no sooner had he begun (in application of his sermon) to invite all sinners to believe in Christ, than four persons sunk down close to him, almost in the same movement. A second trembled exceedingly. The third had strong convulsions all over his body but made no noise, unless by groans. The fourth, equally convulsed, called upon God, with strong cries and tears. From this time, I trust, we shall all suffer God to carry on his own work in the way that pleaseth him.\textsuperscript{178}

One would wonder whether this was the same Whitefield to whom people would now refer for the full demonstration of their inspiration:

If anyone doubts the truth of what I have affirmed, let him come to Mr. — (a Methodist leader, probably Whitefield), and he will furnish him with proof sufficient from his own dreams, visions, fancies, reveries and revelations.\textsuperscript{179}

The people needed this enduement power, just as did the disciples. There were already Christians before the day of Pentecost, but they did not have the enduement of power necessary to carry out the mission assigned to them. As Wesley often says, there are those 'who have a form of godliness without the power (2 Tim. 3:5); I had the faith; but I had it by knowledge, and not in power.'\textsuperscript{180}

On 21 January 1739, the same month in which they received the power of the Holy Spirit, Wesley says: 'We were surprised in the evening, while I was expounding in the Minories. A well-dressed middle-aged woman suddenly cried out as in the agonies of

\textsuperscript{177} White, \textit{When the Spirit Comes}, pp. 41-42
\textsuperscript{178} Wesleyan Methodist Church, \textit{The Works of John Wesley}, Vol. 1, 7 July 1739, p. 210
\textsuperscript{179} Lyles, \textit{Methodism Mocked}, p. 39
\textsuperscript{180} Wesleyan Methodist Church, \textit{The Works of John Wesley}, Vol. 1, 8 May 1742, p. 368
This woman had called a physician under the advice of her husband but was not healed; however, on this very night she was healed. To Wesley, this was unquestionably a case of divine healing of the highest order, and it was of no surprise that the woman was healed suddenly.

It is notable that, after 1 January 1739, there were many incidents relating to the manifestation of the power of God. There was something extraordinary in Wesley's preaching. For instance, whilst he was preaching at Newgate on 26 April 1739, he said:

Immediately one, and another, and another sank to the earth: they dropped every side as thunderstruck. One of them cried aloud. We besought God in her behalf; and he returned her heaviness into joy. A second being in the same agony, we called upon God for her also; and he spoke peace unto her soul.

To show that such events were not usual, Wesley remarked on 30 April 1739:

We understood that many were offended at the cries of those to whom the power of God came; among whom was a physician, who was much afraid, there might be fraud or imposture in the case.

In fact, such remarks as these indicate that Wesley believed these strange occurrences were manifestations of the power of God; and because these incidents are so numerous, the researcher found it necessary to group them together according to subject themes and their occurrences.

### Power in Faith Healing

The belief existed among the early Methodists that cures of diseases and other ailments could be effected by divine intervention, invoked by prayer. Indeed, the Bible says: 'Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much' (James 5:16). In fact, Jesus became a source of healing ministry in Christianity by effecting miraculous cures of both body and mind. Jesus also gave his disciples the power of healing, saying of

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183 Wesleyan Methodist Church, *The Works of John Wesley*, Vol. 1, 26 April 1739, p. 188
those who believed that 'they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover' (Mark 16:15-18).

This was the authority for healing ministry for the early Church. Subsequently, the Methodist Church employed the same method. In early Methodism, healing was carried out in a variety of ways—deliverance, miraculous healing, exorcism—and such healing is recorded in Wesley's journals as a testimonial to the operation of the Holy Spirit. His writings show that healing and comfort of soul were brought about through prayers:

On Saturday, March 1, 1740 – Many that were in heaviness being met together, we cried to God to comfort their souls. One of these soon found that God heareth prayer. She had before been under the physician's hands, her relations taking it for she was "beside herself." But the Great Physician alone knew how to heal her sickness. 185

Here, Wesley is referring to God as the Great Physician who would bring medicine made from heaven.

On another occasion, Wesley himself was seized with pain on his side while he was preaching, so that he even failed to speak. 186 He said: 'I knew my remedy; and immediately kneeled down. In a moment, the pain was gone.' 187 Wesley had strong faith in the power of God for healing and he further indicates his belief when he said, in 1741:

Yet in the evening my weakness was suspended, while I was calling sinners to repentance. But at our love-feast which followed, beside the pain in my back and head, and the fever which still continued upon me, just as I began to pray, I was seized with such a cough, that I could hardly speak. At that same time came strongly into my mind, "These signs follow them that believe." I called on Jesus aloud to "increase my faith," and to "confirm the word of his grace." While I was speaking my pain vanished away; the fever left me; my bodily strength returned; and for many weeks I felt neither weakness nor pain. "Unto thee, O Lord, do I give thanks." 188

185 Wesleyan Methodist Church, The Works of John Wesley, Vol. 1, 1 March 1740, p. 264
186 Wesleyan Methodist Church, The Works of John Wesley, Vol. 1, 21 March 1741, p. 304
188 Wesleyan Methodist Church, The Works of John Wesley, Vol. 1, 8 May 1741, p. 310
Wesley made this commendation before three medical doctors who believed that his disorder had only one method of cure, but Wesley answered that, 'God has more than one method of healing either the soul or body,' asserting before them his strong faith in God as the source of all healing. Maddocks echoes the fact that Wesley practised what he preached as he would pray equally for God's healing for his own infirmities.

The following incident illustrates how a child was healed immediately after baptism:

Mary Welch, aged eleven days, was baptised according to the custom of the First Church and the rule of the Church of England by immersion. The child was ill then, but recovered from that hour.

Wesley said that God does not have only one method of healing and this is evident in a remarkable incident that happened on 28 September 1739:

I met with a fresh proof, that "whatsoever ye ask, believing, ye shall receive." A middle-aged woman who desired me to return thanks for her to God, who, as many witnesses then present testified, was a day or two before really distracted, and as much tied down in her bed. But upon prayer made for her, she was instantly relieved, and restored to a sound mind.

And at another time:

My brother had a second return of his pleurisy. A few of us spent Saturday night in prayer. The next day, being Whit Sunday, after hearing Dr. Heylyn preach a truly Christian sermon on 'They were all filled with the Holy Ghost.' And so, said he, "may all you be, if it is not your own fault," and assisting him at the Holy Communion (his curate being taken ill in the church) I received the surprising news that my brother had found rest to his soul. His bodily strength returned also from that hour. "Who is so great a God as our God?"

These incidents reveal how much faith Wesley had in the healing power of God. In fact, it appears that the power of healing revived their ministry of evangelism and also shows that Wesley was urging others to talk about healing, as is stated in his sermon (Sermon CIII):

191 Wesleyan Methodist Church, The Works of John Wesley, Vol. 1, 21 February 1736, p. 25
193 Wesleyan Methodist Church, The Works of John Wesley, Vol. 1, 19 May 1738, pp. 96-97
Do as he did in the days of his flesh. Whenever thou hast an opportunity, go on doing good, and healing, all that are oppressed of the devil, encouraging them to shake off his chains and flee immediately.  

Significantly, Wesley knew from where divine healing came. For Wesley, it is the direct, supernatural power of God upon the body or soul. In 1746, Wesley recounts he had a terrible headache for almost three days:

The third day, on Wednesday in the afternoon, my memory failed, almost entirely. In the evening, I sought my remedy in prayer. On Thursday morning my headache was gone.

Further incidents of miraculous healing are three claims of Wesley's horse being healed; these incidents being recorded in his journals of 17 March 1746, 2 September 1781 and 23 May 1783. It seems that Wesley related these incidents positively and he recorded the slightest occurrences, which he considered to be evidence of the power of God. Hence, Madden acknowledges that, 'Wesley retained a place for faith-healing and supernatural or miraculous instances of recovery and cure.'

Noteworthy is Wesley's gradual understanding that he was sent to perform these miracles and the realisation of the power that was bestowed in him: 'But I found Mr. Lunell in so violent a fever, that there was little hope of his life. But he revived the moment he saw me, and fell into a breathing sweat. He began to recover from that time. Perhaps for this also was I sent."

Notably, some healing was not performed by Wesley himself, as he records: 'While at Leonberg, a cripple, who could hardly move with crutches, was healed as the preacher was explaining on Mark 16:17: "And these signs shall follow them that believe."' As

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194 J. Wesley, *Sermons on Several Occasions* (Leeds: John Barr, 1825), pp. 279-280
a result, it is no surprise to hear Wesley deny that miracles have ceased. Miracles to Wesley were evidence that proved the power that was in God, since faith in miracles caused the Methodists to increase in number rather than diminish. As he said: 'wherever the power of God is not, they decrease.' Hence, Rack noted that, 'Wesley catered generously enough in his journals and magazine for these tastes with accounts of wonders in nature.'

It is of paramount importance that miracles of faith healing were happening on a large scale and Wesley even asks if there are any who deny or doubt such incidents. However, there is something of which to take note. Wesley did not depend entirely on the supernatural for healing; he used other remedies as well: for example, the use of the Primitive Psychic and electrification. Hence, Porterfield, in her defence of Wesley's use of electricity, says: 'Wesley never thought of God as being limited to electricity, but he did think of electricity as an elemental form of power, derived from God, working in and through nature.' According to Madden, 'Wesley believed that prayer and the love of God were useful balm for soothing the passions.' Furthermore, Maddocks seems to echo the same sentiments by saying that, 'Most of all, however, the love of God is the panacea for all our diseases and illness and it becomes the most powerful of all the means of health and long life.' Hence, Wesley's view of disease was theologically informed and he believed that alleviation, if not cure, could be found in the natural world provided by God. All this seems to be pointing to faith healing. In Wesley's journals of 20, 23 and 25 December 1742 he records a healing of someone whose pulse had gone and his legs were cold and he was (seemingly) dead already. However, through prayer, the man recovered. But what does all this prove? Wesley remarked: 'Not that I

203 Wesleyan Methodist Church, The Works of John Wesley, Vol. 4, 5 August 1777, p. 108
204 Rack, Reasonable Enthusiasts, p. 432
205 Wesleyan Methodist Church, The Works of John Wesley, Vol. 3, 26 December 1761, pp. 76-77
206 Porterfield, Healing in the History of Christianity, p. 164
207 Madden, 'Wesley as Adviser on Health and Healing', pp. 186-187
208 Maddocks, 'Health and Healing', p. 144
209 Madden, 'Wesley as Adviser', p. 188
claim any gift above other men, but only that I believe that God now hears and answers prayer even beyond the ordinary course of nature.\footnote{Wesley, ‘A Letter to The Reverend Dr. Conyers Middleton’, p. 47}

**Mysterious Power**

It is only through reading Wesley's journals that one discovers his beliefs. One such belief is that of mysterious power, although it seems that many Protestant churches did not believe in miraculous power, and Wesley alludes to this in his journal, on 11 January 1750:

> I read, to my no small amazement, the account given by Monsieur Montgeron, both of his conversion and of the other miracles wrought at the tomb of Abbe Paris. I had always looked upon the whole affair as a mere legend, as I suppose most Protestants do, but I see no possible way to deny these facts, without invalidating all human testimony. I may full as reasonably deny there is such a person as Mr. Montgeron, or such a city as Paris in the world.\footnote{Wesleyan Methodist Church, *The Works of John Wesley*, Vol. 2, 11 January 1750, p. 171}

Owing to the fact that Wesley had a strong belief in miraculous happenings, he went on to argue, in his journal dated 15 August 1750:

> ... that the Montanists were real, scriptural Christians, and, 2, that the grand reason why the miraculous gifts were so soon withdrawn was not only that faith and holiness were well nigh lost, but that dry, formal, orthodox men began even then to ridicule whatever gifts they had not themselves, and to decry them as either madness or imposture.\footnote{Wesleyan Methodist Church, *The Works of John Wesley*, Vol. 2, 15 August 1750, p. 205}

This point was again made in his letter to Dr. Middleton when he argued that Montanus and his associates were not the first authors to raise the spirit of enthusiasm in the Church and to acquire great credit by their visions and ecstasies. Wesley says, 'Sir, you forget; they did not "raise the spirit" but rather Joel and St. Peter; according to whose words the young men saw visions, before Montanus was born,' thereby declaring his position to be more scriptural and that all the extraordinary happenings were in accordance with the Scriptures.\footnote{Wesley, ‘A Letter to The Reverend Dr. Conyers Middleton’, p. 47} Wesley went on to say that:

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It is true that God hath put the world; but this is to be understood with limitation, because there are some more mysterious works of God, which no man can fully understand because he cannot search them out from the beginning to the end.\textsuperscript{215}

Hence, in the above incident, we see the power of God in a very strange way.

Wesley also included in his journals accounts of mystical retribution surrounding the early Methodist ministry; the first being on 24 August 1743 when someone was preaching against this sect (Methodism). The person fell in the pulpit and died three days later.\textsuperscript{216} As if this was not enough, on 15 June 1769, another minister, who cursed the Methodist Church in his preaching, was tormented by hobgoblins.\textsuperscript{217} The same current is also observed on 15 August 1744 when Wesley went to Bedlam to a woman who was struck raving mad after speaking against him and his brother Charles.\textsuperscript{218} Yet another similar incident happened on 23 October 1740. This involved one who was cursing and blaspheming, trying to hinder the work of God: 'But on Friday God laid his hand upon him, and on Sunday he was buried.'\textsuperscript{219} Therefore, there can be no doubt that Wesley attributed his death to the work of God. Similarly, on 12 April 1740 Wesley witnessed an instant death.\textsuperscript{220} On 9 June 1752, in Todmorden, there was a minister who was recovering from a palsy with which he was struck immediately after having preached a virulent sermon against Methodism.\textsuperscript{221}

As a result of reading such incidents, it is clearly evident that Wesley believed in divine, mystical retribution from God. This can be further understood on reading his commentary on Acts 12:21-23:

\begin{quote}
God does not delay to vindicate his injured honour; an angel of the Lord smote him [Herod] ... Men did not see the instruments in either case. They were only known to the people of God.\textsuperscript{222}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{216} Wesleyan Methodist Church, \textit{The Works of John Wesley}, Vol. 1, 24 August 1743, p. 426
\textsuperscript{217} Wesleyan Methodist Church, \textit{The Works of John Wesley}, Vol. 3, 15 June 1769, p. 366
\textsuperscript{218} Wesleyan Methodist Church, \textit{The Works of John Wesley}, Vol. 1, 15 August 1744, p. 468
\textsuperscript{219} Wesleyan Methodist Church, \textit{The Works of John Wesley}, Vol. 1, 23 October 1740, p. 291
\textsuperscript{220} Wesleyan Methodist Church, \textit{The Works of John Wesley}, Vol. 1, 12 April 1740, p. 269
\textsuperscript{221} Wesleyan Methodist Church, \textit{The Works of John Wesley}, Vol. 2, 9 June 1752, p. 264
Whilst Sandford and Sandford feel there are many grey areas in dealing with this subject, Wesley believed these mysterious powers emanated from God. 223

**Exorcism and Deliverance**

The subject of power over demons or evil spirits is one that is found in the ministry of the early Methodists. Demonic powers would unveil some of these phenomena, as in Mark 7:24-30; 9:17-29. As one reads Wesley's journals, one becomes aware of the existence of demonic and evil powers during his ministry.

Wesley believed that evil powers were present and needed to be cast out, as Jesus did to Legion (Mark 5:1-20). In fact, Wesley's sermon *Of Evil Angels* (Sermon LXXII) defines demon possession. 224 The reality of this sermon regarding evil or demonic possession stands upon the same evidence as in the Scriptures in general. Reports and records of incidents showing cases of demonic possessions, followed by deliverance or exorcism, will be disclosed in this research and an example is shown in the following letters, the first being received by Wesley on 9 February 1739:

A note was given me at Wapping, in nearly these words:-

"Your prayers are desired for a child that is lunatic and sore vexed day and night, that our Lord would be pleased to heal him, as he did those in the days of his flesh and that he would give his parents faith and patience till his time is come." 225

A second letter, dated 13 February 1739, shows how the problem was dealt with and that prayer was the first of many weapons used by Wesley to disarm the indwelling evil spirit, or demons, troubling the boy. 226

It is noteworthy that, for Wesley, deliverance was required both from demons and from sin; the latter being shown in his own condition as someone under bondage to sin and who himself needed deliverance from sin on 24 May 1738. He said: 'In this vile, abject


state of bondage to sin, I was indeed fighting continually, but not conquering. In fact, Kraft thinks that there is nothing new in the ministry of deliverance besides 'imitating Jesus by freeing his creatures from the enemy and that God gives us the power and authority to do it.'

Porterfield sees exorcism to be the core of Jesus' healing ministry. In an incident which happened on 5 December 1738, Wesley stands as an exorcist and there is healing and deliverance after commanding prayer in the name of Jesus. According to MacNutt, however, 'the Protestant Reformers, for the most part, deemphasized exorcism or did away with it altogether.' In fact, exorcism was regarded as mere superstition. Hence, Wesley performed exorcism in the midst of the popular belief of cessationists. It seems Wesley was already familiar with exorcism as he states the different conditions of the ones possessed, for instance: 'We prayed; the violence of her symptoms ceased, though without a complete deliverance.' Some of the people possessed would have preternatural knowledge of Wesley's coming. As recorded on 28 October 1739, it can be seen that Wesley was able to detect someone who was under demonic possession. Sometimes Wesley would claim the gift of discernment and that this spiritual discernment was accompanied by the knowledge of exorcism.

There are many similar manifestations of evil possession recorded in Wesley's journals and it seems that, during this era, possession by evil spirits was still being encountered rather than being a thing of a bygone era. What is interesting is that Wesley not only believed in the existence of evil spirits or demons but also knew how to exorcise them, sometimes dealing with issues where medical physicians had failed. Noteworthy is the fact that Wesley believed in what the Bible says about evil spirits or demons and did not negate the fact that their existence did not cease but still operates even in his day.

229 Porterfield, Healing in the History of Christianity, p. 36
230 Wesleyan Methodist Church, The Works of John Wesley, Vol. 1, 5 December 1738, p. 165
231 MacNutt, Deliverance from Evil Spirits, p. 138
232 MacNutt, Deliverance from Evil Spirits, p. 138
236 Wesleyan Methodist Church, The Works of John Wesley, Vol. 1, 12 January 1741, p. 296
Belief in Witchcraft

Witchcraft, although known as the 'Old Religion' which dates back to the biblical times, is sometimes misunderstood and misinterpreted.\(^{237}\) Both the Old and New Testaments make repeated references to the practice of witchcraft, showing that it is condemned by God (Ex 22:18; Gal 5:19-20). In fact, the Bible does not differentiate between witchcraft and sorcery; it seems that witchcraft, sorcery and divination are used interchangeably.

