

# *inFocus*



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**Pentecost inFocus  
Fall 2014**

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# Editorial: Growing Strong in the Seasons of life



develop qualities and abilities which characterize what the Bible expects from a matured believer.

The apostle Paul in his letter to the church in Ephesus, emphasized the need to grow spiritually by admonishing them not to be any “longer children, but grow up in Christ” (Ephesian 4:15). In 2 Peter 3:18, believers once again are reminded to “grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.” To grow in grace is to mature as a Christian. We are saved by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9), and we mature and are sanctified by grace alone. We know that grace is a blessing that we don’t deserve. It is God’s grace that justifies us, sanctifies us, and will eventually glorify us in heaven.

Just as we expect new born babies to grow, likewise, the need for Christians to grow cannot be overemphasized. However, Christians, both new and old, must want and desire this growth. We know committing babies to certain activities ensures proper development. Similarly, regularly engaging in activities such as Bible reading, meditation on the word and prayer ensure proper spiritual growth. Dear reader, those actions by themselves don’t mature us, but God uses these spiritual disciplines to help us grow. Therefore, maturing in our Christian life is not about what we do, but about what God does in us, by His grace. It is also important to mention that this desire must be maintained so that the early zeal which comes with being born again is not lost or stagnate as we journey through this life.

The concept of growth as understood by many people is mainly in relation to human development. We can clearly understand this view especially if we look at babies. The expectation is for us to see them grow; develop as the days turns to weeks, months and years eventually. If they don’t, there is definitely a problem.

Growth, therefore, is development or improvement towards a goal called “maturity” (or as referred to in the Bible, “perfection”). However, this development requires time. Just as growth and development is expected of babies, Christians are expected to mature. When a person converts to the Christian faith, the person is spiritually immature. As time passes, the person is expected to

As you go through the pages of this news magazine, it is our collective hope that you find a voice that speaks to your particular challenge and help allay any fear or confusion that you may have on any of the topics discussed in this magazine. Above all, we hope that you never cease to grow in the knowledge of the Lord our God as we are transformed by His grace day by day. Then we will prove 2 Corinthians 3:18: “We, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord.”



# New H th





# Lead for the Church

We have a new leader. On Sunday August 31, 2014, the Church of Pentecost Canada welcomed a new national head, Apostle Sampson Ofori Yiadom and family to lead the church. The ceremony was held at the Mckeown Worship Centre and was chaired by Aps. Emmanuel Owusu (National Head, USA). There were delegates from Germany, USA and various Canadian assemblies.

Aps. Yiadom is married to Mrs. Millicent Yiadom (since 1992) and they are blessed with four children (three sons and a daughter) - Emmanuel, Noel, Sebastien and Jeffrey. He has a diploma in Christian Studies from College of Biblical Studies in Houston Texas (2001) and a Bachelor of Arts in Applied Theology and Organizational Governance from Northwestern Theological Seminary in Port Richey, Florida (2009). He was called into full time ministry in 1999, pastorate in 2006 and apostleship in 2008 in the United States. Prior to his recent appointment, he served as the national head of the church in Germany from September 2011 to August 2014.





# WINDSOR ASSEMBLY INAUGURATED

BY PS. RICHARD ADJEI



History was made on Sunday, October 27, 2013 when Windsor was officially inaugurated as an Assembly of COP Canada. The ceremony was performed by Aps. Samuel Antwi (Area Head, Wa, Ghana), Ps. James Mckeown Quainoo (Eastern Canada Area Head), and Ps. George Amon (Hamilton-London District Pastor). Also in attendance were Ps Richard Adjei, Mrs. Emily Quainoo, Mrs. Esther Amon, and representatives from Hamilton and London assemblies.

Preaching the sermon on “Come let us rebuild,” Ps. James Quainoo challenged the saints to emulate Nehemiah who had a burden for the welfare of God’s people (Nehemiah 2). This burden led to prayer, strategy, divine favor, special help, blessing, protection and breakthrough. Nehemiah moved forward by faith in spite

of the opposition and challenges he encountered. “God wants prayer warriors in this church who would pray for the hand of God to move in this city” he extorted. Aps. Antwi inaugurated the Assembly and prayed for a seven member interim leadership.

The Windsor church started in the home of Elder Anaclet in the summer of 2010 under the supervision of Rev. Lawrence Manu, the then District Pastor. With the support of the London and later Hamilton churches, Windsor has grown to a population of 67 (43 adults and 24 children). The church is diverse with a vibrant mix of West Africans, East Africans and Southern Africans. Services are held in English, French, and Swahili. Services are held at 1052 Langlois Avenue at 10 a.m. on Sundays.

# CHURCH DISCIPLINE: IS IT NECESSARY?

BY PS. RICHARD ADJEI

Church discipline, unlike normal discipline, is the practice of censuring church members when they fall into “open sin” in hope that it “will serve as a warning to the congregation and that the offender will repent” and be reconciled to God and the church<sup>2</sup>. However, church discipline is often misunderstood and considered controversial. Some believers regard church discipline as relevant and necessary while others have a strong aversion to it. This article will examine the practice of church discipline, its biblical foundation and benefits to the Christian.

We will examine some of the various perspectives against church discipline and the biblical basis for the practice and then we will deal with discipline in the Church of Pentecost (COP) context and how the church restores a disciplined member.

**Discipline** <sup>1</sup> | 'disipline | [noun] [Old French from Latin *disciplina*] *1: the practice of training people to obey rules or a code of behaviour, using punishment to correct disobedience;*

*2: a branch of knowledge, typically one studied in higher education*

## OBJECTIONS TO CHURCH DISCIPLINE

When the church censures or disciplines a member, some argue that such an act implies that the church is “judging people” when the Bible says, “judge not that you be not judged” (Matthew 7:1)<sup>3</sup>. Advocates of this view argue that church discipline make people self-righteous, leads some to hide

their sins and stifle genuine repentance. This prevents some individuals from seeking the help they need and forgiveness for their shortcomings.

Furthermore, they contend that if all sin - no matter how trivial or serious - is sin before a righteous God and, all humans sin, why then does the church only discipline people for certain sins. Church discipline is thus regarded as “selective” whereby some people are “targeted” and others are shown leniency for similar acts. Additionally, by

making the censuring part public, the church disgraces and victimizes the offender.

Those who hold this view consider the act of censuring “cult-like” and “abusive”. Even though there are some conducts that are “shameful even to talk about” (Ephesians 5:12), yet some believers engage in them with the excuse that “we are saved by grace”, “I’m only human”, and “no one is perfect”. In light of these, they argue that church discipline is irrelevant, especially under the new covenant of grace.

## BIBLICAL FOUNDATION OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Church discipline helps saints to know the conduct that is acceptable. It helps offending brethren to change from a sinful lifestyle and mend their ways. It keeps the church of God pure by not allowing one leaven - sinful act - to destroy the dough - the people of God (1 Corinthians 5: 6-9). Church discipline helps maintain the respect, integrity and purity of the church to the outside world so that the church of God is not brought into disrepute or slander.

Even though the church is made up of people who are not perfect and a people who are being transformed daily into the image of Christ, ungodly and unrepentant lifestyles of those who profess to know God bring the church into disrepute. Moreover, such people build their life on earth without a strong foundation, against which when the storms of life beat vehemently, immediately falls down into ruin (Luke 6:48-49). The nations that we are to make disciples (Matthew 28:19) would not want to be associated with a church that condone child molesters, drunkards, adulterers, fornicators, fraudsters, womanizers, sexually immoral, and druggies among others.

