

PROJECT ABSTRACT

Master of Arts in Pastoral Theology

Adventist University of Africa

Theological Seminary

TITLE: A STRATEGY FOR MAINTAINING NEW BELIEVERS IN THE CHURCH AFTER PUBLIC EVANGELISM IN JUBA DISTRICT, GREATER EQUATORIA FIELD, SOUTH SUDAN

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Retention of new believers has been a problem affecting Juba District. Juba Central and Rock City Church were considered for this research. Therefore, a strategy has been developed to nurture the newly baptized church members, to ensure they are retained in the church, and are integrated into the church family and its activities.

After studying the Bible and other literature on evangelism and retention, and also considering other researches done, then a strategy was developed, and implemented successfully. Qualitative method was used, and the analyses coded through Statistical Package for Social Sciences

A syllabus for teaching newly baptized members was developed and implemented. They were taught in small groups for one year. They were nurtured, retained and integrated into the church family. This research is open to any other researcher to continue it further.

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AFTER PUBLIC EVANGELISM IN JUBA DISTRICT,
GREATER EQUATORIA FIELD, SOUTH SUDAN

A project

presented in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts in Pastoral Theology

by

Paskwale Pacoto Okeny

March 2017

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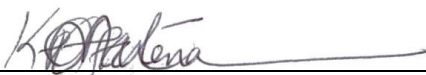
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This research is dedicated to the church members of Juba Central and Rock City Adventist Churches, members of discover classes at the same churches, my wife and my children, the Greater Equatoria Field, and SSAT administration.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Maintaining new believers in the church is becoming a challenge in Juba District of Greater Equatoria Field, South Sudan. This is experienced whenever public evangelism is conducted, and a good number of believers join the church through baptism. It seems there is no strategy for maintaining new believers in the churches; making of disciples must not end up at baptism, “it takes deliberate planning and personal care throughout the process”¹ for a new believer to grow spiritually. So, the challenge of losing members through the “back door”² may increase if there is no plan for retention of new believers. It is necessary to develop strategies for maintaining new believers in the churches; specially those who joined the church through public evangelism. They look new and sometimes appear strangers in the churches.³

There is a need to develop realistic strategies for maintaining new believers who join the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Greater Equatoria Field, and especially, the churches in Juba District, where there are numerous challenges of losing new members after public evangelism.

¹ Teru Fukui, “Overview of Retention Project in Northern Asia-Pacific Division” (presented at the Summit of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Silver Spring, MD, 2013), accessed January 18, 2015, <https://www.adventistarchives.org/nsd-report-document-2.pdf>.

² Douglas K. Tanner, “Designing A Program for the Assimilation of New Members into the Life and Ministry of the Local Church” (Doctor of Ministry Thesis, Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 2005), 4, accessed January 18, 2015, <http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1408&context=doctoral>.

³ General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and Ministerial Association, *Seventh-Day Adventist Minister's Handbook* (Silver Spring, MD: Ministerial association of General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists, 2009), 119–120.

The church should not only be concerned with numerical growth of membership record in the membership Registers, but also be concern with their spiritual growth and nurture. This will help the new members not only to be active in the church, but also to be available in fellowship during worship services, and prayer meetings. Newly baptized believers are supposed to participate in the gospel commission: the mission of the church in making more disciples.⁴ Therefore, the mission of the church in Juba District in making disciples and maintaining them can be achieved when the strategy for maintaining new believers is developed and implemented.

Statement of the Problem

The loss of members in churches within Juba District after public evangelism has been observed with great concern. The churches are “facing challenges of retaining members.”⁵ Whenever public evangelism is conducted more members are added to the churches, but after a short while, they go missing. It seems that the problem starts at the preparation for public evangelism. Preparation for public evangelism starts with inner-church mission concentrating on the church members to be committed Christians, so that they can be able to do the out-reach mission.⁶

When no adequate visitations and Bible studies are done before the evangelistic series begins, then public evangelism, instead of harvesting believers into the church, becomes a holding place, where they shortly stay and then go back to where they came from.