The biblical understanding of witchcraft seems to be in line with the Shona understanding of witchcraft, although the Shona understanding makes a distinction between the sorcerer and the witch. According to the Shona, a witch is one who unconsciously or consciously attacks the enemy through supernatural means, and a sorcerer is one who consciously harms his fellow by use of supernatural, harmful objects.\(^{238}\) Similarly, Baskin says, 'About one third of the components of witchcraft in mediaeval Europe originated in sorcery.'\(^{239}\) Hence, Baskin again states that in many languages the equivalent of the word 'witch' is 'sorcerer.'\(^{240}\) Furthermore, many elements of European witchcraft are also found in the sorcery of other societies. Among the 50 motifs common to both traditions are these: disturbances of the air, travelling on the broom; cats, beehives or other vehicles; animals roaming by night to carry out a mission for their masters; metamorphosis; the use of magic ointments to cause changes to occur; night meetings, choice of holy days for meetings; regarding bees as evil spirits; associating blackness with evil; believing that witches leave their bodies to roam about; cannibalism; associating witches with certain animals—cats, dogs, frogs, toads, mice, lizards, owls, horses and cocks; nudity and the circular dance; crossroads, the evil eye and ligature; pacts with demons; sexual orgies, including copulation with demons; the use of salt to ward off evil; and sticks as magic wands.\(^{241}\)

\(^{237}\) McDowell & Stewart, *Handbook of Today’s Religions*, p. 260
\(^{240}\) Baskin, *The Supernatural Source Book*, p. 610
\(^{241}\) Baskin, *The Supernatural Source Book*, p. 610
Bourdillion, who also wrote extensively about the Shona people, says:

Witchcraft can explain all types of misfortune from minor ailments to conflict with an employer or losing one's job, and many Shona believe that death is always due to witchcraft.\textsuperscript{242}

Witchcraft, though, is universal among the Shona and throughout the world but among the Shona the emphasis and belief differ from those of other parts of the world.\textsuperscript{243}

It seems that the early Methodists believed in witchcraft and that Wesley was really a Biblicist as far as witchcraft was concerned. Both his journals and his notes on the Bible indicate this. He even made a defence against those who thought that witchcraft did not exist but regarded it as mere superstition. Wesley made this strong remark:

It is true, likewise, that the English in general, and indeed most of the men of learning in Europe, have given up all accounts of witches and apparitions as mere old wives' fables. I am sorry for it; and I willingly take this opportunity of entering my solemn protest against this violent compliment which so many that believe the Bible pay to those who do not believe it.\textsuperscript{244}

In other words, Wesley is saying that to deny the evidence about witchcraft contained in both the Old and the New Testaments is to deny everything in the Bible.

The narrative of the medium of Endor (1 Sam 28:7-25) and the scriptures at Exodus 22:18 and at Deuteronomy 18:10 all show that witchcraft is being condemned. Also, looking back in Church history, both Tertullian and Augustine believed in witchcraft.\textsuperscript{245}

So, it is evident that a belief in witchcraft has existed down through the centuries. Furthermore, the following recording was made regarding William Penn (1644-1718) who was a Quaker and the founder of Pennsylvania:

... a suspected witch was brought for trial before Penn ... But when the witch appeared before Penn he asked her, "Art thou a witch? Hast thou ridden through the air on a broomstick?" "Yes," she said. There must have been a gasp in the Court.\textsuperscript{246}

\textsuperscript{242} M. Bourdillion, \textit{The Shona Peoples} (Gwelo: Mambo Press, 1976), p. 199
\textsuperscript{243} Bourdillion, \textit{The Shona Peoples}, p. 200
\textsuperscript{244} Wesleyan Methodist Church, \textit{The Works of John Wesley}, Vol. 3, 25 May 1768, p. 324
\textsuperscript{245} F.L. Cross (ed), \textit{The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church} (Oxford: Christ Church, 1957), p. 1472
\textsuperscript{246} B. Gascoigne, \textit{The Christians} (Rugby: Jolly & Barber, 1977), p. 216
Glanville (1626-1680) recorded: 'Those that dare not bluntly say, "There is no God," content themselves (for a fair step and introduction) to deny there are spirits and witches.'\textsuperscript{247} So, when Wesley argued for the existence of witchcraft, it was nothing new.

There is more evidence regarding Wesley's orthodox belief in witchcraft and its existence. In his commentary on Acts 8:9-12, Wesley remarked, 'So there was such a thing as witchcraft once, in Asia at least, if not in Europe or America.'\textsuperscript{248} This statement supports his theological position on witchcraft. His argument showing how firmly he stood for the existence of witchcraft can be further seen in his commentaries on Galatians 5:20\textsuperscript{249} and 2 Kings 9:22.\textsuperscript{250}

Wesley believed that witchcraft was practised by idolaters whose aim was to bewitch people's minds and that it can be passed on to later generations since it was a covenant with the Devil.\textsuperscript{251} Just as Christians promise to serve Christ, so witches enter into a covenant to serve the Devil. Therefore, Wesley believed that witchcraft was waging war with God's government and for this reason he thinks that 'not to believe in witchcraft is to be wiser than our forefathers.'\textsuperscript{252}

Bowen points out that Cennick, one of Wesley's preachers, 'lived in perpetual fear of ghosts.'\textsuperscript{253} It must be noted that Wesley's belief in the supernatural was in opposition to those with deistic beliefs who argued against revelation and the supernatural.\textsuperscript{254} At the same time the views of the Enlightenment thinkers were that:

Enlightenment was man's coming of age. It was man's emergence from immaturity which caused him to rely on such external authorities as the Bible, the Church and State to tell you what to think and do. No generation should be bound by the creeds and customs of bygone ages.\textsuperscript{255}

\textsuperscript{247} Porterfield, \textit{Healing in the History of Christianity}, p. 105
\textsuperscript{248} Wesley, \textit{Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament}, Acts 8:9-12, p. 297
\textsuperscript{249} Wesley, \textit{Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament}, Galatians 5:20, p. 485
\textsuperscript{250} Wesley, \textit{Notes On the Old Testament}, 2 Kings 9:22, pp. 656-657
\textsuperscript{251} Wesley, \textit{Notes On the Old Testament}, pp. 656-657
\textsuperscript{252} Wesley, \textit{Notes On the Old Testament}, Exodus 22:18, p. 181
\textsuperscript{253} M. Bowen, \textit{Wrestling Jacob} (London: The Religious Book Club, 1938), p. 245
\textsuperscript{254} Gascoigne, \textit{The Christians}, p. 227
Hence, Wesley held on to the belief that God had not lost control of the world and that 'Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever' (Heb 13:8). In fact, Wesley defended the existence of witchcraft so strongly by saying that this subject had been believed throughout all ages of the primitive church and the history of the secular world, and also in the scriptures of both the Old and the New Testament.\textsuperscript{256}

It is of great importance that, although Wesley believed in the existence of witchcraft and witchcraft possession, it seems the Methodist Church has not kept it, or regarded it, as reality through the ages of enlightenment. It is the researcher's belief that witchcraft is not dead, as was highlighted in the first chapter of this research; hence, the reason for attempting to ascertain if the belief in witchcraft existed in early Methodism. How long was this belief carried on as the Methodist Church continuously responded to its evangelistic call of preaching the gospel to people who held the same traditional view, who believed in witchcraft and who explained sickness on the basis of witchcraft? Jenkins noted that, 'In many parts of the world, the feared forces of darkness include witchcraft ... and the fear of witchcraft is on the increase.'\textsuperscript{257} Therefore, Wesley's worldview was much closer to the biblical world-view, as well as the world-view of the Shona people of Zimbabwe, since it fully acknowledged the reality of the spirit world; hence, Wesley's argument that the supernatural world did not die with the apostolic church.

The researcher's own assumption is that Wesley dealt with issues of witchcraft in the same manner as he dealt with issues of demonic possession. Rack points out that, 'the symptoms of demonic possession and those influenced by witches were very similar.'\textsuperscript{258} Therefore, if witchcraft is regarded to be unreal and Christians ignore it as mere superstition, then the ministry of preaching and teaching seems to be of no relevance to the lives of the affected. Witchcraft may not be understood in Europe or in America at present, but in other parts of the world it is still practised in 'preliterate' societies and it is practised even in those so-called modern societies, although bearing little resemblance to witchcraft of old. Thus, Jenkins says:

\textsuperscript{256} Wesley, 'A Letter to The Reverend Dr. Conyers Middleton', p. 36
\textsuperscript{257} Jenkins, The New Face of Christianity, pp. 110-111
\textsuperscript{258} Rack, Reasonable Enthusiasts, p. 196
While a Euro-American audience might be appalled to think that an African church preached a belief in witchcraft, the practical consequences of this teaching in a particular society might be beneficial.\footnote{Jenkins, *The New Face of Christianity*, p. 125}

**Power and Holiness**

There is something distinct and definite attributed to supernatural evangelism, as far as Wesley and early Methodism are concerned, and that is power and holiness; therefore, it is the researcher's intention to find out more about this.

Again, this aspect is linked by many to the roots of present day Pentecostalism. Dayton says, 'the "spiritual" mood of holiness prepared the way for the "Pentecostal style."'\footnote{D.W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*, p. 76}

Further, Synan mentioned that, 'the first American Pentecostal churches began with deep roots in the Wesleyan holiness movement that spread across America during the 19th century.'\footnote{Synan, *The Century of the Holy Spirit*, pp. 97-98}

His argument, therefore, is that these Pentecostals 'simply added baptism in the Holy Spirit with tongues as the initial evidence of a 'third blessing' that brought power for witnessing to those who had already been sanctified.'\footnote{Synan, *The Century of the Holy Spirit*, pp. 98-99}

Apart from this addition, this is what the Wesleyans were already doing. The second blessing, as mentioned in the definition of power evangelism in the second chapter, carries the power given by the Holy Spirit in the way that God chooses. White says that, 'holiness is necessary if we want ongoing fellowship with God. God wanted fellowship with his people.'\footnote{White, *When the Spirit Comes*, p. 134}

So the second blessing brings about supernatural evangelism. The incidents that happened after 24 May 1738 marked the beginning of supernatural evangelism. For example, one recorded account in Wesley's journal of 1 January 1739 indicates, or testifies, how the power of God was now manifesting itself through the state of holiness.\footnote{Wesleyan Methodist Church, *The Works of John Wesley*, Vol. 1, 1 January 1739, p. 170} In fact, White indirectly supports this opinion when he points out that:

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... more importantly, both Wesley and Whitefield were empowered by a special anointing of the Holy Spirit in their evangelism. It was this [second blessing] that preceded and empowered their evangelism.²⁶⁵

Christian holiness, therefore, is what was needed to change the hearts of man through the power of the Holy Spirit. The power of God, then, is seen through the word of the speaker for it is, 'Not by might nor by power, but by my spirit.' (Zech 4:6) The power of God is seen in the Word. Its works are to destroy the works of the Devil, without any limitations or restriction. Furthermore, holiness, or sanctification, is supernatural grace because it takes supernatural power to arrest, control and destroy the works of evil. As a result, Wesley said, 'all our Preachers should make a point of preaching perfection to believers constantly, strongly, and explicitly; and all believers should mind this one thing, and continually agonize for it.'²⁶⁶

According to the scripture, 'Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect' (Matt 5:48), Wesley argued that when Christians attain holiness, God continues to use them in a mighty way. He was calling the Church back to the Pentecostal experience with its subsequent power and holiness, wanting the whole Church to be filled with people clothed with power and holiness so the wonders of God's power were kept alive, made real and present. Wesley was pointing to what could be seen in the frontier Methodists who became famous for their expressive worship and the demonstration that often accompanied their revivals. Synan states that the manifestation of 'the jerks,' 'freeing the devil,' being 'slain in the spirit,' the 'holy dance' and the 'holy laugh' were 'not uncommon in these services' and were 'seen as signs of God's presence and power.'²⁶⁷

Wesley was saying that faith and holiness are the prerequisites to miraculous power. Hence, where there is no faith, there is no power. There can be no doubt that Wesley believed that power and sanctification go hand in hand; they both become part of the Christian heart experience. Holiness becomes a prerequisite for supernatural evangelism. Therefore, Christians are sanctified by faith (Acts 26:18). As a result, it

²⁶⁵ White, When the Spirit Comes, p. 181
was Wesley's expectation that this power and holiness would manifest themselves in every Christian since his thrust was to raise up a holy people: 'It was in the evening that I went to observe the different spirit of the congregation at Yarmouth. Almost all seemed to feel the power of God, and many were filled with consolation.'

For Wesley, conversion was not just a change of mind but a demonstration of religious feelings and enduement of the power of God by the coming of the Holy Spirit. Hence, Rack commented that, 'It should be clear by now that for Wesley the true goal of the Christian life is sanctification, holiness; even to the point of perfection.' Therefore, Wesley, for one, believed that the Word had not lost its power, even in his day. Hence, it is the researcher's belief that one of Wesley's greatest fears was that the people called 'Methodists' would lose the understanding that Methodism was born in association with power and holiness or sanctification.

Thus, the purpose of this research is to discover the traits and presence of supernatural evangelism within early Methodism and to ascertain how Methodists of today have managed to maintain these essential features, even after a period of over 300 years. Are they still that powerful Church? For, 'wherever the power of God is not, they decrease.'

### Power Over Nature

It seems that Wesley's world was surrounded with extraordinary or supernatural power, as evidenced from his journals that even miracles over nature were part of his ministry. Hence, Rack says, 'Wesley's love of the supernatural made it difficult for him to show where limits had to be defined.' Lowe echoes the same sentiments, in that Wesley was more open to manifestations of supernatural power. Because of Wesley's love of

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269 Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiasts*, p. 395
the supernatural, Snell says that he [Wesley], 'did not believe in God, who was the slave of law.' Consequently, Wesley declared that:

Christianity is built upon four pillars: viz., the power, understanding, goodness, and holiness of God. The Divine Power is the source of all miracles; divine understanding of all prophecies; divine holiness of the moral character of the penmen.

Wesley is a person who has extraordinary faith and he held the scriptural views high above the natural law. In Wesley's journals there are incidents showing God's power over nature. On 15 April 1739, Wesley was at Newgate preaching to a crowded congregation. He recorded that while he was preaching: 'It rained hard at Bristol but not a drop fell upon us.' On 17 June 1761, he states: 'The next evening it began to rain just as I began to preach, but it was suspended till the service was over.' This shows that it was not mere coincidence. On 20 June 1761, Wesley wrote: 'This evening it rained at Hutton Rudby, till seven, the hour of preaching. But God heard the prayer and from the time I began we had only scattering drops.' Furthermore, on 2 September 1750 Wesley recorded another incident: 'It rained in the day several times; but not a drop fell while I was preaching. Here is an open door indeed! May no man be able to shut it!' Wesley is insisting that God the Almighty, who sends rain upon the earth, can also withhold it in answer to our prayers. In fact, answered prayers are miracles. Significant is the fact that Wesley is trying to demonstrate that God has the ability to perform 'signs and wonders' through His divine power. Hence, Wesley attributes these incidents to be the result of divine power.

In conclusion, this research has influenced the writer to believe that early Methodism was born out of power evangelism, where the extraordinary or the supernatural take place. Hence, Murphy says that some Pentecostals will be surprised to discover that what occurs in some of their revival services has occurred, in the past, in non-Pentecostal

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273 F.J. Snell, Wesley and Methodism, p. 157
275 Wesleyan Methodist Church, The Works of John Wesley, Vol. 1, 15 April 1739, p. 186
revivals. Some of the same phenomena that occur today were also common then, especially during the Great Awakening of the 18th century under Wesley, Whitefield and Jonathan Edwards. White cites that:

> Wesley, certainly for one period of his life, had an imbalanced dependency on "supernatural manifestations." Happily, it neither impeded his evangelism, nor led to the neglect of discipline, worship or the sacraments in the church's life.

Hence, Synan writes that, 'Methodists also contributed much to the formation of the classical Pentecostal denomination.'

When reading Wesley's journals, one is presented with the profound truth about this subject. They mirror the beliefs and doctrines of early Methodism based on holiness or sanctification, and also the belief that through the power of the Holy Spirit one is able to destroy the works of the Devil. In fact, it is this attribute of holiness and sanctification which will help the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe to revisit the issue of power evangelism, which is product of the early Methodist Church, after a period of more than 300 years.

John Wesley, being the founder of Methodism, has clearly shown us some distinctive features which denote the true spirit of Methodism. It could be that the very things which were once regarded as distinctive features, and were solemnly affirmed by the early Methodists, after a period of more than three centuries are now denied by the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. Firstly, supernatural or power evangelism is a product of holiness or sanctification. Denying or neglecting this is grieving the Holy Spirit. Secondly, denying power evangelism is denying the doctrine of holiness or sanctification, especially that of the original design of the Methodist followers. As it is, it seems this second blessing, which had once been the glory and strength of Methodism, is now being handed over to the Pentecostal churches.

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280 White, *When the Spirit Comes*, p. 135
The purpose of this research is to reawaken the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, as well as the Methodist Church family worldwide, to repossess their original calling. Chapter 4 will deal with the methodology used in addressing the research question.
CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to set out the methodology used to achieve the objectives of this thesis, which are: to explore the future ministry of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe; and, to make an inquiry into the phenomenon of power evangelism and the relevance of its approaches in the 21st century Zimbabwean context. The phenomenological inquiry explores how Methodist members have experienced and interpreted power evangelism in accordance with their world-view. The methodology needs to address the question of whether their approaches are still relevant and, if so, whether these approaches are able to meet the needs of their people. Paton says:

A phenomenological perspective can mean either or both: (1) focus on what people experience and how they interpret the world (in which case one can use interviews without actually experiencing the phenomenon oneself); or (2) a methodological mandate to actually experience the phenomenon being investigated (in which case participant observation would be necessary).  

In order to investigate the phenomenon, the focus is on what the members experience and how they interpret this, in this instance.

The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe has existed for over 120 years. Why is the Church so controlling and so reticent about the phenomenon of power evangelism? Is its approach only a palliative measure, unable to address the real needs of the people? Why are their members leaving the Church? The assumption is that those who leave the Church do so for their spiritual survival. People go where their needs are being met. Consequently, by failing to address this phenomenon the Methodist Church may run the risk of raising the level of dissatisfaction among its members, thereby stunting the spiritual growth and the social, physical and emotional well-being of its members. Therefore, the following assumptions have been made in this research:

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282 M.Q. Paton, Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods (London: Sage, 1990), p. 70
(a) power evangelism is not a stranger to Methodism and is appropriate for all generations;

(b) power evangelism seems to have been stigmatised within the practices of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, causing people to shun it, especially leaders.

In order to understand the above phenomenon, it is necessary to establish an epistemological foundation and to determine to what extent power evangelism is relevant in the Shona African context.

**Epistemology**

The term ‘epistemology’ can be defined as the study of knowledge and justified beliefs. It is the study of how ‘we become persuaded of things to believe, or why we believe what we believe.’ Our Christian beliefs are shaped by the traditions of the Church, as well as by the people who have gone before us and the Bible. Hence, Carthledge says:

> Practical theologians in their use of social science methods and techniques will bring a distinctly theological epistemology that is influenced by a Christian world view and spirituality.