Church discipline further acts as a deterrent by helping the rest of the church to examine themselves and seek the counsel of the Holy Spirit to overcome their weakness. This ensures that many will not fall “weak, sick



and asleep” within the body of Christ and are “condemned with the world” (1 Corinthians 11:30-32).

The same God of grace and mercy is the same God who chastens for “righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne” (Psalms 89:14). Scripture teaches that the grace of God should not be a license to sin (Jude 1:4; Titus 2:11). Indeed, “shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not!” (Romans 6:1).

Throughout Scripture God disciplined people for open sins, willful disobedience, and un-repentance. Some examples include:

- Miriam was disciplined for leading a rebellion against Moses (Numbers 12);
- King Uzziah had leprosy on his forehead where everyone could see because he grossly disrespected God and the over 70 priests who advised him against burning an incense in the temple, something that was reserved only for priests (2 Chronicles 26);
- King Herod, the grandson of Herod the Great, was struck and killed by an angel of the Lord because he did not give glory to God (Acts 12:20-24); and
- Ananias and Sapphira died instantly and mysteriously for lying to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:1-11).

God can use the church to exercise discipline in a believer’s life in order to help him or her to develop a Christ-like character. In Matthew 18:15-19, Jesus gave the church the authority to resolve problems between believers and to make decisions that are binding. Those who refuse to be corrected by the church are to be treated as “heathen and tax collectors.” In other words, the church should not fellowship with people who refuse to accept corrections and this is done through church discipline. Some believers often associate the terms “binding” and “loosing” with prayer. However, from the context of what Jesus said, it implied that if the church meets to take a decision to “bind” someone or something, it is bound in heaven. Similarly, if the church “looses” someone or something, it is loosened in heaven.

This shows that if someone errs and the church disciplines him or her, that discipline is approved by God. As such, believers should take the church’s disciplinary actions seriously and not rebel against it. Sometimes to avoid church discipline, it may appear easier to hide or lie about one’s actions. But Proverbs 28:13 teaches us that: *“he who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.”*



Although discipline may appear difficult to bear, believers are cautioned against rebelling or rejecting God’s discipline (Hebrews 12:5-12). God’s discipline proves that we are His legitimate children, training us towards godly character *“for whom the Lord loves He chastens”*. The book of Proverbs further states: *“Any who love knowledge want to be told when they are wrong. It is stupid to hate being corrected”* (12:1, GNT).

### APPLYING CHURCH DISCIPLINE

In 1 Corinthians 5, the Apostle Paul writes to the church in Corinth about a young man who was having sexual relationship with his stepmother. The whole church knew of this but no one attempted to stop it. Apostle Paul was incredulous that the church would condone such an appalling kind of sexual sin that even the heathen frowned upon. In that passage, some elements of church discipline are highlighted:

- a) He warns that such a person should be delivered to Satan “when you are gathered together” (v. 4-5). When “gathered together” implies that the disciplinary action should be communicated to the entire church, along with the conduct that led to the discipline.
- b) Believers are not to allow the abominable conduct to infiltrate the church as “a little leaven leavens the lump” (v. 6-7).



- c) The church is not to keep company with “anyone named a brother” – that is a member of the church – who is sexually immorally, covetous, idolater, a reviler (one who angrily insults), a drunkard, or an extortionist (v. 9-12). This does not mean the church should shun them but the church should not accept those lifestyles. Immorality among believers must be judged. God will judge those who are not believers but believers are to discern between right and wrong conduct and choose right conduct and not allow evil conduct of others to influence them.
- d) “The church is to hand the offending brother to Satan” (v. 5)

According to Rev. Dr. Daniel Walker, “handing over to Satan” may be interpreted as follows: <sup>4</sup>

- a) The world is considered the domain of Satan in which evil spirits oppress people and the physical flesh is in danger (John 12:31; 16:11; Acts 26:18; Colossians 1:13). But the church is considered to be God’s domain. Thus, the person was to be evicted from the sphere in which Christ’s work was operative to that in which Satan exercised authority (e.g. excommunication).
- b) Since such an offence was punishable under Roman law, some assume the passage meant deliverance to the authorities for judgment and execution.

- c) Such a person should be allowed to go his own way (as the Prodigal Son) in the hope that he would become deluded of his ways and repent.
- d) The wording could be interpreted as simply evocative and should not be taken literally in terms of being put out of God’s hands into Satan’s.
- e) Handing over could imply the physical flesh being affected and destroyed (perhaps with satanic illness) with the eternal life kept intact.

The Bible urges believers to warn the unruly or undisciplined in the church (1 Thessalonians 5:14) and for believers to “mark” and “avoid” or keep an eye on those who cause divisions through false doctrines (Romans 16:17-18). But those who are strong are admonished to help restore those who are weak (Galatians 6:1).

Discipline is meant to help restore an offending person; it is not intended to demean, disgrace, put down or condemn as the worse sinner. In James 5:19-20, believers are urged to bring back a sinner from his wandering ways so as to save his soul from death and cover a multitude of sins. In other words, if church discipline is performed in love and the person is restored, it will save them from both spiritual and physical death.

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# Discipleship through Mentoring

BY GINA AWUAH

*Now it came to pass that a group existed who called themselves fishermen. Week after week, month after month, and year after year these fishermen met in meetings, and talked about their call to fishing. Continually they searched for new and better methods of fishing and for new and better definitions of fishing. They built large beautiful buildings for the purpose of teaching fishermen how to fish and sponsored costly nation and worldwide congresses to discuss, promote and hear about all the ways of fishing. The plea was that everyone should be a fisherman and every fisherman should fish. One thing they didn't do, however, was fish. Those who taught had doctorates in fishology and spent time studying and travelling to learn the history of fishing and to see far-away places where the founding fathers did great fishing in the centuries past. But the teachers did not fish. They lauded the faithful fishermen of years before who handed down the idea of fishing. Many who felt the call to be fishermen responded. They were commissioned and sent to fish. And they went off to foreign lands...to teach fishing. Now it's true that many of the fishermen sacrificed and put up with all kinds of difficulties and ridicule from people. They anguished over those who were not committed enough to attend the weekly meetings. After all, were they not following the Master who said, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men"? Imagine how hurt some were when one day a person suggested that those who do not catch fish were really not fishermen, no matter how much they claimed to be.*

**Are you fishing? Are you catching?  
And what are you doing with the fish  
once you catch it?**

The above is an awesome depiction of how we put into practice the great commission, which requires us to "...go

and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them... and teaching these new disciples to obey all the commands God has given us" (Matthew 28:19). It confirms our fascination with discussing the hows of doing rather than actually performing; and our misplaced emphasis when it comes to our calling as Christians. We are often so caught up in teaching that we fail to realize that our role entails more than just directing people to Christ. We are commissioned to "make disciples," which requires teaching through mentoring.