⁴ Jonathan K. Dodson, *Gospel-Centered Discipleship* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 33.

⁵ Kwabena Donkor, “Discipleship: Towards A Biblical Approach,” Summit of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (Silver Spring, MD, 2013), accessed January 18, 2015, www.adventistarchives.org/summit-on-nurture-and-retention,-2013.

⁶ Derek Prime, *Active Evangelism: Putting the Evangelism of Acts into Practice* (Scotland: Christian Focus, 2003), 103.

Public Evangelism is normally conducted for two or three weeks; then baptism is done. However, when there is no proper ground preparation, the interests who come to the church during the public preaching and are baptized immediately after the series ends, most of them are not rooted in the truth. When there is no plan for nurture and retention after campaign, so that the new members are instructed further in post-baptismal class for one year and then assimilated into the church life, it is obvious that most of them backslide. Therefore, the old members who are already disciples of Jesus have their part to do in the nurturing process of the new believers, “A [disciple] should be able to help the young in the faith to mature by teaching the new believer how to study the Bible sharing their faith and cultivate good culture.”⁷ It is important to nurture the new believers to grow in faith and this takes place in post-baptismal class. That is to say, “all believers need to be continually nurtured and mentored in the journey of faith.”⁸

Furthermore, lack of understanding of the importance of membership transfer can also contribute to loss of new believers. For example, a member may move to a different location where he/she becomes a stranger, if the membership is not transferred, that new member, because of unfamiliarity, may withdraw and get lost. The loss of members in this manner can be minimized by training the clerks to know their responsibility of educating the church members on the importance of transferring membership whenever one moves away from the church holding his/her membership.

This research project attempted to address the question of how to maintain or retain new believers in the church after public evangelism. In seeking to provide

⁷ Dodson, *Gospel-Centered Discipleship*, 27.

⁸ General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, “Recommitting, Reconnecting, and Reconciling: Reviving Discipleship, Nurturing Believers, and Reuniting with the Missing” (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Silver Spring, MD, 2013), accessed January 18, 2015, <https://www.adventistarchives.org/nurture-and-retention-summit-statement.pdf>.

appropriate solutions, the researcher proposes programs for public evangelism ground preparation, and briefly explains activities that will contribute to maintaining new believer in the church. This includes training members in personal ministry, efficient ground preparation, constant visitation and follow up, introducing new members into small group ministries, training them in discipleship, and nurturing them by reviewing the fundamental beliefs and teaching about Seventh-day Adventist Church's fundamental beliefs as they are grounded in the Bible.

Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this project was first to establish the reasons for membership loss after public evangelism by using questionnaire for interview, and second to develop strategies for maintaining new believers in the church and keep them active. The implementation of the strategies may involve developing materials for seminars and conducting seminars in the churches and developing another questionnaire for the evaluation of the strategies suggested.

Justification

This Project is important because it may help in the retention of the new members and foster the growth of the church. Once new believers are sustained in the church, the church, no doubt, will be able to progress and grow numerically, spiritually and even financially. When new members are finally well nurtured and trained they will become resourceful both in in-reach and outreach ministries, as they advance God's cause. But "poorly prepared members make weak members."⁹

⁹ General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and Ministerial Association, *Seventh-Day Adventist Minister's Handbook*, 109.

Limitation

The data collection was limited to members of Juba Central Church and Rock City Church and the branches of these two churches. The interview was limited to members of the selected churches available within Juba, and did not cover the entire membership of the district; but the program developed will be useful in the entire district.

Delimitation

The project would only cover two old churches and four new planted ones that were established in Oct 2014, after public evangelism within Juba District of the Greater Equatoria Field of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Sudan. Time frame to complete this research was twelve months.