Moreover, epistemology is a result of the context in which the phenomenon occurs and it is shaped by the cultural, historical and social norms operating within the context and time. In other words, even though the Christians, especially those within the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, may not understand the theological reasons behind their beliefs, they hold such beliefs simply because the Church has said so. Therefore, these beliefs are shaped by the cultural world-view of the Shona people and scriptural epistemology: Shona culture versus what the Bible says.

The issue of power evangelism is viewed negatively by the Methodist Church and their view may be based on cultural or traditional epistemology. The members of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe believe, without any further discussion, anything that is handed down to them. The Church as a whole has never seriously looked into the issue.

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from a theological point of view. Rather, it just seeks to control it. If one asks the
reason why, no one knows. Therefore, it is the desire of the researcher to face the
challenge of solving this unsolved problem.

Mixed Methodology

A mixed methodology approach will be applied in this research in an endeavour to
discover the approaches to power evangelism used by the Methodist Church in
Zimbabwe among its rural Shona people. The researcher will use six versions of the
questionnaire to determine a multiple perspective of the phenomenon and a varied
understanding of how this issue appears to different people as a result of their different
interpretations of the issue. Therefore, the researcher will combine both quantitative and
qualitative approaches, termed 'mixed model studies.'

The intention is to synthesise the two approaches. Mixed methodology has advantages
over the quantitative or qualitative methods used singularly as it: combines the strengths
of the two together; generates and tests grounded theory; answers a broader and more
complete range of research questions; overcomes weaknesses in other methods so they
complement each other; provides evidence for strong conclusions; produces complete
knowledge necessary to inform and practice; adds insights and understanding; and
words, pictures and narrative can be used, thereby adding meaning to numbers.
Conversely, when using mixed methodology, one needs to learn about multiple methods
and approaches, and how to use them appropriately. It can also be time-consuming.
However, these disadvantages are far surpassed by the strengths.

This study will use the mixed model research whereby the researcher begins with a
quantitative method, then proceeds with a qualitative follow-up study. The
quantitative approach will identify key issues and point to possible answers that will
then be followed up with interviews and observations. After looking at the research

285 A. Tashakkori & C. Teddlie, Mixed Methodology: Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches (London: Sage
287 Creswell & Clark, Designing and Conducting, pp. 13-15
288 Tashakkori & Teddlie, Mixed Methodology, p. 46
question and the strengths of the mixed methodology, the researcher felt it necessary to use mixed methodology as one way of achieving the desired results. This approach allows for the identification of the phenomenon together with a follow-up method to affirm the veracity of the findings and to further clarify their meaning.

**Research Participants**

The selection of the subjects is a fundamental element of a mixed methodology study. The subjects of this study were secured from a population of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, leaders of other denominations and missionaries who once worked in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. The Shona people represent the largest percentage of Zimbabweans, as mentioned in the first chapter. The human resources supporting the research prevented an extensive survey on the general population, therefore the researcher decided to choose a sample from the above-mentioned population, in an attempt to ensure that there was no bias in the selection and that the subjects chosen were a true representation of the population under study. The representative nature of the 'multi-stage sampling' was assumed by selecting sample from different departments or organisations within the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe and outside. Multi-stage sampling helps where a cluster sample is so large that a sub-sample is then selected from each group.

In this case, the selection was taken from active ministers, retired ministers who once worked with missionaries, ministers in charge, headmasters and headmistresses of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe's schools, missionaries and heads of other denominations. This selection was made for two different reasons: firstly, to ensure unbiased data; and secondly, because the sample was large enough to satisfy the needs of the investigation under study. Without this, then, it would not be a reliable sample. The factors determining their selection as sample members are the fact that all the people selected were leaders, or are still leaders, and the assumption that they know what is going on in their churches.

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289 Tashakkori & Teddlie, *Mixed Methodology*, pp. 74-75
The active ministers in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe are people in the field who know what is taking place. They would give a true representation of the population under study, as many of them are superintendents and bishops, and some belong to different committees which discuss issues pertaining to church doctrine: for example, a customs and beliefs committee, and a faith and order mission committee. Hence, they also seem to be the majority in number in terms of leadership.

The missionaries who once worked in Zimbabwe and the retired ministers who worked with the missionaries were chosen as potential participants who would be able to provide enough information that would also support archival material. Most of these are pioneers of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe and their oral testimony, or history, carries weight as it comes from their experiences, although the number of this group has deteriorated so much owing to death through old age and illness. The remaining ones managed to participate in this research and their evidence is taken to be a primary source as it gives first hand information from those who were eyewitnesses.

Lay leaders from heads of schools, district and connexional, were also selected to participate. The lay people would also provide another perspective, that may be unknown by the ministers, since they represent those who are at the receiving end. It was hoped they would bring in experiential incidents that may be regarded as evidence that could be used to uncover a deeper and richer understanding about power evangelism. The information they provide would explain what is taking place on the ground as they are part of the community they represent and such information is important in answering the following questions in particular: What is their response to sickness, witchcraft, evil spirits or demons? Does the gospel they are preaching relate in any way to dealing with those things mentioned above since power evangelism knows no boundary? How is power evangelism perceived from other denominations who share the same context? How do other denominations respond to this issue?

290 Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, *Deed of Church Order and Standing Orders* (Harare: Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, 1997), p. 43
The other denominations are categorised into separate groups: the mission or mainline churches, Pentecostal churches, and African Initiated churches. These groups have been separated because it has been assumed that most Christian churches share commonalities in many ways, including their worship and their beliefs. The information will contribute to answering the research question by addressing the approaches they use to power evangelism and how relevant their methods are in the 21st century? It also addresses whether they are controlling or discouraging power evangelism and if they are losing members in the same way as the Methodist Church. It was assumed that the other denominations are experiencing power evangelism in some way. These other denominations are stakeholders in the sense of their context. Their views will aid in understanding that it is not only a problem within the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe but something that affects all Shona people. Hence, it will be necessary to compare what is happening in other denominations with the current practices within the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe.

The research will benefit the subjects (the Methodist Shona people) in the sense that the subjects are now being heard and understood from another angle, thereby trying to dispel the notion that associates power evangelism with 'Pentecostalism,' and of power evangelism being regarded as 'unbiblical' and 'against' Methodist doctrines and practices. Hence, evangelism that is non-sensitive to the needs of the people is not enough.

It is the researcher's hope that the chosen subjects will be able to provide the information needed for the study.

**Research Instruments**

The research instruments employed were interviews, questionnaires, focus group, and the use of archival material. They have been chosen as one effective way of answering the research question—but they do have their own weaknesses. The researcher will give a description of each tool, showing the strengths and the weaknesses, as well as the measures taken to control the weaknesses in order to ensure the validity and reliability of the instruments and the data to be collected. The researcher will endeavour to justify why they have been selected as suitable research instruments.
Interviews

The research interviews combined both closed-ended (quantitative) and open-ended (qualitative) questions simultaneously. As quantitative questions limit data information, the combined complementary use of qualitative questions during interviews increases the likelihood of obtaining a fuller and richer picture from respondents.

Data was generated through semi-structured interviews conducted on different occasions; the first being conducted between April and June 2010, and the second between July and August 2010. Interactive talk and discussion enabled the researcher to acquire facts for the construction of his arguments. Most of the interviews were on a one-to-one basis, with the exception of an interview with a missionary couple. The positive aspect of using semi-structured interviews is that the issues discussed, the questions raised and the matters explored changed from one interview to another as different aspects of the topic were revealed. It brought about a process of open discovery as part of its strength. Tshakkori and Teddlie support this idea as they argue that:

Despite the dichotomy of classification by some writers, many research interviews combine the open and closed ended interview formats. The most common type of combination is a "funnel interview" in which the researcher starts with very broad questions and gradually limits the scope of the question to a few focused issues. This type of interview is directly applicable to the mixed research approach.291

Hence, the choice of both closed-ended, quantitative data and open-ended, qualitative data is advantageous, as it proved to be for the writer since it provided the opportunity to ask further questions where there was a need for clarity, when an answer was vague, or in order to gain further information.292 A good example of such questions is:

- Did you encounter issues of hysteria/mass hysteria (mamhepo) and illness related to witchcraft among church members?
  A Yes  B No

291 Tashakkori & Teddlie, Mixed Methodology, p. 102
• If Yes, how was it handled?

All the interviews were conducted in conversational form, in what has been referred to as the interactive relational approach. Chirban points out the effectiveness of interactive relational approach interviewing compared with the findings approach which he regards as lifeless, rather than effective, because it ignores the dynamics between the interviewer and the interviewee.293 Face-to-face interviews provide important insight into the history of the phenomenon by well-informed respondents.294

This was an especially relevant approach in that, by developing an interactive and relational stance, it is possible to access information that would not otherwise emerge through formal and structured questioning alone. Such an approach was necessary in interviews that were somewhat sensitive with regard to power evangelism. With the missionaries, if this method had not been used, it would have seemed like the researcher was trying to fault-find.

The interviews were all audio recorded and observational notes were taken. However, the researcher had to apportion his time for conducting the interviews so that everything was carried out within the allotted time, which, at times, was difficult. Ethical issues were minimized since most of the appointments were made, prior to the interviews, through the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe and most of the people selected were very cooperative as all the interviews, with the exception of the one previously mentioned, were conducted on a one-to-one basis.

Questionnaires

The writer designed simple questionnaires so that they could be easily understood by everyone, as some of the subjects were quite elderly, and in order to obtain quality responses. The questionnaires were targeted at specific individuals within six groups representative of the population: i.e. missionaries, retired ministers who once worked

with the missionaries, active ministers in Zimbabwe, ministers in charge and heads of schools, and other denominations. Most of the subjects would also participate in interviews as well as the focus group.

Some of the questions applied to several or all of the groups to compare respondents' views and some questions applied only to specific groups. Their answers could then be followed up to obtain more information and provide clarity, where necessary, and they became convincing when consistent in both the questionnaire and interview. The intention was to obtain first-hand information and only to reflect the thoughts, concerns and attitudes of the Church regarding the subject under study. As some respondents might have felt very uncomfortable discussing issues relating to power evangelism in interviews or in the focus group, and as there is a hidden assumption that the Methodist Church is controlling and is stifling the Holy Spirit with regard to power evangelism, closed- and open-ended questions were used to encourage respondents to give more detailed information without fear of being recognised, although confidentiality was assured. Also, due to the storytelling culture among Shona people, the questionnaire enabled respondents to write out some of their experiences concerning power evangelism.

A covering letter was attached to the questionnaire to inform the respondents that the research was for educational purposes only and to define what was meant by power evangelism in an attempt to inform respondents somewhat about the subject.

**Focus Group**

To ensure the accuracy and depth of information the researcher triangulated the findings with a focus group. This group was composed of people who had completed questionnaires and interviews before the focus group met so that the responses given to the former research tools were not influenced by anyone. The focus group was used to

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295 Tashakkori & Teddlie, *Mixed Methodology*, p. 103

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gather information relating to the feelings and opinions which represented the population of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe.

The members of the focus group were selected from Harare East District and they were all in leadership positions. It was composed of 17 active ministers, 3 retired ministers who once worked with missionaries, a bishop of the district, a district lay president, and 15 lay representatives who were spouses of the ministers, both active and retired. The leader of the district is the bishop but, on this occasion, the focus group was chaired by one of the circuit superintendents.

The focus group served to provide a layer of theological information not present in the other tools and all of the members were eye witnesses of historic events, some of which were in the distant past. Listening to what other members had to say would influence and encourage participation, enabling them to voice their opinions, thus producing data and insight that would have been less accessible without group interaction. The researcher aimed to ensure that all issues relating to power evangelism within the Shona African context were covered.

Archival Material

In addition to the above tools, archival material was used in the research as another source of information. Tashakkori and Teddlie define archival data as: 'data collected and/or documented by individuals and/or institutions regarding individuals and/or groups.' Relevant material can be found in the archives of the Church, universities and government. The research would not be complete without the use of such documents, as information from these was used to fill the gaps in the evidence where data had not been provided or uncovered by other research instruments.

Documentation about the history of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe was found in various places: the library at the University of London under the Wesleyan Methodist

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297 Tashakkori & Teddlie, *Mixed Methodology*, p. 108
Missionary Society; the archives at Cliff College; and the archives of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. These documents were so helpful in the authentication of information gained by means of other tools in the research. The documents may have had their own weaknesses, such as their validity and reliability. However, since they are part of the history of the Church they, in turn, were compared with materials gathered by means of the other research tools to authenticate their validity.

Since many of the documents were minutes of meetings and letters of correspondence, these documents were examined to see if they contained any wording that denoted power evangelism. The researcher looked for such words and phrases as evangelism, faith healing or miraculous healing, exorcism, demon possession or spirit possession, deliverance, witchcraft, witch-doctor/medicine man or traditional doctor, superstition, heathen practices, sorcery, magic, mass hysteria, convulsions, supernatural.

**Data Collection Procedures**

All the questionnaires were numbered and a record was made of who had received one and who had returned it. Most of the questionnaires were sent out via email but, where that was not possible, they were posted with a pre-paid envelope for return and the Head Office of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe assisted with their distribution. For those who were once missionaries in Zimbabwe, the distribution was made through their secretary, who already had their email addresses. For the other denominations the researcher obtained a supporting letter and the postal and email addresses of the heads of churches from the general secretary of the Zimbabwe Council of Churches, at present a Methodist minister. One of the Methodist connexional drivers was enlisted to help in distributing and collecting the questionnaires to these people, especially those subjects who resided in Harare. For ministers in charge and heads of schools, all the questionnaires were distributed on the same day and returned the following day since they were meeting together as a group for a seminar.

Another method used to collect data was face-to-face interviews. This method offered a high response rate and provided comprehensive data that was relevant to the study but was not covered in the questionnaire. Most of the interviewees asked the researcher to
meet them in neutral places, mostly church buildings. Interviews were also conducted by telephone, especially for the follow-ups in the UK, such as the missionaries.

**Data Analysis Procedures**

This data analysis provides details about the overall products used to organise, describe and analyse the collected data and to present the findings. It will present the results in a logical way by means of tables. The analysis will be split into sections, each one representing a specific group of respondents. Within the first section (Section A) there will be a comparison of the responses to each question, starting with those questions which were put to some or all of the groups and followed by the questions only put to that specific group. In each of the following sections, again, the analysis will start with those questions shared with other groups and then with the ones put to that specific group. Where a question has been dealt with in a previous section, it will be simply referred to as having already been addressed.

**Summary**

This chapter has been concerned with research design, the subjects, research instrumentation, data collection and presentation, and analysis procedures. Mixed methodology research was chosen for this study because it involved administering interviews, questionnaires, a focus group, and archival material appertaining to the characteristics and experiences of the targeted subjects. In this case, the subjects were members of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, ordained and lay missionaries who once worked in Zimbabwe, and leaders of other denominational churches in Zimbabwe who were available and willing to participate in the research. The tools used for the research instrumentation were those considered to be relevant and which would produce the most reliable and detailed information.

Following this discussion on the methodology used, the next chapter will deal with data presentation, analysis and discussion.
CHAPTER 5

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Data Presentation

The researcher's aim in this chapter is to present and analyse the main findings of the research study based on questionnaire responses, interviews, archival evidence and the literature review. The data relate to the issues concerning power evangelism (defined in Chapter 2) and the approaches used by the Methodist Church in dealing with so-called polluted objects. The research also aims to discover why the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe seems to be so reticent and controlling about power evangelism.

Despite gaining autonomy in 1977, the Methodist Church has not seen beyond its autonomy in order to address the needs of its members from a biblical, contextual, African Shona world-view, as is pointed out by Daneel, in that some of the schisms and defections from the mission churches were caused by 'the neglect in the Methodist Church of the manifestations of the Holy Spirit,' as in the case of the Vapostori. In his footnote, Daneel adds, 'Some Apostles proudly claimed that they were actually Ma Wisiri,' (Wesleyans, i.e. Methodists) regardless of the fact that they are now followers of the African Initiated churches.

Therefore, a way forward needs to be found based on responses gleaned from various sources and, in order to achieve this, the researcher has devised a mixed methodology supported by six versions of the research questionnaire. Some of the questions asked are included in each version of the questionnaire, whereas other questions refer only to a particular group; the intention being to obtain the same information already highlighted in the Research Methodology (Chapter 4).

The data are presented in Appendix 2 in table form. The responses will be analysed, making a comparison with the corresponding research questions presented in the questionnaires in Appendix 1. Those questions that are asked in more than one questionnaire will be dealt with simultaneously and reference will be made to the particular groups being addressed.

**Analysis and Discussion**

The following analysis and discussion is divided into five sections, A to E, covering the six versions of the research questionnaire.

SECTION A: Ministers who worked during the missionary era (Questionnaire 1); missionaries, ministers and lay people (Questionnaire 6)

According to *A Century of Methodism in Zimbabwe*, 215 missionaries worked in the Methodist Church in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) by 1990.\(^{300}\) According to the list given in the appendix, this number includes both ministers and laity.\(^{301}\) Since all of these missionaries had left Zimbabwe by the time this research was conducted, the names of those still alive were found in the *Minutes of the Annual Conference* and the *Directory of the Methodist Church in Britain, 2009*, the list in *A Century of Methodism in Zimbabwe* and from the Zimbabwean ex-missionaries' fellowship records, the secretary of which resides in Britain. By the time of the research 16 missionaries were working in Zimbabwe, of which 14 responded (results in Table 1, Appendix 2). Up to 1977, when the Methodist Church became autonomous, 15 local ministers worked with the missionaries (Table 2, Appendix 2).

Tables 1A and 6A, Appendix 2 show the periods of time in which the missionaries and their Zimbabwean counterparts respectively were in Zimbabwe, and they reflect the numbers and percentages of those who answered the questionnaires. The periods of time given helped the researcher to make comparisons to certain incidents that occurred

\(^{300}\) Banana, *A Century of Methodism*, pp. 225-228

\(^{301}\) Banana, *A Century of Methodism*, pp. 225-226
during their ministry. As a result, the researcher holds the opinion that certain incidents (in particular the one involving Mai Chaza in 1955, mentioned in Chapters 1 and 6) could have actually been witnessed by some of the respondents.\textsuperscript{302} Moreover, there are a number of missionaries who are aware of some of these incidents.