Mentoring is "intentionally investing time to help another individual pursue God's purposes and plans for life" (Wright, Bryd, and Fields 10). God created humanity with the longing for personal interaction, fellowship and continuously seeks us out. This plan has not been altered! Throughout the Bible, we are steadily reminded that it is not good for one to be alone, suggesting that association with others don't just happen! It requires intentional pursuit, and continuous work. It also suggests that God has designed us to yearn and wishes for us to be in fellowship with others, so we can share our lives and challenges together to help us in our quest to becoming more like Him.

As such, we see the concept of mentoring relationships throughout the Bible. Some well-known examples include Jesus and his Disciples, Moses and Joshua; Naomi and Ruth. These relationships were deliberately cultivated with a purpose and we see rewards like great leadership emerge as a result. We also see in the bible chaos surface in instances where purposeful mentoring was ignored; like in the case of Israel after the death of Joshua. The generation after Joshua did not know God or the things He had done for Israel and so they engaged in acts that led to their downfall. Joshua was pursued and carefully trained by Moses, but he neglected to invest in someone else, leaving Israel in a state of confusion after his death.



I would like to highlight that the **generation after Joshua did not know God**. You are entrusted to make disciples through mentoring, so it is not sufficient that you alone know God, or obey Him. You must commit yourself, your time and your resources to guide others and allow yourself to be taught if you are to fulfill your calling as a disciple maker. To facilitate this, there are three people you must emulate and must have in your life: a Barnabas, a Paul and a Timothy.

*Barnabas* is a peer and a friend. He is a person who regularly encourages, and supports; someone who holds one accountable, tells the truth and believes in one. Not only should you endeavor to be a Barnabas, you must have such people in your life as a source of motivation.

*Paul* is a leader or teacher who pursues others in order to mentor them. This person normally possesses great wisdom and experience so he can help others avoid certain mistakes. He also recognizes the potential in people and challenges them to reach their full capacity. Paul's investment is crucial since it causes augmented growth. If

you do not have a Paul in your life, you must be proactive in finding one and also becoming one.

*Timothy* is that eager young leader who needs guidance in life and in their walk of faith. This person will have great humility, a teachable spirit and great potential but requires a Paul to draw it out. He is open and ready to grow and be empowered. We should all have protégés that we can pour into but we must first allow ourselves to be poured into as the road to maturity is a lifelong learning process. Besides, can you give to others what you do not possess?

Finally, I would like to end with this; impartation does not happen without life exchanges so endeavor to live for the next generation through mentoring.

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# Academic Success while maintaining your Christian Identity

BY EMMANUEL A. ANOKYE



Life as a Christian student in today's post-secondary schools is not easy. We are often confronted with worldly views that are in direct opposition to our faith, especially those of us who study any form of science. Some Christian students may even be persuaded to leave the faith after constant exposure to worldly theories they encounter in school. However, it is still possible to succeed in higher forms of education without compromising one's faith and I hope to provide some guidelines to accomplish this in the following article.

Goal setting is crucial to success in any aspect of life, even in the case of spiritual growth as Apostle Paul states in the book of Philippians 3:14: "I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus." Furthermore, it is important that as children of God we first seek the guidance from and involve Jesus in the goals we set concerning our education and careers. In doing so we give ourselves the opportunity to access hidden treasures of wisdom and knowledge that

can aid us in our life decisions including career paths as described in Colossians 2:2-3.

Time management is essential to a successful Christian student life in university. I noticed that managing time for assignments, test studying, normal readings, and attending social or church related activities can be overwhelming at times. It is just a matter of planning accordingly. Luckily, all my university classes provided a course syllabus at the beginning of the term which outlined the dates for tests, and completion of assignments. Taking the time to input these dates for all courses into a calendar or planner helped me to be aware of the time I had in between assignments and tests for various courses. It was not easy but I quickly realized that cramming the night before an exam in some cases was not worth the lost sleep and poor long term retention of knowledge. A more effective way to study is to avoid exhaustion or burn out, make sure to add in rest time for every study session (a good rule of thumb is 10 minutes of



rest for every hour of study), and during this rest time, you can meditate on the word of God or take part in other beneficial activities.

In addition, university is a place of much social interaction where parties, concerts, and association meetings can all take place. It is important as followers of Christ to use discernment when deciding on the time we spend at such events as highlighted in the following statement from 1 Corinthians 10:23, “Everything is permissible”—but not everything is beneficial. “Everything is permissible”—but not everything is constructive.” Therefore, the social activities we choose to devote time to as students should at least be able to edify our Christian walk or assist in our career development. Taking part in other social activities of interest is fine but it is important to make sure that the time we spend at these extracurricular activities does not come at the expense of study time.

As mentioned in Romans 13: 1-7, it is important to show respect for the rules that govern society (including those within a place of learning) and people who are in positions of authority in school. Being Christian students, we should avoid taking part in any unlawful activities on campus no matter how enticing they maybe such as cheating and plagiarism. Though some students are known to get away with this in school, it only takes a matter of time before they are caught and faced with serious suspension or expulsion charges often ending with a notation on their academic record. Therefore, better to be safe than sorry. Respect is of great importance in the case of being on good terms with your professors, Deans and teaching assistants even if you may not agree with the way they do things. Taking the time to meet your various professors and learn their teaching and marking style is very important to academic success in university and college, especially for courses that are highly subjective. Moreover, attending lectures on a regular basis provides the opportunity to know what the professor expects from students in order to get full marks on tests and assignments. Having a good relationship with professors will make them more likely to write a letter of recommendation for you when you apply for scholarships, or look for job in the future. Also, visiting the professor with questions during office hours also provides a great opportunity to ask the professor further details about your concerns in the course. In most cases professors are more than willing to offer their assistance and they will appreciate you taking the initiative to come to them and get the help. However, it is possible that in the case of large classes the professor may not be that accessible and the duties of marking assignments and exams are carried out by teaching assistants (TA's) instead. In such cases, be

sure to approach your TA's during their office hours and get the information you need on what they want to see for marks on tests.

Having a good mentor is also important to successful achievement in life. In the bible we can see several examples of prophets like Elijah, apostles like Paul, and Jesus Christ himself taking on mentorship roles for younger individuals like Elisha, Timothy, and the 12 Disciples respectively. The idea of mentorship is also great for career guidance. As Christians it would be optimum to find a mentor in the career you wish to have who is also a Christian. This way the mentor can offer proper guidance on career paths and decisions that are not in opposition to Christian values. However, when approaching someone to be your mentor first establish a friendly relationship with the person, and show a genuine interest in their work and keep in touch to discuss your progress regularly. Sometimes you may have the opportunity to shadow them on the job or accompany them on a work activity. Hopefully, you enjoy the experience and it motivates you to continue down that career path, but if this is not the case, it is strongly advised that you take time re –evaluate your career choice and align them to what you're truly passionate about. Some people may find this easier to do on their own but if you find it difficult don't be afraid to ask your mentor or loved ones for assistance.

Although many students are not 100% sure of what career they want to do for the rest of their lives, upon



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entering university or college you are expected to have at least an interest in a specific subject area. It often helps to have a shortlist of jobs within your subject area of choice that you are passionate about. For example, those interested in health sciences can pick from several different jobs such as family physician, registered nurse, research scientist, and so on. Once you decide on a few jobs within your area of interest you can start looking into what tests outside of school are required for you to be able to practice in that field and plan your studies and goals accordingly. Also, it is important to be honest with yourself in regards to your ability to excel in certain university courses. A good student is always able to recognize when they are having difficulties with certain courses early on and look for assistance from their peers, teaching assistants or professor to change that pattern. In addition, one should make sure to put all goals both short and long

term in writing on a calendar or digital planner. I know this seems tedious but taking the time to do this helps to keep one accountable for his or her goal achievements and provides a means to gauge progression. Lastly, it is important discuss your goal progress with trusted individuals such as your parents or mentor. They may offer valuable insight into areas of the goal setting that may have been over looked and can help in revising your goals to help keep you on track.

Overall, being successful in university is similar to running a marathon race, you have to be disciplined in your preparation, training, and execution of your set goals that you want to achieve. However, during your academic journey make sure to remember the Lord your God and seek guidance and perseverance from him just as Apostle Paul did in his ministry goals (1 Corinthians 9:24-27).



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# UNDERSTANDING OUR ADOLESCENT CHILDREN

BY DORIS OSEI BONSU



Teenagers enter their adolescent years with a mixture of optimism, excitement and apprehension. Rightfully so! Adolescence is a time when boys and girls begin to establish greater independence from their parents. It is also a time when young people begin to develop a sense of personal individuality that will help define their future identity as adults. In fact, establishing independence and forming a unique identity are two of the most important developmental tasks adolescents must accomplish in preparation for living satisfying and productive adult lives.

It is not easy for parents or teenagers to smoothly navigate this transitional stage which is often accompanied by an increase in tension and strain in the parent-child relationship. Adolescents want to demonstrate

independence from their parents and to make their own decisions. They often do not recognize their need for adult supervision, guidance and support in their transition to adulthood.

Some parents find it easy to keep the lines of communication open with an adolescent child. These parents are often perceived by the child as stable sources of positive influence, and the teenager feels supported in his/her growing independence. Communication in such families is characterized by mutual respect and the ability to freely exchange feelings and ideas. Parents who understand their teenager's need for a reasonable measure of independence and individuality encourage their child's growth and achievements. This positive interest

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# People are







# nd Places







strengthens the bonds of the parent-child relationship. When an adolescent receives parental approval and believes that the parent genuinely values his/her accomplishments, it promotes a positive self-concept and creates a willingness to share other information about one's self.

Many families find it difficult to establish and maintain open communication with their children during the adolescent years. Some parents have difficulty understanding the changes their teenager is experiencing and resist his/her need to pull away from the family and make independent decisions. At the same time, some teenagers are so self-focused they do not appreciate or accept their parents' legitimate concerns, and, they therefore rebel against all parental authority. In these circumstances, frequent arguments may develop, and family life may become difficult and conflict ridden for all. Parents and teenagers may withdraw from one another to avoid arguments, but this is typically a short-term solution that does not resolve the underlying problems. The tension and disruption may become intolerable and the parents may need professional help to re-establish harmony within the family.

A major long term goal, when assisting parents and adolescents who are experiencing difficulty in their interactions, is to help them develop more effective communication and problem solving skills. This enables the family members to resolve their own conflicts and to establish more harmonious and more satisfying relationships. In order to accomplish this goal action must be taken in a number of areas.

The first step in this process is to define the problem. It is important to help all family members to clarify their views on the nature of the conflicts and the circumstances that cause them. This is accomplished by discussing specific areas of disagreement, such as curfew, choice of friends, chores, or school performance, and by identifying the communication patterns that exist within the family

and result in conflict. Parents and teenagers are helped to examine their own behavior to identify their role in disagreements. In addition, they are assisted in identifying the ways in which they themselves can resolve problems and prevent further disruption of family life.

Not surprisingly, parents and teenagers feel in better control of their lives once they understand the ways in which their own conduct contributes to family discord. With this insight, they are then ready to explore steps they can take together to resolve future impasses on a less confrontational basis.

We endeavor to teach the family to attack the problem, not each other. This involves assisting family members to respond less intensely when upset, to state a position without being disrespectful and to communicate genuine interest in what is being said by others. The family learns how to listen without interrupting, how to verify the accuracy of what they heard, and how to discuss a problem without becoming side-tracked by irrelevant issues.

After the sources of the problems are analyzed and family members have learned to communicate more effectively, we encourage them to propose possible solutions. Parents and teenagers are helped to discuss and clarify the changes they would like to see to reduce family conflict. They are taught to listen without immediately responding and to respond in a way that maintains constructive dialogue. By jointly discussing all proposed solutions, the family members begin to comprehend each other's positions and each participant ends up feeling acknowledged and better understood.

After family members have learned effective listening and feedback techniques and have become more skilled at identifying the problem and proposing possible alternatives they are ready for the final step in this process - evaluating and selecting solutions. The teenager and the parent are now able to listen to one another without interrupting, to better understand each other's position, and feel that their own view is being taken into consideration. These changes result in a significant lessening of animosity and a new willingness to compromise. Parents and teenagers are now more ready and able to discuss and agree on specific solutions that can benefit the whole family.

Adolescence is a transitional period for both children and their parents. It involves individual and family changes which can at times disrupt family relationships. By improving communication and developing better problem solving skills, families can work together to minimize disagreements and restore a good level of harmony in their home.



# Maintaining Good Health as a Christian

BY JERRY ANIM-ANSAH, RN, BScN

The practice of a healthy lifestyle or maintenance of good health is something that we all strive to achieve at some point in our lives. Many New Year resolutions involve promises to start eating healthy and exercise regularly.

Unfortunately, due to the realities of life and other important obligations such as family, employment and school, many of these exciting health challenges and goals go unaccomplished. Good health brings joy, happiness and even prolongs life. In the Bible, during the days of the Old Testament, sending greetings involved pronouncement of good health and long life. In 1 Samuel 25:6 it reads: "say to him: long life to you! Good health to you and your household! And good health to all that is yours!" This was David's greeting to Nabal (a very wealthy man) while he was in the wilderness in Carmel. For us to live long and enjoy the fruits of our labor, engaging in healthy lifestyles is prudent and also spiritually rewarding. The purpose of this article is to elucidate on the practical ways of maintaining good health as an ambassador of Jesus Christ while following His commands on Earth. The goal is not only to create an awareness of the importance of maintaining good physical health but also to develop habits that will strengthen us spiritually. Four ways or tips for maintaining good health



that are going to be discussed in this article include: consumption of produce (fruits and vegetables), routine physical exercise, adequate sleep/rest and lastly spiritual exercise.

Eating fruits is used numerous times in the Bible figuratively as seen in Psalm 128: 2 which states "you will eat the fruit of your labor; blessings and prosperity will be yours" (NIV). Again in the book of Mark, it is written that our Lord Jesus while hungry cursed a fig tree in Bethany when He realized it had not produce any fruits (11: 14). Consumption of fruits as indicated in these Bible verses is an enjoyment or blessing of what God has blessed us with on Earth. Nutritionally fruits and vegetables (produce) contain essential nutrients that our bodies need for healthy growth and longevity. The adage goes "an apple a day keeps the doctor away" and indeed consumption of bigger portions of fruits and vegetables prevents development of conditions such as heart disease, obesity and even cancer. To make this practical, let us engage in serving more fruits and vegetables at large family dinners or festive occasions rather than our staple dishes which contain more unhealthy fats and carbohydrates.