Tables 1B and 6B, Appendix 2 show the number of responses given to each question and the percentages are shown in Tables 1C and 6C, Appendix 2. Table 1B shows the statistics of the 15 local ministers who worked with the missionaries, and Table 6B shows the statistics of the 14 missionaries. Table 1C shows that there was 100\% agreement by those ministers who worked during the missionary era to the question, \textit{Was there any special/relevant training given to ministers/lay persons doing evangelism or working in schools?} In answer to the same question, 85\% of the missionaries replied positively as recorded in both Table 1C, Question 2 and Table 6C, Question 2 in Appendix 2. The same question was also answered by headmasters/headmistresses and chaplains in Question 3, Questionnaire 5, Appendix 1 and the results in Tables 5B and 5C, Appendix 2 show that 32.1\% said 'Yes,' 35.8\% said 'No' and 32.1\% did not know. Therefore, the majority across all respondent groups agreed that some training was being conducted with people before working in schools or doing evangelism. Although the figures of those saying 'No' decreased across all groups, it might be that those who said there was no training could be lay people, who do not undergo traditional theological college courses. Moreover, this question also informs how much knowledge the missionaries possessed of the people they were evangelising. For those who did receive training, it was given by westerners to westerners and could have some limitations as to the world-view of the local people. Hence, Peaden says, 'There is always a tendency to despise what is unknown or not understood, and so Shona culture was despised and regarded as barbaric or uncivilised.'\textsuperscript{303}

The above quotation relates to the following question in Questionnaire 6, Appendix 1: \textit{Was there any harm in a missionary being ignorant of African traditional}

\textsuperscript{302} Ranger, \textit{Are We Not Also Men?}, p. 61
\textsuperscript{303} Peaden, \textit{Missionary Attitudes}, p. 41
Table 6C, Question 3, Appendix 2 shows that 92.9% felt there was great harm and only 7.1% felt there was no harm. Since the largest number held the opinion that there was harm, this was: being insensitive to the faith of others; imposing westernised Christianity, rather than encouraging a biblical approach by taking local culture into consideration; and also that one cannot 'inculturate' without some knowledge of the culture.

Question 4, Questionnaire 6, Appendix 1 was intended to ascertain if they used the gospel as the tool to eradicate sorcery, witchcraft, hysteria/mass hysteria (mamhepo). The responses given in Table 6C, Appendix 2 helped the research to realise that, while 37.7% answered 'No,' the 64.3% who answered 'Yes' believed in using the gospel to destroy the so-called polluted objects, even though they may have failed to put it into practice. For instance, when people saw the power of the gospel that transforms their lives, they would realise that God's power is far greater than the powers of the traditional doctors (n'angas) and witches, as is highlighted by Maxwell in one of the Pentecostal churches in Katerere: 'Perceiving that the old religious system was no longer meeting the popular need, some local traditional leaders who practised traditional medicine converted to Christianity.'

This was achieved by means of the gospel. However, the 37.7% who answered 'No' may have thought that the gospel alone was not the answer for the removal of these things. Moreover, there are those who share the point being made by Peadan when he said that many missionaries 'felt that education would banish superstition especially in relation to ancestor worship and witchcraft.' It is interesting that Maxwell noted that, in the context of evangelism, the power of God is seen in healing and exorcism and it challenges people to overcome their fear of mystical powers. Furthermore, Chavunduka supports Peadan's idea by bringing to light that many missionaries thought that education and medicine would remove such mystical powers.

304 D. Maxwell, Christians and Chiefs in Zimbabwe, p.85
305 Peadan, Missionary Attitudes, p. 10
In Question 5, Questionnaire 6, Appendix 1 and Table 6C, Question 5, Appendix 2, only 20% of the missionaries had encountered miracles of healing, exorcism and deliverance from evil spirits and demons in their services but 80% had not encountered any. Interestingly, the responses of their Zimbabwean counterparts to this same question (Question 4, Questionnaire 1, Appendix 1 and Table 1C, Question 4, Appendix 2) showed the reverse to be true whereby 80% had witnessed miracles of healing, exorcism and deliverance in their services. When the same question was put to the lay presidents of district and connexional offices, Table 3D, Question 4, Appendix 2 shows that 60% had encountered these experiences and 40% had not. This shows that, whilst not many of the missionaries had encountered these phenomena, the percentages for the locals, though they differed, were so high indicating that they might have been witnessing these phenomena secretly when they were on their own. This is depicted by Ranger regarding Rev. Thompson Samkange's healings at Pakame mission. On the other hand, the figure of 80% for the missionaries who did not witness these supernatural happenings could be an indication that they relied more on the approaches of medicine and education (mentioned earlier) to destroy the supernatural evil. In acknowledgement, Shorter confesses that these approaches 'discourage the expectation of miracles and the substitution of prayer for medicine.' However, it may also mean that they have just not seen miracles in their services.

Question 6, Questionnaire 6, Appendix 1 seeks to find out how the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe handled issues of witchcraft and traditional healers/doctor since they were a threat to evangelism. Table 6C, Question 6, Appendix 2 shows that 71.4% of the missionaries knew how they were handled and 28.6% did not. The same question was answered by their Zimbabwean counterparts and the lay presidents of district and connexional offices (Question 9, Questionnaire 1, Appendix 1 and Question 5, Questionnaire 3, Appendix 1) with the following respective results. Table 1C, Question 9, Appendix 2 shows that 53.3% were aware of how the issues were handled and 46.7% knew nothing of it, whilst Table 3D, Question 5, Appendix 2 shows that 44% knew how

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308 Ranger, Are We Not Also Men?, p. 79
309 Shorter, Jesus and the Witchdoctor, p. 224
they were handled, 16% did not know and 40% were not sure. It can be clearly seen that a greater proportion of the respondents are aware of how the Church handles these issues. Since the Methodist Church seems to have no formal policy regarding this, Methodists would react in different ways. Some had been trained in 'simultaneous missions' (or the Eight Year Plan of Evangelism in 1983-1991); therefore they were equipped to proclaim the gospel boldly and to expect miracles and signs and wonders to follow. These ones would challenge witchcraft and traditional doctors. On the other hand, some individuals would ignore issues of witchcraft and traditional doctors and some would be frightened by any challenge to the powers of witchcraft. Ranger states: 'It became plain that the mission churches were not prepared to give an answer to the fear of witchcraft in terms of the exercise of spiritual power.' Also, it is a general assumption that Methodist Church professionals (trained clergy) have accepted that education, accompanied by western values, is better since it is part of their theological training.

Since missionaries were mostly the ones running the mission station, there is a high possibility of encountering issues of hysteria/mass hysteria (mamhepo) and illness related to witchcraft among pupils. Table 6C, Question 7, Appendix 2 shows that 57.1% of the missionaries had encountered them and 42.9% had not. When put to their Zimbabwean counterparts, lay presidents and leaders of schools (Question 5, Questionnaire 1; Question 6, Questionnaire 3; and Question 6, Questionnaire 5—all in Appendix 1). Table 1C, Question 5, Appendix 2 shows that 100% of the local ministers had encountered these phenomena; Table 3D, Question 6, Appendix 2 shows that 100% of the lay leaders had encountered them; and Table 5C, Question 6, Appendix 2 shows that 89.3% had encountered these issues and 10.7% had not. This clearly shows that those who had encountered issues of hysteria and witchcraft-related illness accounted for the highest percentages. Despite this fact, they differ in how they think such issues should be handled. On the other hand, it could also mean that there is a different interpretation as far as the phenomena represent. Many of the missionaries hold the idea

that it should be left to local ministers and evangelists to deal with such issues as they seem to be competent, although a few of them claim to have carried out some form of exorcism but have kept no record of it. However, there is some controversy as to how it to handle these issues since the missionaries and the local ministers differ in their opinions due to latent conflicts in cultural issues.

Question 8 was: What was the perception of the people as to the causes of illness in people's lives? The general consensus is that traditional African thinking is not concerned with what causes illness but, rather, who. Which ancestor has been displeased? Which living person has put on a spell on you or cursed you? So, both missionaries and local people responded in the same way in that, many times, illness is attributed to witchcraft and ancestral spirits, although the researcher is aware that there are those who have received the western scientific causes of illness from the mission schools and such Christians would weigh the balance differently.

Table 6C, Question 9, Appendix 2 shows that 100% of the missionaries were not aware that a traditional healer/medicine man will perform miracles or become a healer following conversion to the Christian faith. In Table 1C, Question 12, Appendix 2 26% of their Zimbabwean counterparts said 53.3% said this was true, 26% said it was false and 20% were not aware. For the same question, Table 3D, Question 9, Appendix 2 shows that 60% of the lay leaders thought this was true and only 40% said false. Given this scenario where the majority of those who say it is true are the locals, it underlines why some Methodists are against some of these prophetic churches. This is noted by Madziyire who gave a contrasting story of teenagers who used to go to church but now present themselves as spirit-possessed leaders of African communities, offering sacrifices to the ancestors and renewing the old religion. So, as a result, the opposite could be true, or perhaps there is another social movement going on.

The following question was: Do you think the clergy/minister was regarded as a substitute for the medicine man/traditional healer/traditional doctor? All the

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missionaries replied 'No' as shown in Table 6B, Question 10, Appendix 2. However, Table 1C, Question 14, Appendix 2 reveals that 60% of the local ministers responded 'Yes' to the same question and 40% 'No.' This shows that the missionaries were not aware of people's expectations. Ranger reiterates the expectations of the locals in that the missionaries were there to eradicate witchcraft: for instance, in 'Ufipa where charms were piled for destruction at the feet of Catholic missionaries.' Also, Gelfand states:

Knowing that the missionaries were ministers of religion the Africans believed that they were endowed with healing properties in the same way that they believed their own nganga (folk practitioners) were. The sick were very anxious to be cured by the missionaries who might have better remedies than their own doctors.

These were the expectations of the locals upon the arrival of the missionaries, even though they failed to fulfil them.

The response given by the missionaries to Question 10 shows they see no way that power evangelism could be helpful in the African context. As a result, only 21.4% thought it was helpful and 78.6% thought it was unhelpful, as shown in Table 6C, Question 11, Appendix 2. However, the same question, when answered by their Zimbabwean counterparts, reveals that 53.3% said it was helpful and 46.7% said it was unhelpful, as shown in Table 1C, Question 9, Appendix 2. Furthermore, answering that same question, the leaders of churches and the Zimbabwean Methodist ministers show that power evangelism is helpful in the African context: Table 4D, Question 9, Appendix 2 shows that 64.9% of leaders of churches thought it was helpful, whilst 35.1% thought it was unhelpful; and Table 2C, Question 15, Appendix 2 shows that 73.7% of Zimbabwean Methodist ministers said it was helpful and 26.3% said it was unhelpful. For the locals, it seems that the highest percentage is those who say that power evangelism is helpful in the African context. However, for those who think it is unhelpful, it is because practitioners are sometimes open to the temptation of taking the glory for themselves and in a Zimbabwean context, where ministers are held in high esteem among the people who are already seeing God working so powerfully through

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312 Ranger, 'Introduction – Christianity in the Central African Region', p. 11
them, this would raise that esteem even higher and pride can get in the way.\textsuperscript{314} Hence, those who think power evangelism is helpful have considered the context in which it is the most conducive, as highlighted by Ranger:

> What was needed was an Apostolic movement, in which the profound realities of traditional African cultures were Christianized as the Apostles had Christianized the ancient world: through signs of healing and prophecy ... through a confrontation and a defeat of witches by the use of superior spiritual power.\textsuperscript{315}

The next question was intended to find out whether a follow-up was given to the new converts; for instance, if someone has brought 'sacks full of witchcraft items' to be burnt.\textsuperscript{316} There was a need to give such pastoral care. Table 6C, Question 12, Appendix 2 shows that 71.4% said 'Yes,' 14.3% said 'No' and 14% said they were not sure. Hence, the question further demanded who were responsible for follow-ups. What was the credibility of the people making these follow-ups? Some said that it was left to the local churches, although they were not well resourced to cope, and, in most instances, follow-ups were not being done.

Question 13 asks: \textit{Were there any other denominations that were involved in evangelism in your area?} Both the missionaries and the locals gave a 100% positive response to this question. The other denominations that were there include the mainline, Pentecostal and African Initiated churches. It seems the mainline churches were using the same approaches as those used by the Methodist Church, whilst the Pentecostal and Independent churches used approaches that were almost similar. In fact, Table 6C, Question 14, Appendix 2 shows that 78.6% of missionaries still remember the approaches used and 21.4% have forgotten, whilst Table 1C, Question 7, Appendix 2 shows that 66.7% of their Zimbabwean counterparts remembered their approaches, while 33.3% had forgotten. Therefore, Question 15, Questionnaire 6, Appendix 1 had been partly answered. Moving then to the sub-question, \textit{In what way were they different?}, the Pentecostals and Independent churches used power evangelism and, 

\textsuperscript{314} Long, \textit{Health, Healing and God's Kingdom}, p. 140  
\textsuperscript{316} Jenkins, \textit{The New Face of Christianity}, p. 112
through their charismatic Zimbabwean leaders, would sometimes take over large stadia and hold mission over long periods emphasising signs and wonders. Moreover, they emphasised the error of other denominations which were divisive but drew many people.

Question 16 was: Were there ways of handling issues of witchcraft as well as traditional doctors/medicine men? Table 6C, Question 16, Appendix 2 shows that 42.9% of the missionaries knew how issues of witchcraft and medicine men were handled, whilst 57.1% did not know. It could be that those who replied 'Yes' had based their response on the understanding that the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe had introduced teachings which were opposed to witchcraft and witch-doctors as a means to eradicate them. Hence, Peaden shows the most common method used, which is that of banning the locals from consulting such people or getting involved in such things. He says:

> All forms of ancestor cult were forbidden to non-Christian tenants as well as to Christians. This ban included asking for rain as well as shave (a type of ancestral spirit) ceremonies and the making of offerings to family vadzimu.  

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At a later stage, or even secretly, however, certain individuals would call those people who possessed paraphernalia connected with the practice of witchcraft and invite them to bring these possessions for burning—but this has never been established as a policy. On the other hand, it could also mean that many people knew of the Witchcraft Suppression Act 1899:

> ... if anyone convicted of practising witchcraft or accusing another person of being a witch, is liable to a fine not exceeding $200 or three years imprisonment or twenty lashes, or any combination of these punishments.

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On answering the same question, as shown in Table 1C, Question 9, Appendix 2, 53.3% of their Zimbabwean counterparts said 'Yes' and 46.7% said 'No' based upon the Witchcraft Suppression Act 1899.

Question 17, Questionnaire 6, Appendix 1 was intended to find out if they feared witches and illness in the community. Table 6C, Question 17, Appendix 2 shows that

317 Peaden, Missionary Attitudes, p. 20  
318 Chavunduka, 'Traditional Medicine and Christian Beliefs', p. 145
100% of the missionaries were aware that the Shona people feared witchcraft and illness. On the other hand, it shows that the missionaries were not totally ignorant of the culture since they were aware of the great fear among the locals. This question was also answered by their Zimbabwean counterparts in Question 10, Questionnaire 1; Question 7, Questionnaire 2; and Question 7, Questionnaire 3—all in Appendix 1. The responses given by the locals to this question are shown in Table 1C, Question 10, Appendix 2; Table 2C, Question 7, Appendix 2; Table 3D, Question 7, Appendix 2. These show that all respondents gave a positive response, clearly indicating that both missionaries and locals were aware that the Shona people feared witchcraft and illness. Jenkins confirms this by saying: ‘Evil spirits, witches and wizards, sorcerers and ill wishers are a constant source of fear and anxiety.’

Additionally, the researcher wanted to know how they overcame such fears. One African bishop 'attributed the deaths of three of his priests to witchcraft.'

Question 18, Questionnaire 6, Appendix 1 was intended to ascertain if there was any direct confrontation with evil spirits; the second part of the question asked the respondent to explain what happened. Table 6C, Question 18, Appendix 2 shows that 28.6% of the missionaries had encountered evil spirits and 71.9% had not encountered any. Table 1C, Question 11, Appendix 2 shows the responses given by their Zimbabwean counterparts: 93.3% had encountered evil spirits and only 6.7% had not. It can be clearly seen that for the missionaries the highest percentage had not encountered evil spirits whereas, in contrast, by far the highest percentage of the locals had encountered them. The truth is that in most cases where evil spirits are encountered, they cause resistance, leading to a spiritual showdown. Hence, the question went on to ask what happened. Those who had encountered evil spirits had applied exorcism and prayers of deliverance and this generally happened after the preaching of the gospel. Amongst the missionaries, some were practising power evangelism in relation to the above question.

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319 Jenkins, The New Face of Christianity, p. 103
320 Shorter, Jesus and the Witchdoctor, p. 103
The next question was: *Were there certain Zimbabwean sacred places within certain communities?* Table 6C, Question 19, Appendix 2 shows that 78.6% of the missionaries were not aware of any sacred places, whilst 21.4% said that they were aware of some such places. One hundred percent of the local ministers were aware of them, as is shown in Table 1C, Question 19, Appendix 2. The same question was answered by their Zimbabwean counterparts and the leaders of other denominations. Table 1C, Question 13, Appendix 2 shows that 100% of these ministers were aware of them; also 100% of the leaders of other denominations confirmed this, as is shown in Table 4D, Question 13, Appendix 2. Both the missionaries and the locals show that they have done very little. A good example of this is one cited by Lan who says: 'It is well known in Dande that when the Baobab trees on this site were felled they cried out: "Why are we being destroyed? Why do you pull us down for no reason?"' The missionaries might not pay any attention to this, since they consider it to be mere superstition, and the locals would not do anything as a sign that they believe in it, indicating some form of syncretism and compromise. However, the Pentecostal churches challenge these things, as is depicted by Lan. Also Maxwell says that the Pentecostals would bring people to confession and, at the same time, destroy the polluted objects, followed by baptism. As shown by the responses given in Question 13, Questionnaire 4, Appendix 1 as well as Table 4C, Question 13, Appendix 2, every Zimbabwean believes in this; however, the difference is that the Pentecostals would offer prayers of exorcism, as highlighted above.

The following question acted as an evaluation from the missionaries. Table 6B, Question 20, Appendix 1 and Table 6C, Question 20, Appendix 1 show that the missionaries were equally divided in their thinking: 50% of the missionaries holding the opinion that the evangelisation programmes being run between 1983-1991 are still relevant even today; and the other 50% disagreeing with this, saying that they are no longer relevant in the 21st century.

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322 Lan, *Guns and Rain*, p. 41
The intention of Question 21, *Is power evangelism a means of persuasion?*, was to find out how the missionaries and locals perceived power evangelism since this may influence their reaction to it. Was it being perceived as a way of inducing people to believe without being rational? Table 6C, Question 21, Appendix 2 reveals that 57.1% said 'Yes' and 42.9% said 'No.' Table 1C, Question 17, Appendix 2 shows the results of their Zimbabwean counterparts when asked the same question: 60% said 'Yes' and 26.7% 'No.' Therefore, this indicates that there is a general assumption by both the missionaries and the locals that power evangelism is a means of persuading people, insinuating that if the converts are not nurtured, their faith in Christianity will not last and this could be a reason why power evangelism is not generally welcomed. Hence, White feels that the evangelism of today appears to be centred too much on human persuasion. Those who said 'No' to this question account for the lowest percentage from both groups and suggests that these ones feel that power evangelism addresses the needs of the people rather than being a means of persuasion.