The summer season is always welcomed with tremendous joy as it is the beginning of pleasant and

*stay active and stay blessed!*



beautiful weather conditions after long, cold and dreadful winter months. It is also the season that most people engage in outdoor activities and games such as barbecues, soccer and going to the beach. We all try to look good for the summer by signing on gym memberships early spring but once summer rolls away, our commitment in keeping that “summer body” dwindles. Exercising to stay healthy can be fun, less strenuous and relatively cheap. Taking evening strolls, using the stairs as opposed to the elevator and even parking further away from the entrance of shopping malls and grocery stores will help us burn calories easily. Taking part in group physical activities such as marathons, walk-a-thons and occasional pick-up games such as soccer and basketball are also great ways to avoid stress and release endorphins that will promote a healthy lifestyle.

Adequate sleep or rest is another essential way of maintaining good health and many working adults are deprived of this due to work and family obligations. The Bible says in the book of Genesis that “by the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work” (Genesis 2:2-3 NIV). Our saviour Jesus Christ also mentions in the book of Matthew 11: 28 that “come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest” (NIV). Getting rest physically allows the body to repair worn out tissues and replace muscle that was lost during strenuous activity. Having the recommended 6-8 hours of sleep at night helps

with memory function, boosts metabolism and improves overall immune function. Sleep really does the body good hence it is vital to have an adequate amount every night. Taking naps during the day if possible or going to bed early after a long hectic day goes a long way in protecting our bodies as well as keeping us mentally sound.

Last but not the least as stated in 1 Thessalonians 5: 6-18 we must “rejoice always, pray continually and give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” As men and women of God we fashion not against flesh and blood but against spiritual principalities as such our prayer lives must be consistent. Engaging in routine spiritual exercises through prayer and reading of the Bible physically keeps us strong and healthy but spiritually purifies us and connects us close to God. The word of God is indeed a lamp to our feet and a light on to our path. Reading a word of scripture and praying routinely separates us from the “physical world” that we live in and draws us closer to our Father in heaven. As we do our best to stay active and healthy by eating right foods, exercising and sleeping adequately, our maker in heaven will bless us as we walk according to His law (Psalms 119:1b). Amen.

*Stay active and stay blessed!*



# Perspectives on Financial Resolutions - Part 2

BY STEVE WIREDU

In the first part, we explored the principles concerning wealth/money and noted that the guiding principle is to “Make all you can, Save all you can and Give all you can.” We further examined the first principle - make all you can. In this continuing series, we shall examine the second and third principles concerning wealth...

## Second Principle Concerning Wealth – Save all you can (“Save/Budget”)

Scripture teaches that a portion of what is earned should be saved prudently. Another visit with the ant in Proverbs 6:6-9 and 30:25 clearly illustrates this principle. The passage demonstrates the ant’s foresight in laying aside provisions when they are available against the time when provisions are scarce or non-existence. This sort of activity parallels in principle to Joseph’s planning and provision in Genesis 41.

Essentially, saving is simply preparing for future scarcity that may be brought on through predictable or somewhat unpredictable circumstances. As Proverbs 21:20 reminds us: “In the house of the wise are stores of choice food and oil, but a foolish man devours all he has.” The “choice food and oil” have been stored for future need. For this reason, diligence requires that the believer “operate on a margin”. We live in a world that “microwaves” everything where we must have it and we must have it now. A world which encourages the need to have “dessert before dinner”! A world where you buy the things you don’t need (i.e. wants, non-essentials) with the money you don’t have (i.e. credit cards, lines of credit, loans) from the people you really don’t like (i.e. certain financial institutions, car dealers, retailers). In such instances, an effective approach towards saving/budgeting is imperative. Let us consider such approaches.

1. Proverbs 27:23-24 says “Be sure you know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds; for riches do not endure forever...” It is important to have a financial budget and keep good

financial records. A budget is simply telling your money what to do instead of wondering where it went. Diligent people plan their financial affairs and work their plan. You cannot save effectively if you do not know your total earnings and expenses.

2. We should save until we have an emergency fund, we should save for purchases to avoid debt and we should save for wealth creation/building.
3. Diligent people are careful not to incur debts they can’t handle. “The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender” (Proverbs 22:6). While a certain amount of honest debt (reasonable mortgage, car loan and student loan) is expected in today’s world, and everybody wants to achieve a good credit rating, we must be cautious not to mistake presumption for faith. As the familiar sayings goes “when your outgo exceeds your income, then your upkeep is your downfall.” The issue may well not be “getting out” of debt, but rather “keeping out” of debt. Understand which debt is “good, bad or ugly”.
4. Proverbs 22:26-27 and Proverbs 27:13 require that we exercise caution in cosigning. The legal/financial effect of cosigning a loan or note is that the co-signer becomes financially liable upon default and the debt is considered as your “actual” debt.
5. Nothing is a good deal/sale unless you can afford it; just because you can afford something does not necessarily mean you should buy; every purchase should be examined by its alternative uses; little expenses adds up quickly and you don’t save money by spending money!
6. Haggai 1:6 speaks of “earning wages only to put them in a purse/wallet with holes in it.” But the purse/wallet with holes may well be a matter of deliberate choice, extravagance in pleasure or refusing to exercise a reasonable self-denial. We should therefore consider our habits, life style and live within/below our means.

We should equally learn to “use it up, wear it out, make it do and do without”!

7. We should invest prudently. “Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so when I returned I would have received it back with interest” (Mathew 25:27). Understand your risk profile and the purpose for investing, risk/rewards.
8. As Proverbs 15:22 says “Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisors they succeed.” Clearly, for Lack of knowledge, people perish. We should always seek Godly counsel on all issues of life including financial matters.

### Third Principle Concerning Wealth – Give all you can (“Give/Plan”)

Jesus encouraged giving when He said, “give and it shall be given unto you...” (Luke 6:38). It should be recognized that we are stewards of God’s resources. As stewards, we are accountable, we should therefore be faithful and prudent (Luke 16:10-12). The best incentive for prudent use of our wealth/money is in 2 Corinthians 8:9: “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.” There are certain guidance concerning Christian stewardship. Let us consider them in the ensuing paragraphs.

1. Sacrificial giving i.e. giving ourselves to God (2 Corinthians 8:5); Systematic giving i.e. tithes (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 16:1-2, Leviticus 27:30, Proverbs 3:9, Malachi 3:10) and Spontaneous giving i.e. freewill offering (2 Corinthians 9:7) are three of the key principles of giving. We are encouraged to give in spite of our circumstances, generously, cheerfully, by faith and excel in the grace of giving (2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 8:1-15). This grace of giving encourages others to give, meet the needs of others, become a blessing for us and glorify God (2 Corinthians 9:1-15).
2. We are required to provide for our relatives/ immediate family. 1 Timothy 5:8 says “If anyone does not provide for his family particularly his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.” Similarly, Proverbs 13:22a says “A good man leaves an inheritance for his children’s children.”
3. Additionally, it is expected to provide for the family of believers and others (Proverbs 11:24-25, Galatians 6:10, Hebrews 13:16). Acts 2:44-45 demonstrates that the early believers broke “bread” together and shared

things in common. Similarly, Galatians 6:10 says “Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.”