SECTION B: Current ministers (Questionnaire 2)

Section B deals with the responses given by the current active ministers to Questionnaire 2, together with follow-up interviews. As indicated in the introduction to this chapter, some of the questions have already been articulated in Section A; therefore, the writer simply makes reference to such questions.

Questions 1 and 2 attempt to ascertain the number of years these ministers have served, since the researcher feels that experience also counts in dealing with the issues under discussion. This information is shown in Table 2A, Appendix 2 whilst Table 2B, Appendix 2 shows the question numbers and how many responded to each one. Table 2C, Appendix 2 indicates the figures in percentages in terms of respondents. Question 2 has been addressed in Section A, Question 2, Questionnaire 6, Appendices 1 and 2.

Question 3 asks if their college curriculum included training in evangelism. This question is relevant as some ministers currently serving may not be aware of power

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324 White, *When the Spirit Comes*, p. 182
evangelism and how it is done. Tables 2B and 2C, Appendix 2 show the results both in figures and in percentages respectively. Table 2C, Question 3, Appendix 2 shows that 5.3% said 'Yes' in answer to this question whilst 94.7% said 'No.' As a result, it is difficult to lay the blame on the current ministers since power evangelism is not generally a part of their training, as indicated by Jenkins who says:

How many seminaries, even those ... with conservative or evangelical leanings, offer courses on spiritual healing, leave alone exorcism? For most Europeans and Americans, healing is a secular, medical function and has long been so.325

The point raised by Jenkins answers many questions. Therefore, Question 4 does not apply since 94.7% replied 'No' and only 5.3% replied 'Yes' in Question 3.

Question 5, as shown in Table 2C, Appendix 2, shows that 31.6% think the Methodist Church is partially involved in issues of healing miracles, exorcism and deliverance, and that 68.4% think that the Church is not involved at all.

Questions 6, 7 and 8 were addressed in Section A.

Table 2C, Question 9, Appendix 2 shows that 75.9% say that power evangelism is not welcomed and 24.1% are not sure. This could answer why the researcher considers the Methodist Church is so controlling when it comes to power evangelism. Also the 24.1% who are not sure could be revealing the unclear position of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe.

Table 2C, Question 10, Appendix 2 shows that 94.7% of the Methodist ministers are invited to preach in other denominations whereas only 5.3% are not invited.

The next question is a follow-up to Question 10: If 'Yes' which ones are these? Table 2C, Question 11, Appendix 2 shows that 89.5% are invited to preach in the mainline churches, 10.5% in the Pentecostal churches, and none in the African Initiated churches. This might be the result of doctrinal practices since the majority of the respondents are invited to preach in the mainline churches, which also implies that issues of fraternity

325 Jenkins, The New Face of Christianity, p. 185
could be involved, showing where one belongs. However, it could also mean that those ministers invited to the Pentecostal churches have shown signs of being charismatic and have nowhere to express their gifts except for in these churches.

Question 12 is the reverse of Question 11: Do they also invite others? Question 13 asks: And, if 'Yes,' which ones are these? Table 2C, Question 12, Appendix 2 shows that 73.7% of the ministers invite others to preach in their churches and 26.3% have not invited anyone. Of those who answered positively to this question, 94.7% invite ministers from the mainline churches, 5.3% invite ones from the Pentecostal churches and no one invites ones from the African Initiated churches. This helps in understanding that most of the mainline churches do not practise power evangelism, as spelled out by Jenkins: '... not all African churches offer exorcism and spiritual healing;' and 'spiritual intervention must be offered as the last resort.' Hence, the low number of ministers invited from the Pentecostal churches suggests that the Methodist Church is afraid of their influence and is exercising control over who can be invited. Since 'pulpit exchanging' is taking place, it could be that some Pentecostal influence is coming into the Methodist Church from those invited to preach, although some Methodist ministers are also being invited to preach in these Pentecostal churches.

Thus, the following question is an attempt to provoke the respondents' view about which method should be used to promote evangelism in this current area. Generally, many think power evangelism should be used, especially within the Shona Zimbabwe context, although that it is not what is actually happening in practice. In addition, its use should be conditional that it does not give people false hope.

Question 15 was addressed in Section A.

Question 16 was: Are signs and wonders part of the gift of the Holy Spirit? Table 2C, Question 16, Appendix 2 shows that 63.2% believe they are part of the gift of the Holy Spirit and 36.8% think they are not. Therefore, this question seeks clarity as to whether

326 Jenkins, The New Face of Christianity, p. 118
supernatural evangelism is regarded as the works of man rather than the works of God, as sometimes people confuse it as being derived from human wisdom (1 Cor 2:4).

The following question seeks to find out if the Eight Days Programme in Evangelism is still helpful. Table 2C, Question 17, Appendix 2 reveals that 42.1% think it is still helpful, 31.6% answer that it is of very little help and 26.3% do not know. Although the majority feel it is still relevant, Madhiba considers this programme to be out of date. 327 Maybe those who feel it is helpful have nothing to replace it with, again as Madhiba says. 328 The same question has been addressed by the laity in Question 13, Questionnaire 3, Appendix 1. Table 3D, Question 13, Appendix 2 shows that 60% of the laity feel the programme is still relevant and 40% feel it is of little help. As a result, what Madhiba says could be true in that the evangelism programme has become a programme for a few individuals rather than the whole Church. 329 Those who participate in it feel it is still relevant, whereby the rest feel it is out of date.

Question 18, Questionnaire 2, Appendix 1 links very well with the previous question: Do you sometimes lose some of your members to these denominations, that is, mainline churches, African Initiated churches, Pentecostal churches? Table 2C, Question 18, Appendix 2 shows that 5.3% of respondents said they lose some of their members to the mainline churches, 68.4% to the Pentecostal churches and 26.3% to the African Initiated churches. Despite the fact that many feel that their evangelism programme is still relevant, they are losing members. This same question was also addressed to the laity and the leaders of the churches. Table 3D, Question 12, Appendix 2 shows that 68% of the laity replied that they lose their members to the Pentecostal churches and 32% to the African Initiated churches; and Table 4D, Question 19B, Appendix 2 shows that 54.1% of the leaders of churches replied that they lose their members to the Pentecostal churches, 37.8% to African Initiated churches and 8.1% to the mainline churches.

327 Madhiba, Struggles and Strides, p. 65
328 Madhiba, Struggles and Strides, p. 65
329 Madhiba, Struggles and Strides, p. 65
Therefore, these results reflect that something needs to be done about this, as echoed by those who feel dissatisfied with these 'longstanding traditional approaches.'

Whilst acknowledging that power evangelism is practised and there is an approach in place, even though it may not be relevant, the next question probes for the respondents to point out what they think is lacking in the present way of doing evangelism. Many respondents feel that evangelism in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe has become more traditional and repetitious. Furthermore, they feel it uses literature borrowed from westerners which lacks the approaches required to meet the needs of the Shona African according to their world-view.

SECTION C: District or connexional lay leaders (Questionnaire 3)

Questionnaire 3 was partly directed to lay leaders who had been in leadership at district and connexional level since the Methodist Church became autonomous in 1977. Before autonomy, the Methodist Church was just a district of the British Conference. Data relating to these respondents are shown in Tables 3A to 3D inclusive in Appendix 2.

The responses to the first question are in Table 3A, Question 1, Appendix 2 which shows the periods in which these lay leaders worked, the positions they held and the percentages. In fact, 60% were district leaders and 40% connexional leaders. The information regarding the periods in which they worked is important to this research as it helps in understanding what was happening during each period of time.

The second question seeks to find out whether or not there were any society, circuit, district or connexional evangelism committees during the period. Table 3B, Question 2, Appendix 2 shows that evangelism programmes have been ongoing at all levels. Tables 3C and 3D show the responses in numbers and percentages respectively.

Questions 4, 5, 6 and 7 were addressed in Section A of this chapter.

330 Madhiba, Struggles and Strides, p. 66
Question 8 was: Do Christians consult traditional doctors during illness? According to the results on Table 3D, Question 8, Appendix 2, 48% said 'Yes,' 32% said 'Not at all' and 20% 'Some.' The figures explain the danger posed by syncretism if these issues are not dealt with; issues relating to healing, fertility, witchcraft and demons. Hence, Jenkins says, 'Instead of relying on God as Hezekiah did, we go to witchdoctors to find out who has bewitched us.'\(^{331}\) Moreover, this highlights the need for power evangelism. The same question was also addressed in Question 16, Questionnaire 4, Appendix 1, and Table 4D, Question 16, Appendix 2 shows that 27% answered 'Yes' and 73% 'No.' The 27% could reflect the answer coming from the mainline churches and the 73% from the Pentecostal and African Initiated churches since Maxwell mentions that the Pentecostals are able to deal with the issues mentioned above so that their members do not consult the traditional doctors.\(^{332}\)

Question 9 was addressed in Section A.

Question 10, Do Methodist members go for second or extra services in other denominations?, becomes crucial as a result of what was revealed in Question 8. Statistics show that 76% said 'Yes' and 24% 'No,' as is seen in Table 3D, Question 10, Appendix 2. The same question was addressed in Question 15, Questionnaire 4, Appendix 1, and Table 4D, Question 15, Appendix 2 reveals that 100% said 'Yes' to this question meaning that Methodists do go to other denominations for extra services. Hence, Madhiba's point could be true in that 'the evangelism programme has become foreign and unappealing for many members' and that 'there is no material developed for disciplining members.'\(^{333}\)

Question 11 was a follow-up to the previous question: If 'Yes,' which ones? Table 3D, Question 11, Appendix 2 shows the results that 32% of Methodist members go to the African Initiated churches and 68% go to Pentecostal churches. This may also indicate why the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe is losing its members. The same question was

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\(^{331}\) Jenkins, *The New Face of Christianity*, p. 118

\(^{332}\) Maxwell, *African Gifts of the Spirit*, p. 53

\(^{333}\) Madhiba, *Struggles and Strides*, p. 65
asked in Question 18B, Questionnaire 4, Appendix 1, and Table 4C, Question 18B, Appendix 2 shows that 10.8% go to mainline churches, 35.1% to African Initiated churches and 54.1% to Pentecostals. The reason behind the members going to these churches for second services could be that stated by Kurewa when he indicates that they go where their needs are being met. In addition to this, Daneel says, 'Mission Church members—openly or secretly—make use of the faith healing services rendered by the Spirit-type prophets.'

Questions 12, 13 and 14 have been addressed in Section B of this chapter.

SECTION D: Leaders of other denominations (Questionnaire 4)

This section targeted the heads of other denominations. As with the other sections, some parts of the questionnaires have already been addressed. The heads of other denominations were from the mainline, African Initiated and Pentecostal churches. Questionnaire 4 is included in Appendix 1 and the responses given are in Tables 4A to 4D in Appendix 2. These responses are shown in both numbers and percentages.

The answers to the first question are shown in Tables 4A and 4B. Table 4A, Question 1, Appendix 2 shows the number of years each leader has served and to which churches they belong. Table 4B, Question 1, Appendix 2 shows the total proportion of leaders belonging to each church in terms of numbers and percentages. Hence, Table 4B shows that 43.2% were leaders from mainline churches, 27% from African Initiated churches and 29.8% from Pentecostal churches.

Question 2 attempts to discover from where they get their membership. Table 4D, Question 2, Appendix 2 shows that 43.2% find their membership from the non-believing community and 56.8% from other denominations and the non-believing community. These results suggest that some churches are losing their members to other

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334 Kurewa, The Church in Mission, p. 170
denominations, some giving this the term 'sheep stealing' to make it sound bad. However, the reason could be in line with Jenkins' point where he says:

Most Presbyterians have a God that's so great, so big, that they cannot even talk with him openly because he is far away. The Pentecostals have the kind of God that will solve my problems today and tomorrow. People today are looking for solutions, not for eternity.336

This could also imply that the God of the mainline churches is the same and, as a result, people join other churches in order for their specific needs to be met. Therefore, it could be argued that meeting the people's needs in a material way is not the whole gospel. For example, people who are well, socially, economically and physically, have different needs to those who are disadvantaged in these areas.

The next question seeks to find out if exorcism and the casting out of demons are a part of their ministry. Table 4D, Question 3, Appendix 2 reveals that 70.3% of the denominational leaders do practise exorcism and the casting out of demons, and only 29.7% do not. The responses given imply the realisation of spiritual possession within the African context and the need to set people free from this. Nevertheless, 29.7% seem not to practise it, although the majority have indicated that exorcism and the casting out of demons are carried out.

The following question attempts to find out who carries out the exorcism and casting out of demons. Table 4D, Question 4, Appendix 2 shows that 37.8% said it is done by ministers only, 32.4% said by ministers and lay people and 29.8% did not know. The intention was to see how far the doctrine of priesthood of all believers is being practised and, in the event of the minister being away, do people wait until he/she comes back? Is this not another form of control in some way?

Question 5 was checking if pastoral care was given to people who have been exorcised. Table 4D, Question 5, Appendix 2 shows that 54.1% do give pastoral care and 32.4% do not, whilst 13.5% give it occasionally. Despite the fact that something good has been done, it is also crucial to help the person receiving the exorcism not to put their faith in

336 Jenkins, The Next Christendom, p. 91
the person performing it but, rather, to trust in God for his/her deliverance. Long suggests that exorcism should be accompanied by pastoral care.337

The next question was targeted at those who practise power evangelism. Table 4D, Question 6, Appendix 2 shows that 16.2% practise it every Sunday, 18.9% every fortnight and 64.9% are not sure. The researcher has assumed that neglecting such needs, or not giving frequent attention to them, would cause people to visit the traditional doctors who might be in a position to help them through other devious means. On the other hand, this could be the reason why people flock to Pentecostal and African Initiated churches for extra services.

In Question 7, What do you think attracts people into your church?, the general response was that many people are attracted by what they see, especially the exorcism of the devil being conducted in public. This could be true for the African people because, when they witness what is happening, they are more inclined to surrender whatever they have (i.e., polluted objects) in order to gain deliverance, as was experienced at Bonnke's crusades.338

Questions 8 and 9 were addressed in Section B and Section A respectively.

Question 10 asked how much involvement lay people have in evangelism and the results show that 67.6% replied that lay people are partially involved and 33.4% that they are actively involved, as shown in Table 4D, Question 10, Appendix 2. The intention of this question was to find out if power evangelism is only limited to the ordained; hence, in most cases, many incidences happen in the absence of the ordained. How equipped are the lay people to exercise power evangelism in their services?

Question 11 demanded to know if they experience wonders in their services, such as healing miracles and power over evil spirits and demons. Table 4D, Question 11, Appendix 2 shows that 64.9% experience signs and wonders in their church services and only 35.1% have not experienced anything. This also shows the difference between

337 Long, Health, Healing and God's Kingdom, p. 168
338 Jenkins, The New Face of Christianity, pp. 112-113
mainline, Pentecostal and African Initiated churches. Maxwell has noted that, 'Evangelism and divine healing has remained central' in Pentecostal churches.\[^{339}\] What this means is that a service without wonders is unfamiliar.

Question 12 was: Do you know how the Church handles issues of witchcraft, sorcery, spells and magic? Table 4D, Question 12, Appendix 2 shows that 62.2% know how the church handles these issues, 18.9% do not know and 18.9% are not sure. The second part of the question requires some explanation as to how it is handled. Generally, some of the churches use prayers of deliverance; others use 'holy water' to do away with evil spirits; and still others burn the charms. For example, Bonnke was doing the latter in Africa; people were bringing him sacks full of paraphernalia involved in witchcraft for burning.\[^{340}\] Furthermore, Maxwell points out that witchcraft eradication movements have been Christianised and are being used by Pentecostals to deal with witchcraft cleansing.\[^{341}\]

Questions 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19 were addressed in Sections A and B of this chapter.

SECTION E: Heads of schools and chaplains (Questionnaire 5)

This section was directed to the heads of schools and chaplains. Although most of the questions have already been answered, the following questions were directed to this group alone. All the responses are shown in Tables 5A to 5C and they are in both numbers and percentages. Firstly, the questions targeted to this group were done so with the intention of making a comparison with the objectives of the early missionaries regarding mission stations. Secondly, the researcher wanted to know their reaction if they encounter things like illness related to witchcraft, mass hysteria, or spiritual or demonic possession.

\[^{339}\] Maxwell, African Gifts of the Spirit, p. 107
\[^{340}\] Jenkins, The New Face of Christianity, p. 112
\[^{341}\] Maxwell, Christians and Chiefs, p. 189
The first question was: Does the head of the mission station also aim at producing church attendees or doing evangelism? Table 5C, Question 1, Appendix 2 shows that 53.6% said 'Yes' and 46.4% said 'No.' The responses show that there is a vast difference compared with the missionaries whose main objective was religious. Consequently, church and school could not be separated as these two were identical and, in most cases, all teachers up to the head of the school were Christians. Therefore, if 53.6% of the heads of schools said 'Yes' and 46.4% said 'No,' this may mean that there some heads see the school as existing only for academic purposes. Hence, Peaden says that, 'In the first place the teachers were also preachers and catechists, teaching the children in the week and preaching on Sundays.'

The next question, In what way do they do it?, is a follow-up for those who replied 'Yes' in Question 1 and these respondents indicated that they started and ended the day by praying.

Question 3 was addressed in Section A of this chapter.

The aim of Question 4 was to assess the impact of the chaplain at a mission school as far as evangelism is concerned. The chaplain is regarded as a spiritual figure, counsellor, teacher and evangeliser. Even though some of the students are from non-Methodist backgrounds, the chaplain is expected to give counselling to any student in need. However, the chaplain is expected to meet with children who already belong to the Methodist Church so as to nurture and encourage them in their spiritual journey.