4. Moreover, it is expected to provide for our future (i.e. insurance/retirement/estate planning). Jesus said “Put this money to work until I come back” (Luke 19:13). No disciple seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it. (Hebrews 12:11). Planning/saving for future events such as contingencies (sickness and unemployment), retirement and death is certainly not a “pleasant talk”. However, financially this would appear to be a “necessary evil” as the saying goes.
5. Finally, we are to provide for the greater good of society in general. Jesus, although technically not required to pay tax, but for practical reasons paid the temple tax (Mathew 17:24-27) and mandated to “Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s” (Mathew 22:21). Accordingly, Romans 13:5-7 requires the believer to pay/render their due share of taxes.

In view of the foregoing, what should be our attitude towards wealth/money? In the concluding part, we shall explore the proper perspective one has to have concerning money. It will be observed that there is a need for a balanced and sound biblical perspective concerning wealth (1 Timothy 6:6-10, Proverbs 30:7-9 and Mathew 6:19-21, 33). To this end, the words of John Wesley is very instructive: “*Get these three Principles fixed in your hearts: that Things eternal are much more considerable than Things temporal; that Things not seen are as certain as the Things that are seen; that upon your present choice depends your eternal lot.*” Amen.





# You are Never too Young to Plan your Retirement & Life Insurance

**JOJO JACKSON, M.SC (MGMT), FINANCIAL ADVISOR**

In a generation known for its high debt levels, costly tuition fees and lack of high paying job prospects, it is almost deafening to suggest that young people in their 20s and 30s start planning for retirement and as part of their planning getting life insurance now. 70% of people in their late 50s polled thought they could only afford to retire if they had started saving and planning by age 25. Granted, there is so much going on when you are a young person just fresh out of school or trying to find your own way in life, it's hard to prioritize anything. The challenges that are posed with that is that, most people tend not to know how to allocate their extra cash flow even if there's any.

Factually, young people have a greater opportunity to accumulate large amounts of savings due to the compounding effect over a long period of time. Generally, life expectancy (especially in our part of the world) have increased in the last decade. Advances in medical sciences are keeping people alive with conditions that could have killed them a decade ago. Then again as it is written, "Now listen, you who say, tomorrow, we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money... You do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes....." James 4:13-14. The wise person is the one who stores, who saves and who looks ahead to future needs. The fool thinks only about today.

## **Retirement Planning: where do you start?**

1. Get a Financial advisor you can trust. Expert advice will do you a lot of good
2. Make a list of the things you would like to accomplish or achieve during your retirement years, use this list to estimate your lifestyle budget at retirement.
3. Figure out what you will get from the government: Know about CPP (Canada Pension Plan), OAS (Old Age Security), and GIS (Guaranteed Income

Security). Knowledge of eligibility will help you get a fair idea of how life could be for you when you retire, also considering that some of these plans may not be available at the time of your retirement.

4. Take advantage of your employer or company: If you haven't looked at what your company offers when it comes to savings, then it's time to look into group RRSP-matching plans, TFSAs and others.
5. Consider alternate revenue streams if necessary to enable you to at the least make a decent contribution to your own future.
6. Get INSURANCE: Insurance is an integral part of one's Retirement planning. If insurance is used properly, it can help during a major illness or disability; mostly lump sum payments that are generally tax free. It can provide replacement income for the family in the case of a loss of a spouse or a family member if they are insured. One time, somebody asked me, "Elder, where is your faith in the God who has promised to take care of you and your family when you put your trust in Him, buying into insurance is like replacing God with insurance". He added, Psalm 37: 25 "I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread". I don't want to go into my friend's skewed interpretation of the scripture right now, but for our purposes, I'll say, balancing wise planning and faith in God should be the goal of every protection plan.

In 1Timothy 5:8, Apostle Paul indicates that anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever. In this regard, Paul was not addressing believers to be responsible only in their life time but beyond, way after our death. The passage also reveals God's feeling about the plight of widows and orphans in the society, and links the neglecting to provide for our families now and the hereafter to denial of our faith in Christ and calls such a person an unbeliever. If the Spirit of the ultimate Judge, God calls an action as pertaining to



unbelievers, and as a denial of God, I think that should put some fear in us if we don't provide for families both now and after we're dead.

Inevitably, it is appointed unto man, once to die and after that judgment (Hebrews 9:27); nevertheless we do not know how, when or where we will be called to death. Therefore it is wise and imperative to include insurance in our plans very early in life. Moreover, the earlier such a decision is made in one's lifetime, the better, and in fact less costly. It is wise and godly to insure oneself against

death, accident and sickness.

### Where do you start?

1. Speak to a trusted and knowledgeable Financial or Insurance Advisor, and insist on a reputable Insurance Company
2. Find out how much death or critical illness benefit your family would need, there are good financial analysis tools to help estimate what you would need
3. It is very important to prioritize this as oppose to making it secondary to your list of needs. Therefore buy within your budget because insurance is not a luxury, it is a long term deal.

Once again professional help is key. As the saying goes, "No one knows tomorrow". So plan for the worst and hope for the best, especially when it has to do with insurance and retirement. It is said that those who plan ahead, stand a better chance than those who don't; better yet those who fail to plan, plan to fail. Don't risk being blown off course by a sudden change in the wind.

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# The 10 for 10 Series: inFocus with Your Church Leaders

Have there ever been questions or insights you always wanted to know about your church leaders but never got the chance to ask? In this edition of Pentecost InFocus, we

continue our series called 10 for 10. Ten questions and ten answers intended to provide insight and perspective about your church leaders and the special motivation or unique calling that pushes them in their ministry everyday. We hope the answers to these questions will inspire you to develop a new focus as you labour in God's vineyard.

In this edition of InFocus, we bring you an in-depth discussion with Evangelist Daniel Nii Lomotey Engmann, Missionary to Guyana, Church of Pentecost. He was the first person called as a Pastor in the Church of Pentecost Canada.

## 1. Prior to being called into ministry, what was your professional background?

**Evangelist Engman:** I studied and worked as an accountant in Ghana.

## 2. How many years have you been a Pastor and what would you consider as some of your greatest victories through Christ over the years?

**Evangelist Engmann:** My wife and I were called into full time ministry some twenty years ago. Over the

years, I believe some of our greatest victories through Christ are:

- When we were sent to Montreal, there was an exodus of church members from the French speaking province and our Friday evening prayers only saw a few members. The church was struggling. But then God answered our prayers in a marvelous way as the Lord filled his church to overflowing before we were transferred.
- Seeing all the hard work and transformation that has taken place in both Hamilton and Ottawa assemblies, which we started as cells in basements. In Ottawa we started the church with two men and four women. For three years while we were in Montreal, we laboured tirelessly to grow the church. We would often drive almost 2 hours to Ottawa and 2 hours back almost every Sunday and on some Fridays through snowstorms, rain, deep fog and other inclement weather conditions. While we were in Ottawa, we would sometimes visit the members after service, arriving back in Montreal at 1am. We give glory to God for the work that's now going on in Ottawa, Hamilton and Montreal.
- We saw the hand of God in victorious ways in the life of a struggling youth who was a high school dropout and involved with bad friends. He became born again, went back to school and finished university. He is now a lawyer and is working in a prestigious law firm in Canada.
- Another victory we enjoyed through Christ was that in two separate continents we fasted and prayed with two people infected with the HIV virus. Doctors later confirmed that the virus could

not be traced. They received their healing in Jesus name. One of the persons has lived with this victory for 20 years and is still doing well and their partner did not catch the disease.