Hence, the following question asks if the chaplains spend time with the Church Uniformed groups or organisations (BCU, GCU and MYD). Table 5C, Question 5, Appendix 2 shows that 89.3% meet with these organisations whereas 10.7% said they do not meet with them. This could also mean that the 10.7% are the heads of primary schools where these organisations are not functional. In contrast, the missionaries did

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342 Peaden, Missionary Attitudes, p. 8
343 Peaden, Missionary Attitudes, p. 8
344 Peaden, Missionary Attitudes, p. 8
not give attention to any particular organisation but regarded every child as belonging to the Methodist Church by virtue of being at their mission station.\textsuperscript{345}

Question 6 was addressed in Section A but a testimony was received from one of the missionaries in response to this question. This also reflects that, when such things happen, even the Church leaders do not know how to handle them. The question asks: \emph{Do you sometimes encounter issues of hysteria/mass hysteria (mamhepo) and illness related to witchcraft among pupils?} Table 5C, Question 6, Appendix 2 shows that 100% said 'Yes.' Question 7 goes on to ask: \textit{How should it be handled?} The following is a true account given by one of the missionaries at one of the Methodist mission schools in Mashonaland:

Yes, it happened at the school where I was chaplain. There was a growing sense among pupils that one of the non-academic staff was practising witchcraft against some of the students. Several students became hysterical with "mamhepo." It got increasingly worse. The president of the Conference visited the school and the whole school was called to the chapel. People became hysterical (possessed). The president fled the chapel when this started happening and took refuge in the chaplain's house. But the chaplain was left behind and started exorcism service and it was successful. In all that process he remembered an article he had photocopied while being trained in UK which spoke about an identical issue that had happened in the 1960s in the same area.\textsuperscript{346}

A similar case is also given by John Mbiti, quoted by Bediako:

The story is about a young man who had studied in western universities for more than 10 years and had earned his doctorate. Coming home he encountered an incident. Someone has fallen to the ground. It is his older sister ... he rushes to her. People make room for him and watch him. "Let us take her to the hospital," he calls urgently. They are stunned. He becomes quiet. They all look at him bending over. Why doesn't someone respond to his advice? Finally, a school boy says, "Sir, the nearest hospital is 50 miles away, and there are few buses that go there." Someone else says, "She is possessed. Hospitals will not cure her." The chief says to him, "You have been studying theology for 10 years. Now help your sister. She is troubled by the spirit of her great aunt." He looks around. Suddenly goes to Bultmann, looks at the index,

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\item \textsuperscript{345} Peaden, \textit{Missionary Attitudes}, p. 8
\item \textsuperscript{346} Extract from a response to Question 7 in Questionnaire 6
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finds what he wants and reads again about spirit possession in the New Testament. Of course he gets the answer. Bultmann has demythologized it. He insists that his sister is not possessed. The people shout, "Help your sister, she is possessed." He shouts back, "But Bultmann has demythologized demon possession."\textsuperscript{347}

In answer to the question, \textit{How is it handled?}, from these two accounts it can be seen that leaders and trained ministers are not given sufficient training to prepare them to face such challenges in the congregation. Rather, some of the responses given to this question show that pupils would be sent back to their parents who, they thought, would be aware of how to deal with the problem, although some cases should be handled by the chaplain.

Question 8 asks about the reaction of the staff and pupils to the issues mentioned in Question 6. It seems the way staff and pupils react differs because of their backgrounds. Since some come from a Pentecostal background, they would want to carry out a public exorcism there and then; others would want to keep away, thinking that it would spread to them like a contagious disease; and others would suggest calling a traditional doctor, or calling those from the Apostolic Church leaders (\textit{Vapostori}), from the African Initiated churches.

Question 9 is a follow-up to the responses given above: \textit{In view of the fact that some pupils are not Methodist, do you experience other denominations coming to perform exorcism or issues of witchcraft?} Table 5C, Question 9, Appendix 2 shows that 92.9\% said 'No' and 7.1\% said 'Yes.' Those who said 'No' are by far the majority, and the reason for this could be that they wanted to uphold Methodist Church policy. For example, such a response as the one made above, where some suggested inviting the traditional doctors from African Initiated churches, indicates that people are aware that in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe they are unable to the meet the needs of the people in these instances, thereby opting to invite others.

\textsuperscript{347} K. Bediako, \textit{Christianity in Africa: The Renewal of Non-Western Religion} (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1995), pp. 155-156
The last question was looking for advantages and disadvantages of evangelism in a Church-controlled school. Some of the advantages mentioned were that the children are many and, if they catch the fire of the gospel, it will spread easily. If something good happens, such as instant healing and exorcism, it attracts them to be a party to that victory and join the Church. A disadvantage is that those from non-Methodist backgrounds feel they are being forced to be a part of the Church.

Summary

In conclusion, the above analysis and discussion has shown that the approaches used by the Methodist Church in dealing with the so-called polluted objects have failed to meet the needs of the Shona African people. This should not be taken as a failure of the missionaries but, rather, as a method that is not relevant. However, their methods have helped to enlighten the people. By saying that the missionaries have only emphasised medicine and education as their approach to power evangelism is not being appreciative of the good works that they have done. Also, the analysis reveals that the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe still uses the missionary approaches in their present situation, although they are now an autonomous church. It should be noted that other denominations are not competitors or enemies: the Methodist Church can learn also from their approaches which seem to be relevant to the needs of the African Shona people.

Having dealt with the data presentation, analysis and discussion in this chapter, Chapter 6 will deal with Zimbabwean Methodism and power evangelism. It will also give a historical background and reveal how fertile the Zimbabwean Shona context with regard to power evangelism.
CHAPTER 6
ZIMBABWEAN METHODISM
AND POWER EVANGELISM

The Methodist Church came to Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) through South Africa, and it was by means of the call of Mr. Cecil Rhodes to Rev. Isaac Shimmin that the Methodist Church started its missionary work in this new country. Rhodes offered the Methodist Missionary Society the sum of one hundred pounds annually towards its expenses for the missionaries who would serve in the new country under the administration of the British South Africa Company. This was agreed upon by two committees: the British Methodist Conference and the Missionaries in Transvaal. Hence, what is now called the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) was more of an extension of the Methodist Church in South Africa under the Transvaal District which was established in 1882. Its first chairman was Rev. Owen Watkins who, together with Rev. Shimmin and two evangelists (Mr. Michael Bowen and an African evangelist, whose name is not provided), crossed the Limpopo River in July 1891.

The Methodist Church had its beginnings in South Africa in 1806 at the foot of Table Mountain. However, it was almost a century later when Revs. Watkins and Shimmin and the two evangelists followed Rhodes’ pioneer column to Mashonaland (the infant Rhodesia). The first evangelistic service was 'held in a hut, with a barrel for a reading desk and a few soap boxes for his pews. A congregation of four men crowded in.' This marked the beginning of evangelism in the Methodist Church in Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). To mark the growth of the Church, achieved by means of its evangelistic thrust, a chapel was built which would accommodate 150 worshippers. When he laid the

349 P.S. King, Missions in Southern Rhodesia (Iwyathi: Iwyathi Centenary Trust, 1959), p. 30
351 King, Missions in Southern Rhodesia, p. 30
353 Findland & Holdsworth (eds), The History of the Wesleyan Methodist, Vol. IV, p. 382
stone, Dr. Jameson congratulated the Wesleyan Church for building the first permanent church in the country.

However, if the work of evangelism was to be established, more land would need to be earmarked for mission stations. On 20 October 1891 Watkins went to see Rhodes with the hope of being given more mission land for the expansion of the kingdom of God. They had long conversations and the following are some of Watkins' words:

They must bear in mind they gave one farm to any man who would come into the country—they would give me one for myself and one to each man I might bring, if I only asked—but we did not ask for land for ourselves, but for the society, which would have to spend a lot of money and would do great good in the country, not only to white men, but to the Natives— but we could not do much Native work unless we had land for Mission Stations.\(^{354}\)

The missionaries obtained many mission stations: 'Fort Salisbury (1891), Hartleyton (1891), Epworth (1891), Nenguvo (1892), Kwenda (1892), Gwai River (1893), Bulawayo (1894) and Tegwani (1897).\(^{355}\) Notable was the arrival of missionaries from other denominations into this new country.\(^{356}\) However, since the purpose of this research is to deal mainly with Methodism, not much attention will be given here to these other denominations.

After the establishment of the mission stations, Shimmin knew the barriers and difficulties they were facing as foreign missionaries. The first barrier was the language of the local people so, to solve that problem, they brought in more African evangelists from South Africa; these being: Josias Ramushu, Modumedi Moleli, Samuel Tutani, Wellington Belisi, James Anta, and two unnamed ones.\(^{357}\) Quoting Zvobgo: 'The missionaries also emphasized the importance of the African evangelist in carrying the gospel to his fellow Africans.' Their report of 1893 states:

That Africa is to be saved by Africans themselves is a favourite theory of most Christian workers out here, and in this new mission we are

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\(^{354}\) Thorpe, *Limpopo to Zambezi*, p. 45

\(^{355}\) C.J.M. Zvobgo, 'The Influence of the Wesleyan Methodist Missions', p. 63

\(^{356}\) Zvobgo, 'An Overview of the Methodist Church', pp. 7-8

proceeding on these lines. Under the careful and constant supervision of
the minister, the native evangelist can become the most effective
missionary, and especially is this the case in a country like
Mashonaland.\textsuperscript{358}

Hence, because of this need, they further recruited five Tonga missionaries, who were
the first indigenous members of the Methodist Church in Southern Rhodesia from the
Zambezi valley, their names being Lewanika, Simemeza, Ciyoka, Sibenzo and Mafare
Muzambgw.\textsuperscript{359} It would be seen later how the natives helped with the evangelisation.

**Missionary Approach to Evangelism**

Findland and Holdsworth say, 'It has grasped the great truth that civilisation without
Christianity would not be beneficial to the people.'\textsuperscript{360} This statement has helped the
researcher to understand the approach taken by the missionaries in their evangelising
work. Since the missionaries needed the help of the natives in their evangelistic mission,
they had to enlighten the African evangelists by training them so that they would be
equipped to carry the gospel message to a people they had determined as being without
religion:

The missionaries did not understand, and did not bother to understand at
the beginning, the African society which they came to evangelize. In the
domain of religion, the Methodists assumed that Africans either had no
religion at all, or that they had only a vague conception of the existence
of a Supreme Being.\textsuperscript{361}

Evangelism was an easy task for the missionaries because they had made assumptions
about the African natives, yet knew very little of their beliefs and culture which they
needed to study in order to win the Shona people over to Christ. For example, as the
missionaries did not see any shrines depicting sacrificial places, when they saw large
numbers of Africans coming to hear the gospel, this only served to confirm their wrong
assumptions. Manyoba said:

\textsuperscript{358} Zvobgo, 'The Influence of the Wesleyan Methodist Missions', p. 68
\textsuperscript{359} Zvobgo, 'The Influence of the Wesleyan Methodist Missions', p. 68
\textsuperscript{360} Thorpe, Limpopo to Zambezi, p. 62
\textsuperscript{361} Zvobgo, 'The Influence of the Wesleyan Methodist Missions', p. 64
The Methodist Missionaries began their work in this country in Mashonaland where the people accepted the new religion, not because of what the missionaries said about God, but because of the good works they did in the name of God.\textsuperscript{362} 

Peaden echoes these sentiments when he says, 'in the early days many missions claimed large congregations.'\textsuperscript{363} This happened for a variety of reasons, some of which had nothing to do with repentance. 

The missionaries used a threefold ministry approach to evangelism: that is, preaching, teaching and healing.\textsuperscript{364} The mission stations they had acquired were to act as both church and school. The building would be used as a classroom during the week and a church on Sundays. Hence, to the Shona people, church and school became synonymous. The purpose of this method was to win people over to Christianity through conversion by participation, since 'their main objective was religious.'\textsuperscript{365} Schools now acted as recruiting grounds for church membership: 

\begin{quote}
Missionaries said quite frankly that schools would assist converts in developing the culture change considered necessary for the Christian life in a way which was not possible otherwise.\textsuperscript{366}
\end{quote}

So the idea of merging religion and education became an evangelising method, which can be seen in the following statement: 

\begin{quote}
When you educate the Native you weaken tribal customs, and in consequence, unless we are careful to instil religion into the mind, as well as educating him, we are taking away something without putting anything in its place.\textsuperscript{367}
\end{quote}

For the missionaries, education was a tool to deal with the superstitions connected with ancestral worship and witchcraft. Power evangelism was culturally appropriate to address these so-called 'polluted beliefs.' Without any doubt, Peaden says: 'There is no question that the mission schools were the most important machinery for recruiting

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{363} Peaden, \textit{Missionary Attitudes}, p. 6
\textsuperscript{364} Peaden, \textit{Missionary Attitudes}, p. 8
\textsuperscript{365} Peaden, \textit{Missionary Attitudes}, p. 8
\textsuperscript{366} Peaden, \textit{Missionary Attitudes}, p. 9
\textsuperscript{367} Peaden, \textit{Missionary Attitudes}, p. 10
\end{flushright}
Church members.' Hence, sometimes only a small proportion of those who passed through these schools became members, maintaining the doctrine of the Church but without inner conviction. As a result of this, the issue of syncretism was being hatched since these people would not discard their traditional beliefs, especially those with regard to witchcraft and ancestor worship.

The other aspect of the threefold ministry was healing. The 'missionaries did not believe that illness could be caused by either ancestors or the magic concoctions of an enemy.' Milongo commented that many missionaries did not believe or accept Mashave (spirit possession) as a disease worth healing as they refer to it as a hysterical and psychosomatic disease and, hence, they consider anyone trying to heal it to be an imbecile chasing the wind. The missionaries also considered the 'medical missionaries to be evangelising agents.' This idea is seconded by Gelfand who said that western medicine was used by the missionaries 'to win over the African population to Christianity.' Conversely, the natives equated the missionary with their own traditional doctors (n'anga). Gelfand says:

Knowing that the missionaries were ministers of religion, the Africans believed that they were endowed with healing properties in the same way that they believed their own nganga (folk practitioners) were.

Therefore, sick people were anxious to be cured by the missionaries as they thought they had better medicine.

However, in the event of the missionaries failing to heal a person, as 'there were many illnesses which they were not able to cure,' that same person would go to the traditional doctor (n'anga) and be cured of the disease that the medical missionaries had failed to cure.

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368 Peaden, Missionary Attitudes, p. 14
370 Peaden, Missionary Attitudes, p. 16
372 Peaden, Missionary Attitudes, p. 17
373 Gelfand, 'Medicine and the Christian Missions in Rhodesia', p. 114
374 Gelfand, 'Medicine and the Christian Missions in Rhodesia', p. 116
375 Peaden, Missionary Attitudes, p. 18
One would question: Where was faith healing, exorcism and deliverance? In a way, faith healing was a part of the same package as medical mission. Faith healing would come through the results obtained; an example being:

It is of a boy who had been brought several miles by his mother on her back some weeks ago, he had fractured his leg and is now brought for examination. The leg was well set, and the missionary faith has gone forth, to add to his triumphs.\(^\text{376}\)

Consequently, this idea of faith healing through medical mission is highlighted in the Report of 1932:

Each morning a few people arrive for treatment, and our workers have prayers before they begin. The people are told that it is because Christ healed the body as well as the soul, that is why we have this dispensary.\(^\text{377}\)

One wonders how the following statement, made by Rev. J. W. Stanlake on a visit to Epworth station, would be fulfilled without the various aspects of power evangelism:

These people have everything to lose. Polygamy must go. Witchcraft must go. The orgies of beer drinking must go. These things have deep roots. To speak of the freedom and joy of the Christian life, to present the Christ to them whose minds have no power to conceive of what is pure and of good report, is a task before which many a man has paused.\(^\text{378}\)

In their approach, the missionaries expected the material realm to infuse power into their evangelism, so it was medicine, schools and agriculture, accompanied by western Christianity, which would eradicate what they regarded as barriers. However, the native evangelist used a different approach to meet the needs of the people, but not while the missionaries were present. Things were happening behind the scenes.

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Power Evangelism in Secret

'The native Evangelist has done good work on this station and we are able to report the increased congregation and financial support.' This report shows that the African evangelists were carrying out their work in the absence of the missionaries and, in some cases, native churches would be seen to be springing up where 'the European missionary was unknown,' highlighting the fact that much was happening in secret.

One of the native evangelists was Modumedi Moleli, whose 'first objective was the conversion of the people.' These conversions usually happened at Sunday worship services and were normally accompanied by outward signs. Many would respond to Moleli's emotional call to confess their sins and receive God's forgiving mercy. Many would be seen in their cries and tears. Graaff says, 'Moleli worked to develop an "awareness of sin" among his congregation and among those with whom he came into frequent or occasional contact.' In his sermons he would bring attention to:

... those aspects of Shona tradition most at variance with Christian tradition, namely polygamy, witchcraft, the right of a father to expect a girl to accept a marriage in spite of her feelings, the mashave ceremonies, and other ancestral rites ... decried excessive harvest drinking and its consequent fighting between adults, the killing of twins and other features of Shona life of the time.

Graaff points out the importance of such preaching: 'In commenting on these aspects of traditional life he was striking at a way of life which his listeners considered to be, to some extent, essential to the continuance of life itself.' Hence, he commented that:

He provided the intellectual satisfaction and emotional support needed to replace the spiritual and cultural loss resultant upon the break with traditional, which had been made by those in the inner circle of his congregation.

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380 Findland & Holdsworth (eds), The History of the Wesleyan Methodist, Vol. IV, p. 394
381 Graaff, Modumedi Moleli, p. 67
382 Graaff, Modumedi Moleli, p. 67
383 Graaff, Modumedi Moleli, p. 68
384 Graaff, Modumedi Moleli, p. 68
385 Graaff, Modumedi Moleli, p. 68
386 Graaff, Modumedi Moleli, p. 77
Another native evangelist was Rev. Josias Ramushu, who later became the first black minister. A report of 1903-1905 states: 'We noted with gratitude that our native minister had a position of great influence over a wide circle of people.' This was followed by another report, of 1913-1914, in which it is written:

We gave ourselves to a week of special prayer for spiritual results. A centenary was opened with a massed prayer meeting. At the afternoon service twenty-four people came forward. From all the native stations come signs of spiritual uplifting.

The report goes on to relate: 'The Rev. Josias Ramushu ... carried out just the power the men were waiting for and more than thirty people knelt at the penitent for full salvation and consecration.' After that, the day was spent in prayers, praise and testimonies, and an explanation of the centenary programme, all of which were to take place in the British Conference.

Supernatural power was needed and, to the Africans, this was part and parcel of their life, as recorded:

A story of the supernatural presents no difficulty to their minds, for their whole life is full of belief in the supernatural and it is quite easy for them to believe in that the great God can do anything.

Again, this report shows that it is powerful for African people to own Africa. The report continues with signs of supernatural power among the African ministers and evangelists: 'One of our African ministers sums it up in this sentence: "So great and mighty has been the power of the Lord in our midst that one witchdoctor has been won for Christ." We are led to believe that the witch-doctor responded to the African minister's word in the same manner that Simon Magus responded to Peter's words (Acts 8:5-24).