- The final victory to be mentioned is to do with a woman who was dropped into the church unconscious and was not breathing in Guyana by her Hindu family members who practiced witchcraft. Our immediate fear was that since we are foreigners if she died in the church we would be arrested. But while we were on the verge of sending her to the hospital, we gathered courage in the face of adversity and we prayed and started to worship the Lord. Suddenly the woman jumped and sat up and started to vomit while we worshipped until she was delivered. She immediately gave her life to Christ and by the grace of God she is now serving God.

### 3. At what moment did you accept the conclusion of your calling into ministry and what vision or indication did you receive that this is indeed your calling?

**Evangelist Engmann:** In my life as a believer I had a deep passion for souls and felt that Christians should live according to the word of God. I also have an unspeakable joy after leading someone to encounter Christ. Moreover, there had been promptings of the Holy Spirit and an inner conviction of the Spirit of God about the ministry, besides the numerous revelations and dreams from people of God about what they see in my life. However, there was a time when my wife and I were both working in the secular world and doing very well financially with few luxuries, yet still, there was lack of fulfillment. As such when the mantle of the call of leadership fell on us, we accepted and have not regretted since.

### 4. Who or what inspires you most in your ministry and why?

**Evangelist Engmann:**

- a) My ultimate inspirer is Jesus of Nazareth the Christ because of his passion and burden for lost souls.
- b) Our Chairman Apostle Dr. Opoku Onyinah, for his simplicity, yet firm and tact in keeping the ancient

landmark of the church and in maintaining purity and discipline.

- c) Moses Okwei Nortey my grandfather, a man with a very big forgiving heart and who liked to bring people together.
- d) Nick Vujicic, an Australian who has no hands and feet but despite his limitations finds a reason to bless the Lord and to evangelize.

### 5. As an Evangelist in Guyana, what were some of the personal challenges you encountered as you transitioned into a new country and environment and how has God helped you overcome them?

**Evangelist Engmann:**

Transitioning into our new country and environment has been very difficult and challenging indeed. We entered into a country with five distinctive cultures- Indian, African, Amerindian, Chinese and Portuguese. People from each cultural background feel superior to the other with the African Blacks often regarded as the most inferior group. This has made our transitioning very difficult.

Secondly, we are often challenged on our virtues: this is a culture where what I know to be wrong is regarded as acceptable and what I know to be right is regarded as wrong. The environment is deeply demonic so spiritually we are always praying and on your guard.

The place is also mosquito infested and thus we must be constantly armed with mosquito repellent. Since we arrived our main diet has been rice, roti, and chowmein. We've had to find ways to adjust our diet in the environment by the grace of God.

We take heart in the fact that when Christ came to the earth he did not disrespect us but he respectfully stood his ground in what was right and gently by his life and example caused the people to see the Father in him. We are also standing our grounds in things to do with righteousness, holiness and truth but we are adjusting ourselves when it comes to our diet and other things that will not affect our Christian stand.



## 6. What do you consider as some of the most pressing burden and hindrances in Guyana to the salvation message of Jesus Christ and what lessons could the church in Canada draw from your experience?

**Evangelist Engmann:** We've encountered many hindrances. Here are examples:

- Some of the most pressing burdens and hindrances in Guyana to the salvation message of Jesus Christ is to do with missionaries who originally came to the country and seeing the extreme poverty wanted to help by donating goods to their new converts. Unfortunately, they caused the people to become dependent on them and not on Christ. As such people often come to the church not for Christ but for the goods they could receive; many people are often in the church but are not necessarily saved.
- Some of the people practice Hinduism by going to pay homage and to bath in a special river in the morning. They would then go to the church afterwards to lead worship. There is, therefore, a mixture of Christianity and other religions; all religions are regarded as almost the same, without any difference in life.
- Some of those who preach Christ have a challenging fraudulent character. They are morally bankrupt, emotionally deficient and psychologically lost. Their lifestyle, therefore, do not attract anyone to change.

- The final hindrance to the salvation message is illiteracy. A lot of the people are not able to read so reading the bible becomes a challenge. They prefer "pray for me pastors" who then normally take advantage of them.
- I believe the lessons the church in Canada can draw from this is that: whatsoever challenges Canada is faced with – either a high level of illiteracy or busyness with the things of life, the church should pause and see where the church is slacking and then return to the Lord. He is willing to stir us up by the power of His spirit as we allow Him to lead his church to correct and change the things that need to be changed. This would bring the glory of God to continue to reign in his church.

## 7. What vision has God laid on your heart for the Church of Pentecost in Guyana and how do you foresee the church there in the next 10 years?

**Evangelist Engmann:**

The vision that God has laid upon our heart is to mentor, encourage by steering, and training the children and the youth to devote themselves to the Lord, so that God will influence them and Christ will reign, thereby building a changing force for the LORD in the country. Every summer we host Vacation Bible School for the Community for a week to a month. We teach math, English and scripture. We also organize Bible Quizzes and talent shows. We also provide food during the program. We try to redirect their minds from what the norm is for them to aspire and aim for a better life. This year we had an enrollment of 70



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children and by the grace of God, 22 children gave their lives to Christ. As we follow up with them, and when they are of age and become baptized, we pray that as we teach them about Godly Christian living compared to the life of alcoholism, promiscuity, murder and constant abuse, we will see a different phase of the church in the next 10yrs.

### 8. In addition to continuous prayers and financial support, what other concrete action could the church members in Canada take to support the ministry in Guyana?

**Evangelist Engmann:** Some of the concrete action that could be taken are:

- a) Every year a team from the witness ministry with music talents could join us to evangelize in a program called Jericho March Evangelism;
- b) Some of the Pastors and the Elders could come on an evangelical tour to familiarize themselves and to help boost the work in Guyana.
- c) The church in Canada or various individuals can also sponsor various projects like sponsoring a child to school, as well as sending various instrumentalists down for a crash music course. Our greatest challenge is to change the church building from wood, which is constantly being destroyed by termites to a cement structure.

### 9 What advice would you give to any young person who may feel the call of God upon their life to go into evangelistic ministry?

**Evangelist Engmann:**

First and foremost I would advise any young person to establish a firm and close relationship with Christ. The truth is that God is more interested in you as a person than in what you can do for him. His main concern is that he will be glorified in you more than through you. The person should make his calling and election sure and to know that it is all about and unto Christ but not to any man. A young person's allegiance should be unto Christ and him alone.

Secondly the ministry is also not about money making but it is a life of being sacrificed for others gain. You must, therefore, be willing to spend and be spent for Him. The person should know and understand his strength as well as his weakness for a man's gifts will bring him before kings. Don't rush, be patient, be mentored and have a good friend who can tell you the truth about when you are right or wrong. It's also important to have a spiritual father in the Lord. Don't leave to go and found another church, but rather, let the Lord raise you in His church.

### 10. Over the past 20 years, through the great leaders of this church, God has established a strong foundation for the Church of Pentecost in Canada. As the first Pastor of the Church of Pentecost Canada, how do you foresee the church over the next 20 years?

**Evangelist Engmann:**

During the next 20 years, the majority of the pioneer church members will be on retirement. Our present youth and young adults will be the existing phase of the church then. What I foresee is that if the youth are able to open the church up to the diverse culture in the country while they still retain the ancient landmarks, the church will be powerful even in those times to the glory of God. If they are not able to hold on, we will then see a reflection of what happened to the orthodox churches as they became nominal.

As per our theme this year [*Fanning the Pentecostal Fire to Impact Generations*], we must feel the urgency of the situation by taking time to mentor the youth and pray with them continuously. This will impact their lives and leave a good legacy for them to follow because what we sow is what the next generation will reap. May the Lord create a burden for each of us in this regard.

Conclusion: It is my greatest honor to have sat down with you for this interview. I hope my insights will be a doorway for someone to encounter Christ and may the Lord grant you more grace as you fulfill your ministry in this to the glory of God. Amen!



*continued from page 9*

## HOW IS CHURCH DISCIPLINE EXERCISED IN THE CHURCH OF PENTECOST (COP)?

Conduct that could result in disciplinary action in COP often involve “open sin”. The Bible uses the word “sin” to refer to any activity or pattern of thinking that is a violation of God’s word. “Open sin” is sin that is “clearly evident” for all to see (1 Timothy 5:24), such as:

- Divorcing wife or husband;
- Marrying more than one spouse;
- Intentionally teaching wrong doctrine;
- Gross disrespect to the church leadership, including refusing to reconcile with another member during dispute, after the church has mediated on the issue;
- Habitually visiting questionable places such as strip clubs, discos, clubs, alcoholic bars, etc.;
- Fornication, adultery, fighting or violence, embezzlement, fraud, or anything that brings the name of God and the church of God into disrepute.

These are, but, a few examples.

In a case of open sin, the type of disciplinary action in COP may include counseling, verbal warning, rebuke, public reprimand, interdiction, suspension of membership, and excommunication. In the church, verbal warning is not made public. However, if a person is reprimanded publicly, the person’s wrong conduct is shared with the congregation and he or she is warned not to repeat it. In certain circumstances, a person may be asked to apologize publicly; each case is examined on its merits and its seriousness. Mitigating circumstances are taken into account to determine the appropriate sanction and its duration. The Pastor, in consultation with the Presbytery decides the type of disciplinary action for an open sin offense. After a person has been disciplined, the church observes the individual for a period of time to determine if they have genuinely repented from their actions.

When an accusation is brought against a church leader, he or she is interdicted, that is, asked to step aside from his/her leadership duties, while the matter is investigated. Interdiction does not mean that a leader has done wrong; it is intended to relieve the person of his/her leadership responsibilities until the matter is fully investigated to determine if the allegation is true or not. If true, the church will then determine the appropriate disciplinary action. This can range from demotion from leadership, suspension or other sanctions as necessary.

A suspended member cannot partake of communion, and is not allowed to give public testimony or minister on the

church’s platform. In COP’s earlier days, suspended members were asked to sit on a “red bench” at the back of the church so everyone would know that he or she was suspended. Nowadays there is no red bench; however suspended members are usually asked to sit at the back of the church. Children whose parents are suspended are christened but the parents have to give the child to someone who is not suspended to take the child up to the platform as a suspended parent cannot go up to the platform while under suspension.

A disciplined member can become a leader after being restored. However a suspended leader/officer rarely gets called back as an officer. In the olden days of COP, they were never called back as officers but nowadays in some cases, they may be called back as officers after repentance is shown and under some particular circumstances.

Excommunication is a very rare form of discipline that COP adheres to. It usually applies in the case that a leader is teaching erroneous doctrine and refuses to correct the wrong doctrine despite the church correcting him or her. For example, in May 2011, COP disassociated itself from and excommunicated Emmanuel and Rebecca Bedford, leaders of Edumfa Heavenly Ministry in Ghana, for refusing to change their wrong teachings. They taught their members that eating sardines, salmon and drinking malt, a non-alcoholic beverage, is demonic. They further taught that women perming their hair prevent them from entering heaven and that those who have been baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit must be re-baptized in the name of Jesus in order to be saved.<sup>5</sup> According to the Church’s Constitution, excommunication must be approved by the Executive Council of the Church. In COP, the Executive Council, currently headed by Apostle Dr. Opoku Onyinah, executes policies and decisions of the General Council, the highest policy making body of the church.

The Church of Pentecost is not the only church that disciplines its members. Almost every Christian denomination (Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, Catholic, other Pentecostal and Charismatic, and orthodox churches) have some form of discipline for members who do not adhere to Christian conduct and the church’s rules and regulations.

## SHOULD CHURCH DISCIPLINE BE MADE PUBLIC?

One of the things that make people lash out against church discipline, especially in the COP context, is the public nature of the discipline. For example, if someone is

suspended, the suspension is announced to the whole church. Where a person is known in other Districts or is an officer, other Districts are notified as well. In the scenario where the disciplined person is a Pastor, a circular is sent to all the church's branches around the world.

In 1 Timothy 5:20, Paul says *“those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear.* Apostle John wrote to the early church concerning Diotrophes' unchristian behavior (3 John 1:9-10) and urged believers to imitate what is good, not what is bad. Apostle John also states that he will tell the whole church of the unchristian doings of Diotrophes. Thus disciplinary action against an offending person is to be made public so others could learn and not repeat the same conduct.

Though he was physically absent from Corinth, Paul had examined the case of the immoral brother in 1 Corinthians 5 and had decided on the penalty for the offense. Before a person is disciplined, their errors are brought to their attention. Once an offending person is informed about why he or she is being disciplined, the disciplinary action can be exercised whether the person shows up to be disciplined or not.

2 Thessalonians 3:14-15 further highlights the public nature of church discipline when Apostle Paul urges the church to “note (mark) any person who does not obey the word of God and should not keep company with him. “ *And if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet do not count him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.*”

### RESTORATION - A KEY INGREDIENT IN CHURCH DISCIPLINE

To restore implies bringing a brother or sister who has committed some open sin to a state of repentance so that he or she can amend his or her lifestyle for better. There are some people in the church who shun those who are disciplined and see them as the greatest sinners on earth. We should be careful of self-righteousness and acting like the Pharisees. We should be saddened that a brother or sister has fallen and do our best to help them to get up. We should get closer to them and model the love of God to them while helping them to rise up again in the faith. Pastors, church leaders, and members alike should not leave the suspended brother or sister alone but should draw them closer, pray with them, encourage them, counsel them, and mentor them to amend their ways and grow in the Lord. In John 21, Jesus restored Peter who

denied Him three times and had gone back fishing with some of the disciples. Paul advocated for Philemon to welcome and restore Onesimus, a slave who had run away from his master Philemon.

In summary, church discipline helps to demonstrate God's grace by loving the sinner but not the sin. It helps to ensure the sanctity of God's church and helps to bring back a believer who wanders from the faith. *“Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all.”* 1 Thessalonians 5:14

<sup>1</sup> Oxford English Dictionary

<sup>2</sup> Church of Pentecost Canada, “New Members Class Study Guide”, 2012

<sup>3</sup> Note: Unless otherwise indicated, bible passages are quoted from the *New King James Version (NKJV)*.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. Dr. Daniel Walker, *Introduction to First Corinthians Lecture Notes*, (Pentecost Theological Seminary, April 2013), pp. 8-9.

<sup>5</sup> Chairman's Circular, ref COP/CO/VL.25/0448/2011.



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