387 Findland & Holdsworth (eds), The Foreign Field of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, Reports, Vol. XXIX, 1903-1905 (London: The Epworth Press, 1905), p. 139
389 Findland & Holdsworth (eds), The Foreign Field, Vol. XXXIII, p. 152
390 Findland & Holdsworth (eds), The Foreign Field of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, Reports, Vol. XXXVII, 1926-1929 (London: The Epworth Press, 1929), p. 73
391 Findland & Holdsworth (eds), The Foreign Field, Vol. XXXVII, p. 80
Another unseen activity was the healing led by a female prophetess, who was a member of the Ruwadzano from the Kwenda Circuit.\textsuperscript{392} In fact, what Jenkins says seems to be true:

... members join or convert because they acquire beliefs about the supernatural realm and its relationship to the visible. Just what are these teeming masses seeking from their churches and revivals? What kind of miracle are they looking for?\textsuperscript{393}

Another African minister who was practising power evangelism was Rev. Thompson Samkange. People flocked to him for his prayers for the sick and 'he even received an unsolicited testimony from a Presbyterian clinic manager—the last person one might have expected to be impressed by the healing powers of Methodist prayer.'\textsuperscript{394} Thus, it is possible that this phenomenon could have been happening secretly to an even greater extent, as is indicated in a novel written by Stanlake Samkange in an incident where the African evangelist (Moses Magedi) was exorcising demons and shouting so loud that he could be heard a mile away. According to Samkange, people even spoke in unknown tongues at such gatherings and were 'shaking themselves so furiously that it took half a dozen men to hold each one of them down.'\textsuperscript{395}

Simultaneously, another strong power evangelism organisation called Ruwadzano Manyano Women's Group, nicknamed the 'Red Blouse Women' because of their uniform, was performing miracles. According to the report of 1930-1932, this organisation was carrying out a great deal of evangelism. It says:

Our special witness to women by women continues as one of the most effective voluntary agencies ever developed in our work in Southern Rhodesia. In most circuits the Manyano or Ruwadza (Women's Prayer Union) has become a recognised part of the circuit organisation.\textsuperscript{396}

Evangelism has become one of the most vital parts of their work and, in many places, they are in active leadership of the Church; hence the comment: 'the strength of some of

\textsuperscript{392} Ranger, \textit{Are We Not Also Men?}, p. 61
\textsuperscript{393} Jenkins, \textit{The Next Christendom}, p.91
\textsuperscript{394} Ranger, \textit{Are We Not Also Men?}, p. 79
\textsuperscript{395} S. Samkange, \textit{The Mourned One} (London: Heinemann, 1975), p. 37
\textsuperscript{396} Findland & Holdsworth (eds), \textit{The Foreign Field}, Vol. XXXVIII, p. 111
our circuits lies in the women’s movement. This was, indeed, also happening in the United Methodist Episcopal Church in Southern Rhodesia, the sister church. Muzorewa makes mention of power evangelism taking place during the women's prayers. He says, 'Members constantly give testimonies to the "miraculous" powers of healing, exorcism and conversion present as Rukwadzano women pray together.' Another recorded incident in the same church was during the Revival in 1918. Nhendu's [his name] hands and legs were deformed but, by means of their prayers and by pronouncing the Apostle's words, 'In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, walk' (Acts 3:6), he stood on his feet and began to walk.

Kurewa notes that while these miracles were taking place, 'many missionaries did not look at it favourably, Africans greatly rejoiced in it.' In spite of the positive results achieved in the work of the Church as a whole, some missionaries perceived the Revival as being detrimental to the African people. Hence, without such supernatural happenings, many would practise syncretism or even go back to their old traditional religion, as is highlighted in the Report of 1913-1914 which says:

In addition to the opposition from without, there was the most distressing and repeated lapse of church members. Even local preachers of long standing were found taking part in heathen practices, such as witchcraft, spirit worship and beer drinking.

This was happening not only in Southern Rhodesia but in other parts of Africa as well, and an example of this is recorded by Krass, who says:

In the same way, Ghanaian Christians whom I knew often forsook Christian practices in order to perform pagan rites in connection with such things as fertility, their relation to the dead, and their fear of witchcraft. In at least the last two of these, I believe the Church may have been to blame, for it chose to ignore or belittle the people's beliefs in these matters. It failed to give people a new Christian understanding starting from where the people were, of death and witchcraft and of the relation between spirits and sickness and death.

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397 Zvobgo, *The Wesleyan Methodist Missions in Zimbabwe*, p. 103
398 D.F. Muzorewa, 'Through Prayer to Action', p. 258
399 Kurewa, *The Church in Mission*, pp. 68-69
400 Kurewa, *The Church in Mission*, p. 70
401 Kurewa, *The Church in Mission*, p. 70
402 Findland & Holdsworth (eds), *The Foreign Field*, Vol. XXXIII, p. 150
403 A.C. Krass, *Go ... And Make Disciples* (London: SPCK, 1974), p. 76
In order to understand the researcher's point of view, it is necessary to hear from those who were experiencing this situation. The following quotation outlines what was happening within the Methodist Church in Southern Rhodesia, depicting the thinking of some of the missionaries:

Ranger describes how white confidence in Mashonaland grew up against a background of relative strength and expansion. The settlers, he says, presented the implications of colonial rule and settler economy to the Africans with no concessions at all (my italics) [i.e. Graaff's]. By altering only a few words this devastating description could be made equally accurate of Shimmin who presented the implications of Methodism with no concessions at all. What Shimmin wanted was the acceptance of the message, the gathering of souls into the Church in the familiar pattern of English Methodism.\footnote{Graaff, Modemedi Moleli, p. 58}

Furthermore, instead of sending men, they were filled with Holy Spirit to fight the evil supernatural and ended up fielding teachers and medical missionaries, who were stopping from practising their cultural beliefs: no traditional drums, no traditional dances, no consulting traditional doctor.\footnote{Findland & Holdsworth (eds), The Foreign Field, Vol. XXXIII, p. 150} Kurewa thinks that to become a Christian someone was supposed to follow the western way of life.\footnote{Kurewa, The Church in Mission, p. 88} Since this was what was taking place, and since reports were being submitted to the British Conference yearly, it is important to know what was happening in Zimbabwe, as the Methodist Church in Southern Rhodesia was a district of the British Conference until 1977.

**The Response of the Church**

It is noteworthy that, whilst the missionaries of the British Methodist Church were attacking certain aspects of Shona African beliefs and culture as being barriers to their Christian work in Southern Rhodesia (for example, witchcraft, polygamy and drunkenness), some of these aspects were also under discussion within British Methodism, bearing in mind that the Methodist Church in Rhodesia only became autonomous in 1977 and, before that, all their reports were sent to British Conference.
Evidence of this has been recorded at some of their conferences. The British Conference of 1942, held in Manchester, raised issues of beer drinking and gambling and how to curb these problems.\textsuperscript{407} The 1943 Conference in Birmingham recommended that 'all Methodists should be called upon habitually to abstain from the use of intoxicating liquors, and from gambling in every shape.'\textsuperscript{408} Even the 1944 Conference, held in Leeds, discussed the same issue, showing that some of these problems were not only from the overseas churches.\textsuperscript{409}

Issues appertaining to healing and exorcism were also under discussion in the following conferences. The representative session of the 1945 Methodist Conference, held in Nottingham, discussed the methods to be used in healing:

> It is of opinion that Methodism should have a place in the widely spread movement towards the recovery of the ancient Christian gift of healing, which is being explored by representatives of the Church and the Medical Profession.\textsuperscript{410}

Hence, the 1946 Conference in London was:

> ... convinced that the recovery of the ancient Christian gift of healing is bound up with any religious revival and is desirous that Methodism should play her part in the new interest in the New Testament's teaching which is so apparent.\textsuperscript{411}

It seems that the approach used by the Methodist Conference before 1946 was different from that prescribed by the Scriptures. Again, it seems the Methodist Church was emphasising that healing should be performed through a collaboration of Christians and medical workers. This emphasis is explained in detail in the 1975 Conference, held in Liverpool, although they also encouraged many forms of healing.\textsuperscript{412} This is totally contrary to what Ranger discovered in 1939 from the Methodist Church in Rhodesia. He

\textsuperscript{407} Minutes of British Conference -- 1942, Manchester, p. 215
\textsuperscript{408} Minutes of British Conference -- 1943, Birmingham, p. 215
\textsuperscript{409} Minutes of British Conference -- 1944, Leeds, pp. 291-305
\textsuperscript{410} The Methodist Conference, Nottingham, 1945, p. 279
\textsuperscript{411} The Methodist Conference, London, 1946, p. 309
\textsuperscript{412} The Methodist Conference, Liverpool, 1975, pp. 185-193
says, ‘Christian wives who could not bear children found little relief within a Methodist commitment to western medicine.’

It appears that the Methodist Church has now realised its inadequacy in its approach to power evangelism—hence their call for medical missionaries not to work in isolation and for the Church not to surrender its calling of healing to other agencies—which, in the researcher's opinion, was not the case when the Methodist missionaries started work in Rhodesia. Cobb's statement, therefore, seems well founded when he writes: 'Thank God for the doctors, and all they are doing in fighting disease, but, at its best, medical science is a very poor substitute for the Healing of Christ through the Church,' meaning that, whilst God has given man the knowledge of drugs, Christians should not leave healing solely to medical science.

This leads us to the issue of exorcism, which was discussed in 1974, 1975 and 1976. A discussion of these issues arose as the Church's response to a particular case, published in the press, which involved Methodist Church members. The statement made by the 1976 Conference shows that there were two opposing views in the sense that there were those who believed in the existence of demons and those who did not believe in their existence.

From the analysis above, the context in which the Methodist Church, including its missionaries, found itself can be seen. There were those who thought thus:

A belief in demons is explicable sociologically and psychologically. It is undeniable that there are people who claim to believe in demons, but since demons do not exist, it is their belief with which we should deal, not demons'. In this case exorcism would be inappropriate, since what is to be dealt with is false belief.

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413 Ranger, Are We Not Also Men?, p. 33
415 Methodist Church, Statement on Social Responsibility, p. 20
416 Methodist Church, Statement on Social Responsibility, p. 20
417 Methodist Church, Statement on Social Responsibility, p. 21
418 Methodist Church, Statement on Social Responsibility, p. 21
Therefore, Kraft is correct in saying that, 'we from European and American societies have learned that ... there are no invisible beings in the universe. We are taught to believe only in visible things.'

It could be that some Methodists had been influenced by the Enlightenment thinkers whose views were that they did not 'believe in angels, Satan, demons and even God.' Hence, their approach to power evangelism was 'more in the realms of science and technology than in religion.' They have replaced the power of God with medicine and education. Enlightenment was at the forefront. MacNutt puts it clearly:

In our contemporary understanding of Christianity, we impose a heavy cultural overlay of rationalism: while we think we are bringing these other "less enlightened" cultures into Christian truth what we are really doing is converting them to a western (that is western since Descartes) view of humanity and the world, which is prejudiced against a number of spiritual practices we label as superstitious. One of the "superstitions" our missionaries want to eradicate is the belief of these people in the presence and activity of evil spirits.

MacNutt is again in a position of not wanting to impose western thinking on other people without actually understanding their cultural background.

**Post-Independence**

The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe became autonomous in 1977, three years before the country became independent from colonial rule in 1980. When the Methodist Church became autonomous, not much changed, except that the Church tried to become more indigenous in terms of its worship which became more relevant to their traditional background. Also, its leadership became indigenous as well. Before this, the Methodist Church in Rhodesia had virtually no indigenous ministry, almost everything being westernised. It could have been that the missionaries wanted to develop an indigenous church somehow, but maybe the general people (the grass roots) were not aware of this issue.

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419 Kraft, *Christianity with Power*, p. 24  
420 Kraft, *Christianity with Power*, p. 26  
421 Kraft, *Christianity with Power*, p. 190  
422 MacNutt, *Deliverance from Evil Spirits*, p. 58
On the other hand, it seems that this was not their intention, as revealed by the churches that broke away from the mainstream churches and began to direct their ministry towards an indigenous way of life. When the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe became independent, it inherited most of the western ways of doing things, maintaining the status quo. The Church maintained its clinics, schools and farms, and held the same meetings that they used to have. Anything that the missionaries denounced as superstitious, the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe still held to. Although the Church was trying to remain indigenous in terms of worship, it did not deal with the issues appertaining to African spirituality that surrounded its members; issues such as witchcraft, healing, possession, visions, dreams and exorcism.

In a way, the missionaries' approach seems to have been maintained without eliminating some of the things that did not meet the changing situations in which the people were living. To quote Jenkins on the statement made by Johane Masowe, one of the Shona prophets:

> When we were in these synagogues [the European churches] we used to read about the works of Jesus Christ ... cripples were made to walk and the dead were brought to life ... evil spirits driven out. ... That was what was being done in Jerusalem. We Africans, however, who were being instructed by white people, never did anything like that. ... We were taught to read the Bible, but we ourselves never did what the people of the Bible used to do.\(^{423}\)

Hence, they are performing 'signs and wonders' in these Independent and Pentecostal churches, causing some members of the mainstream churches to join them so that their spiritual needs could be met.\(^{424}\)

Conversely, it seems that the Methodist Church followed the secular view imposed by the government in connection with issues such as the Witchcraft Suppression Act 1899.\(^{425}\) This Act was meant to eradicate witchcraft but, instead, it perpetuated it, causing it to rip families and villages apart and people to kill each other as 'numerous

\(^{423}\) Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*, p. 149
\(^{424}\) Kurewa, *The Church in Mission*, p. 170
\(^{425}\) Lan, *Guns and Rain*, p. 142
accounts of such murders appear in Zimbabwean newspapers to this day.\textsuperscript{426} Whilst the Methodist Church did not participate in supernatural divine power, some individual members or ministers would practise and claim such victories over evil spirits in secret. These incidents would occur when people were holding night vigils, and they were never recorded since many would not want to be known for fear of being put under church discipline or of being excommunicated for behaving like the Vapostori (religious sects of Johane Masowe and Johana Maranke; religious movements in Zimbabwe whose members believe in dreams, visions, healing, exorcism and miracles, sometimes referred to as 'spirit type' churches (Makereke Omweya)). Hence, Jenkins quoted one African leader, saying: 'These movements or sects are winning our Catholic women over because they seem to be responding to their real needs.'\textsuperscript{427}

It seems that all the mainstream churches or mission churches are trying to maintain the characteristics of their founding churches. This does not mean that the mainstream churches do not offer healing services. Rather, the problem, as cited by Jenkins, is that:

\begin{quote}
... mainline churches may offer healing services or prayer for a patient's recovery but direct religious intervention is rarely in prospect. How many seminaries, even those with conservative or evangelical leanings, offer courses on spiritual healing, leave alone exorcism? For most Europeans and Americans, healing is a secular medical function and has long been so.\textsuperscript{428}
\end{quote}

Even some missionaries like Krass, who seem to have understood the fear of witchcraft among the Ghanaians, confessed that they never preached about it.\textsuperscript{429} It appears that the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe likewise does not encourage its ministers or members to preach on such subjects that deal with witchcraft, although individuals are being used to eradicate it by means of power evangelism.\textsuperscript{430}

Hence, issues of witchcraft, possession and exorcism are closely linked. Denying one aspect may mean denying the rest. In fact, the reason for this research is to find out why

\begin{footnotes}
\item[426] Lan, Guns and Rain, p. 142
\item[427] Jenkins, The New Face of Christianity, p. 111
\item[428] Jenkins, The New Face of Christianity, p. 185
\item[429] Krass, Go ... And Make Disciples, p. 80
\item[430] Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, Minutes of the Standing Committee, held on 14 November 2009
\end{footnotes}
the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe is so reticent about supernatural evangelism. Thus, when one reads the journals of John Wesley, one feels that the missionaries in Zimbabwe were not sharing the true Wesleyan ministry of the supernatural divine power, as recorded in most of his journals. Since the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe came from the missionaries, it has also inherited a disbelief in the supernatural, the end result being that those ministers or members who feel dissatisfied and disgruntled leave the so-called missionary church to start their own church, or to join other churches which are open to this phenomenon. In fact, if not dealt with, the leaders in the mainstream churches often condemn these African Initiated and Pentecostal churches as if they are not being used by God, since 'African clergy are so conservative, they are just parroting what the missionaries told them.'

The purpose of this research is to look further than what we have inherited from the missionaries and to apply the Bible in accordance with the needs of the local people. Why is it that the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe cannot come up with a definite stance since supernatural evangelism is found in Wesleyan theology and is even more relevant to the cultural context of the Shona people? In putting the emphasis on western medicine and education, the Church cannot deal with certain African beliefs. Thus, Jenkins quoted Fr. Peter Wasswa Mpagi from Uganda, in saying, 'Many sicknesses cannot be cured medically.'

The next chapter contains the researcher’s conclusion to this research and the recommendations made.

431 Jenkins, The New Face of Christianity, p. 19
432 Peaden, Missionary Attitudes, p. 18
433 Jenkins, The New Face of Christianity, p. 110
CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to ascertain the approaches used by the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe for power evangelism, as stated in Chapter 1, together with the reasons why it was desirable to carry out such research. Chapter 2 defines what was meant by power evangelism, and Chapter 3 deals with power evangelism in early Methodism. Chapter 4 explains the research methodology used and the reasons for the choice of methodology. Chapter 5 consists of the data presentation, analysis and discussion, and Chapter 6 describes Zimbabwean Methodism and power evangelism.

The Deed of Church Order and Standing Orders of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe states that 'Methodism was raised to spread scriptural Holiness by the proclamation of the Evangelical Faith, and declares its unfaltering resolve to be true to its divinely appointed mission.' It seems the method used to spread that scriptural holiness lacks the spiritual experience. Also, the intended dramatic, supernatural experience of God is missing. It appears that the approaches used by the first missionaries of education and medicine as a means to eradicate the so-called polluted objects are the ones still being used more than a century later. It is true that the so-called mission churches no longer believe in the supernatural divine intervention of God. For them, what the researcher considered to be power evangelism had been replaced by something else:

Like the missionaries they considered that the answer to it was enlightenment through religion and education. Scientific treatment of disease and the propagation of hygienic knowledge are reasons held to be a powerful weapon against this demoralising superstition.

Since medical missionaries were regarded as evangelisers and they were in a position to break the power of witchcraft, spiritual possession, demonic attacks, evil spirits, illness

434 Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, Deed of Church Order and Standing Orders, 1997, p. 1
435 Peaden, Missionary Attitudes, p. 18
and the power of the witch-doctor (n'anga), Wagner says that the approach was 'civilise to evangelise.' In fact, the missionaries had made a good diagnosis regarding the issues affecting the Shona people: namely, witchcraft, evil spirits, sorcery, demons and ancestral spirits. However, their problem was that they regarded everything as superstition and, because of this, whilst having given a good diagnosis, they ended up giving the wrong prescription to resolve the problem, using approaches that were non-biblical (education and medicine) in dealing with supernatural evil, following the Enlightenment thinking of deism rather than biblical Christianity. In view of their approaches, one wonders how people were able to convert to Christ. Maybe the theology of prevenient grace—that is, the spirit of God—was at work among the Shona people. As Jenkins says, 'Northern-World resistance to ideas of a healing mission can readily be criticised as a stubborn refusal to acknowledge the plain lessons of Scripture.' Hence, the researcher doubts how scriptural their approaches were to power evangelism.

On the other hand, this research has also revealed that many of the Pentecostal churches had their roots in the Wesleyan holiness movement. Even some African Initiated churches claim to be Ma Wisiri (Wesleyans, i.e. Methodists) since they are aware of how Methodism began. Conversely, the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe itself has remained like the 'slough of a snake that frightens but remains harmless.' In the end, they will only be left with the name 'Methodist,' the Wesleyan enthusiasm having left them.

It has also been discovered by means of this research that, because of the enlightenment, Methodist missionaries have somehow lost the spirit of Wesleyanism in order to accommodate those who no longer believe in the existence of evil spirits, demons and exorcism, and they class these phenomena as being sociological and psychological issues. It seems the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe has long surrendered its conviction,

436 Wagner, Signs and Wonders, p. 110
437 Kraft, Christianity With Power, p. 39
438 Jenkins, The New Face of Christianity, p. 123
or has never had it, that Methodism was born out of religious experience followed by 'signs and wonders,' as reflected in Chapter 3. In fact, the present generation of followers of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe seem to be far removed from the founder of Methodism as regards theology and enthusiasm. From what the researcher has gathered from Wesley's journals, it seems that the criteria of using supernatural power has long been forgotten and needs to be rediscovered. However, one cannot continue to blame the missionaries who left almost three decades ago. The missionaries have long since gone; it is the present Methodist generation that has to act. The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe needs to recapture the old Wesleyan spirit for the denomination to survive in a context where the spiritual market is so high. Hence, the researcher feels that one of John Wesley's greatest fears was that the Methodists would lose the understanding that Methodism was born in association with power and holiness or sanctification, as he stated:

I am not afraid the people called Methodists should ever cease to exist either in Europe or America. But I am afraid, lest they should exist as a dead sect, having the form of religion without power. And this undoubtedly will be the case; unless they hold fast both the doctrine, spirit and discipline with which they first set out.\(^{441}\)

As Dallimore says:

This matter must have our attention, not only as part of our study of the eighteenth century Revival but as an aid to our understanding of the occurrence of similar phenomena during other revivals in Christian history.\(^{442}\)

He continued to say:

Many people looked upon these experiences as an unmistakable sign of the supernatural—a demonstration of the mighty work of God—and viewing Wesley as the one divinely used channel of this power, they found him raised to extraordinary heights of esteem in their minds.\(^{443}\)

Hence, the researcher feels strongly that the Methodist Church missionaries somehow withheld some authentic Wesleyan spirituality, in an effort to try to enlighten the locals,

\(^{441}\) Wesley, 'Thoughts Upon Methodism', p. 258


\(^{443}\) Dallimore & Whitefield, The Life and Times, pp. 330-331
by emphasising medicine, education and industry. Therefore, as a result of these outcomes, the researcher makes the following recommendations.

**Recommendations**

The researcher makes the following recommendations:

(a) In light of the above summary, the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe should take the approach of presenting the gospel that focuses on the supernatural demonstrations, as well as power encounters in accordance with the Bible, in order to meet the needs of the people.

(b) The Methodist Church should devise a clear theological position, based on the ministry of Jesus Christ and Wesleyan spirituality, on handling the issues of power evangelism since they are a fact of life rather than a topic for debate.

(c) The Methodist Church should acknowledge witchcraft, demons, spells, sorcery, ancestral spirits, evil spirits and traditional doctors as real, and not just mere superstition, in order to minister to the needs of the people.

(d) The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe should not elevate church tradition above the Bible, as nowhere do the Scriptures point to 'signs and wonders' as being things of the past.

(e) The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe should guard against the temptation to control power itself so that it does not make itself into a god, since the power comes from God and not from itself.

This research has demonstrated that power evangelism was part of Jesus' ministry and has been in existence throughout the ages of Christianity. Notably, it has been shown that Methodism was born out of power evangelism, although some might have learnt from their theological training that this aspect ceased within the first century. The call to this research was prompted by what was happening in the mission field; being confronted with a reality that was not taught at theological colleges. In fact, if the Methodist Church does not address or rectify the issues affecting the daily lives of so many Zimbabweans, it will continue to breed syncretism among many of its Christian members as they seek assistance from traditional doctors or from those who share the
same beliefs. Therefore, they will be Christians during the day but at night-time they will consult their traditional doctors. Moreover, to deny power evangelism is to deny the doctrine of holiness and sanctification, which was the original design of early Methodism. On the other hand, the issue of power evangelism has its own negatives and positives, especially in such continents as Africa. There is a need to rely more on the Holy Spirit in meeting these needs. Hiebert says we should not bend the gospel to fit the spirit of our times. As a result of this study, it can be seen that this topic is still a fertile ground for further research.

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\[444\] Hiebert, ‘Healing and the Kingdom’, p. 140
APPENDICES
APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRES
QUESTIONNAIRE 1 - ZIMBABWE

ONLY MINISTERS - THOSE WHO WORKED DURING THE MISSIONARY ERA

(Please underline, circle or tick your answer)

1. Which period did you work?

2. Was there any special/relevant training given to ministers/evangelists working in schools or running evangelism programmes?
   A. Yes   B. No   C. Don’t know

3. a. Were there any follow-ups given to the newly converted people?
   A. Yes   B. No   C. Not sure
   b. If yes, who was responsible for the follow-ups?

4. Were they any miracles of healing, exorcism, deliverance from evil spirits and demons in your services?
   A. Yes   B. No

5. a. Did you encounter issues of hysteria/mass hysteria ‘mamhepo’ and illness related to witchcraft among church members?
   A. Yes   B. No
   b. If Yes, how was it handled?
6. a. Were there any other denominations that were involved in evangelism in your area?  
   A. Yes  B. No  
b. If Yes, which ones?

7. Do you still remember the approaches they were using in evangelism?  
   A. Yes  B. No

8. a. Were their approaches similar to yours?  
   A. Yes  B. No  
b. If No, in what way were they different?

9. Were there ways of handling issues of witchcraft as well as traditional doctors?  
   A. Yes  B. No

10. Were there fears of witches and illness in the community?  
    A. Yes  B. No  C. I don’t know

11. a. Were there any direct confrontations with evil spirits?  
     A. Yes  B. No  
b. If Yes, can you explain what happened?
12. It is believed that a traditional healer/medicine man/traditional doctor will perform miracles or become a healer following conversion to the Christian faith. How true or false is this statement?

A. True   B. False   C. Don’t know

13. a. Were there certain Zimbabwean sacred places within certain communities?

A. Yes   B. No

b. If Yes, what was the Christian response to these things?

14. Do you think the clergy/minister was regarded as a substitute for the medicine man?

A. Yes   B. No

15. a. In what way was power evangelism helpful in an African context?

A. Helpful   B. Unhelpful

b. Any other comments about power evangelism?

16. a. Do you think the evangelism programmes run during the missionary era are still relevant to the 21st century people?

A. Yes   B. No

b. Please comment.

17. Is power evangelism a means of persuasion?

A. Yes   B. No   C. Don’t know
**QUESTIONNAIRE 2 - ZIMBABWE**

**MINISTERS (CURRENTLY ACTIVE MINISTERS)**

1. How long have you been serving in the church?
   - A. 1-10 YRS
   - B. 11-20 YRS
   - C. 21-30 YRS
   - D. 31 YRS OR OVER

2. Was there any special/relevant training given to ministers working in schools or running evangelism programmes?
   - A. Yes
   - B. No
   - C. Don’t know

3. Was evangelism part of your college curriculum?
   - A. Yes
   - B. No

4. If Yes, how useful is it in the Methodist Ministry?

5. What is the role of the Methodist minister in relation to miracles of healing, exorcism, and deliverance?
   - A. Actively involved
   - B. Partially involved
   - C. Not involved

6. a. Do you sometimes encounter issues of hysteria/mass hysteria *‘mamhepo’* and illness related to witchcraft among church members?
   - A. Yes
   - B. No

   b. If Yes, how should it be handled?

7. Do Christians fear witches and witchcraft?
   - A. Yes
   - B. No
   - C. Don’t know
8. It is believed that a traditional healer/medicine man/traditional doctor will perform miracles or become a healer following conversion to the Christian faith. How true or false is this statement?

A. True  B. False

9. How is this type of power evangelism perceived by the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe?

A. Greatly welcomed  B. Not welcomed  C. Not sure

10. Do you sometimes get invited to other churches to preach on evangelism programmes?

A. Yes  B. No

11. If Yes, which ones are these?

A. Mainline churches  B. Pentecostal churches  C. African Instituted Churches (AICs)

12. Do you sometimes invite other denominations to preach on evangelism programmes in your church?

A. Yes  B. No

13. If Yes, which ones are these?

A. Mainline churches  B. Pentecostal churches  C. African Instituted Churches (AICs)

14. a. In your opinion which methods should be used to promote evangelism in this current era?

b. Which method should not be used and why?
15. a. In what way is power evangelism helpful in an African context?
   A. Helpful  B. Unhelpful

b. Any other comments about power evangelism?

___________________________________________________________________________

16. Are signs and wonders part of the gifts of the Holy Spirit?
   A. Yes     B. No     C. Don’t know

___________________________________________________________________________

17. Are the eight days away programmes in evangelism still helpful?
   A. Very much  B. Very little  C. Don’t know

___________________________________________________________________________

18. Do you sometimes lose some of your members to these denominations, that is, mainline churches, African Instituted Churches, Pentecostal churches? (*Circle as appropriate*)

___________________________________________________________________________

19. In your view what is lacking in the evangelism programmes run by the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe?
QUESTIONNAIRE 3 - ZIMBABWE

LAY-PEOPLE, LAY-PRESIDENT, OFFICE BEARERS

(DISTRICT or CONNEXIONAL) (Circle as appropriate)

1. Which periods were you involved in the Methodist Ministry?

2. Was/is there a society, circuit, district and connexional evangelism during your period?
(Circle as appropriate)

3. How involved were the lay people in evangelism?
   A. Actively involved  B. partially involved  C. Not involved

4. Did you experience wonders in your evangelism services, like healing miracles, power over evil spirits and demons?
   A. Yes  B. No

5. a. Do you know how the Church handled issues of witchcraft, sorcery, spells, and magic?
   A. Yes  B. No  C. Not sure
   b. If Yes, explain more fully?

6. a. Do you sometimes encounter issues of hysteria/mass hysteria ‘mamhepo’ and illness related to witchcraft among church members?
   A. Yes  B. No
   b. If Yes, how should it be handled?
7. Do Christians fear witches and witchcraft?

A. Yes  B. No  C. Don’t know

8. Do Christians consult traditional doctors during illness?

A. Yes  B. Not at all  C. Some

9. It is believed that a traditional healer/medicine man/traditional doctor will perform miracles or become a healer following conversion to the Christian faith. How true or false is this statement?

A. True  B. False

10. Do Methodist members go for second or extra services in other denominations?

A. Yes  B. No

11. a. If Yes, which ones?

A. Other mainline churches  B. African Instituted churches  C. Pentecostal churches

b. Give reasons for having extra services.

12. Do you sometimes lose some of your members to these denominations, that is, **mainline churches, African Instituted churches, Pentecostal churches?** (Circle as appropriate)

13. Are the eight days away programmes in evangelism still helpful?

A. Very much  B. Very little  C. Not at all

14. In your view what is lacking in the evangelism programmes run by the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe?
**QUESTIONNAIRE 4 - ZIMBABWE**

**MAINLINE CHURCHES, AFRICAN INSTITUTED CHURCHES AND PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES**

**Name of Denomination………………………………………-ZIM**

**CHURCH LEADERS ONLY (Please underline, circle or tick your answer)**

1. How many years have you been a leader of your denomination?
   
   A. 1-10   B. 11-20   C. 21-30   D. 40 or over

_____________________________________________________________________________

2. Where did you get your membership?

   A. Other denominations   B. Non-believers   C. Other denominations and non-believers

_____________________________________________________________________________

3. Is exorcism and casting out of demons part of your ministry?

   A. Yes   B. No

_____________________________________________________________________________

4. Who exercises exorcism in your denomination?

   A. Only ministers   B. Ministers and lay people.   C. Don’t know

_____________________________________________________________________________

5. Is there pastoral aftercare for those exorcised?

   A. Yes   B. No   C. Sometimes

_____________________________________________________________________________

6. How often do you do power evangelism in your church?

   A. Every Sunday   B. Fortnight   C. Monthly   D. Not sure

_____________________________________________________________________________

7. What do you think attracts people into your church?

_____________________________________________________________________________

8. Are “signs and wonders” part of the gifts of the Holy Spirit?

   A. Yes   B. No   C. Don’t know

_____________________________________________________________________________
9. a. In what way is power evangelism helpful in an African context?
   A. Helpful       B. Unhelpful
b. Any other comments?

10. How involved were the lay-people in evangelism?
    A. Actively involved  B. Partially involved  C. Not involved

11. Did you experience wonders in your evangelism services, like healing miracles, power over evil spirits and demons?
    A. Yes       B. No

12. a. Do you know how the Church handled issues of witchcraft, sorcery, spells, and magic?
    A. Yes       B. No       C. Not sure
b. If Yes, explain more fully.

13. a. Were there certain Zimbabwean sacred places within certain communities?
    A. Yes       B. No
b. If Yes, what was the Christian response to these things?

14. a. Do you sometimes encounter issues of hysteria/mass hysteria ‘mamhepo’ and illness related to witchcraft among church members?
    A. Yes       B. No
b. If Yes, how should it be handled?
15. Do Christians fear witches and witchcraft?
   A. Yes       B. No       C. Don’t know

16. Do Christians consult traditional doctors during illness?
   A. Yes       B. Not at all       C. Some

17. It is believed that a traditional healer/medicine man/traditional doctor will perform miracles or become a healer following conversion to the Christian faith. How true or false is this statement?
   A. True       B. False

18. a. Do Methodist church members attend your church services?
       A. Yes       B. No

   b. If Yes, which ones?
       A. Other mainline churches       B. African Instituted churches       C. Pentecostal churches

   c. Give reasons why they attend?

19. a. Do you sometimes lose some of your members to other denominations?
       A. Yes       B. No

   b. If Yes, which ones?
       A. Other mainline churches       B. African Instituted churches       C. Pentecostal churches
QUESTIONNAIRE 5 - ZIMBABWE

HEADMASTERS/HEADMISTRESSES AND CHAPLAINS

(Please state capacity…………………………………)

(Please underline, circle or tick your answers)

1. Does the head of the mission station also aim at producing church attendees or doing evangelism?
   A. Yes                         B. No

2. If Yes, in what way do they do it? How do you begin or end your school day?

3. Was there any special/relevant training given to ministers working in schools or running evangelism programmes?
   A. Yes                        B. No                           C. Don’t know

4. To what extent does the presence of a school chaplain make any different as far as evangelism is concerned?

5. Does the chaplain have time with church uniformed groups or organisations? (E.g. BCU, GCU and MYD)
   A. Yes                         B. No
6. a. Do you sometimes encounter issues of hysteria/mass hysteria ‘mamhepo’ and illness related to witchcraft among pupils?
   A. Yes  B. No
   b. If Yes, how should it be handled?

7. If Yes to the above, how does the school handle the issues of demon possession/mass hysteria ‘mamhepo’ issues of witchcraft? Who does exorcism if you encounter it?

8. What is the reaction of the staff and pupils to these happenings?

9. In view of the fact that some pupils are not Methodists, do you experience other denominations coming to perform exorcism or issues of witchcraft?
   A. Yes  B. No

10. What are the advantages and disadvantages of evangelism in a church controlled school?
QUESTIONNAIRE 6 - UK

MISSIONNARIES: MINISTERS AND LAY-PEOPLE – THOSE WHO WORKED IN ZIMBABWE AND WERE FROM BRITISH AND IRISH METHODIST CHURCHES

(Please state your capacity…………………………… Underline, circle or tick your answer)

1. Which period did you work?

2. Was there any special/relevant training given to ministers/lay persons doing evangelism or working in schools?
   A. Yes                         B. No

3. a. Was there any harm in a missionary being ignorant of African traditional religion/beliefs?
       A. Yes                         B. No
       b. If Yes, what could it be?

4. a. Is it true that the gospel was the primary means of removing mystical powers?
       (E.g. sorcery, witchcraft, hysteria/mass hysteria ‘mamhepo’)
       A. Yes                         B. No
       b. If Yes, in what way?

5. Were there any miracles of healing, exorcism, deliverance from evil spirits and demons in your services?
   A. Yes                         B. No
6. a. Do you know how the Methodist Church dealt with issues of witchcraft and the traditional healer/doctor?
   A. Yes                         B. No
   b. If Yes, how did they handle them?

7. a. Do you sometimes encounter issues of hysteria/mass hysteria ‘mamhepo’ and illness related to witchcraft among pupils?
   A. Yes                         B. No
   b. If Yes, how should it be handled?

8. What was the perception of the people as to the causes of illness in people’s lives?

9. It is believed that a traditional healer/medicine man/traditional doctor will perform miracles or become a healer following conversion to the Christian faith. How true or false is this statement?
   A. True                       B. False                       C. Don’t know

10. Do you think the clergy/minister was regarded as a substitute for the medicine man/traditional healer/traditional doctor?
    A. Yes                         B. No
11. a. In what way was power evangelism helpful in an African context?
   A. Helpful  B. Unhelpful
   b. Any other comments about power evangelism?

12. a. Was there any follow-up given to the newly converted people?
   A. Yes  B. No  C. Not sure
   b. If Yes, who was responsible for follow-ups?

13. a. Were there any other denominations that were involved in evangelism in your area?
   A. Yes  B. No
   b. If Yes, which ones?

14. Do you still remember the approaches they were using in evangelism?
   A. Yes  B. No

15. a. Were their approaches similar to yours?
   A. Yes  B. No
   b. If No, in what way were they different?
16. Were there ways of handling issues of witchcraft as well as traditional doctors/medicine man?

A. Yes       B. No

17. Were there fears of witches and illness in the community?

A. Yes       B. No       C. I don’t know

18. a. Were there any direct confrontations with evil spirits?

A. Yes       B. No

b. If Yes, can you explain what happened?

19. a. Were there certain Zimbabwean sacred places within certain communities?

A. Yes       B. No

b. If Yes, what was the Christian response to these things?

20. a. Do you think the evangelism programmes run during the missionary era are still relevant to the 21st century people?

A. Yes       B. No

b. Please comment.

21. Is power evangelism a means of persuasion?

A. Yes       B. No       C. Don’t know
APPENDIX 2

TABLES OF RESULTS
### QUESTIONNAIRE 1

Table 1A – Ministers Who Worked During The Missionary Era:

#### Period of Work

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QUESTIONNAIRE 1

Table 1B – Ministers Who Worked With Missionaries in Zimbabwe: Questions and Results in Numbers

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Table 1C – Ministers Who Worked With Missionaries: Questions and Results in Percentages

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**QUESTIONNAIRE 3**

Table 3B – District or Connexional Lay Presidents:

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# QUESTIONNAIRE 3

## Table 3C – District or Connexional Lay Presidents in Zimbabwe: Questions and Results in Numbers

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170
## QUESTIONNAIRE 4

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## QUESTIONNAIRE 4

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### QUESTIONNAIRE 5

#### Table 5A – Heads of School/Chaplains: Total Nos. and Percentages

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## Table 6C – Missionaries: Questions and Results in Percentages

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Extract from a response to Question 7 in Questionnaire 6


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