Methodology

The project attempted to minimized loss of membership because “church membership loss [has become] as an ongoing phenomenon, have created a sense of need for renewal ... is seen as a symptomatic of a deeper underlying problem.”¹⁰ After public evangelism this problem can be countered by training members of the targeted churches and the newly planted companies in personal ministry, preparation of the ground and conduct public evangelism, and continue visiting and following up of the new members.

In addition, introducing them into small group ministry, where they will mature in faith and be integrated into church life. Furthermore, in the small group ministry, the new members will be nurtured and trained in discipleship¹¹; and the

¹⁰ Donkor, “Discipleship: Towards A Biblical Approach.”

¹¹ Fukui, “Overview of Retention Project in Northern Asia-Pacific Division.”

importance of keeping track of membership record will be expressed. Through this process the neophytes will be retained in the church.

New members “slip out of the back door”¹² may not be closed completely because of the reality of “the controversy between good and evil will increase in intensity to the very close of time.”¹³ Still when the developed strategy is adopted the lost of membership in Juba district will be reduced. Lastly, the researcher concluded by making recommendation to be adapted in Juba District for the retention of new members, so that the churches will be vibrant growing spiritually, numerically, and even financially.

Definition of Terms

Church: a community of believers in Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Discipleship: is the nurturing and training of the new church members in visitations and conducting Bible study as a way of sharing their faith, and leading others to become Christ’s disciples.

Inheritance: the tradition of living with the wife of a deceased brother.

Integration: used as a synonym of assimilation, to involve new members into activities of the church life.

Maintaining: is a synonym for retaining, meaning taking care of new members after joining the church, through baptism or profession of faith in the teaching of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

¹² Tanner, “Designing A Program for the Assimilation of New Members into the Life and Ministry of the Local Church.”

¹³ Ellen G. White, *Great Controversy*, [CD ROM, 1991] (The Ellen G. White Estate, 2008).

CHAPTER 2

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

This Chapter looks into the biblical understanding of the church and its evangelism mission both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, and also in the postmodern world. In addition to the three faces of evangelism, which will be examined in depth, the main objectives of this project evangelism and retention, nurturing and discipleship will be examined and the Spirit of prophecy will be consulted as well.

Biblical Understanding of the Church

The idea of the church originated from the Greek word “*ekklesia*” meaning “assembly” or “gathering.” It applies to the “calling out” of people as used extensively in the Old Testament and New Testament referring to the people of God¹. It is important to know how to maintain new believers in the Church. First, one needs to understand the root of the word church; because it did not appear in the Old Testament. *Ekklesia* ek means “out and Keleo “call.” That is, in secular Greek it means a gathering of the people in a regular summoned political body or assembly gathering. However, “in the New Testament this term is most frequently applied to a body of people who believe in Jesus as the messiah and who accept Him and His teaching, and who joined to the organization originated by Him.”²

¹ Leland Ryken, James C. Wilhoit, and Tremper Longman “Church,” III, eds., “Church,” *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery (DBI)* (Westmont, IL: InterVarsity, 1998), 147:2.

² Siegfried H. Horn, “Church,” *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Dictionary (SDABD)*, ed. Don F. Neufeld (Washington: DC, Review and Herald, 1960), 1:210.

Several biblical texts describe the church in various imageries. However, these ones mentioned here seem to have distinctive meaning and applications. First, the church is described as God's building, where every believer can be apart (1 Cor 3:9 NIV).³ Second, the church is described as the body of Christ in which each believer who accepts Christ becomes a part (Eph 1:22-23). Third, the church is described as the flock of God to which all are called to join (1 Pet. 5:2). Fourth, the church is pictured as the bride of Christ that is the identity of believers who are enjoying fellowship with Jesus and are loyal to Him (Eph 5:25-28).

The church is shown as the wife of the lamb (Rev 21:9-10), that is, the believers who accepted Christ, remain faithful to Him and prepare themselves for His second coming; when they will enjoy the privilege of eternal life. The word "believer" in the Bible does not refer to a person holding certain beliefs about God merely for theoretical conviction. To the contrary, a believer is one who accepts the good news of Jesus about the kingdom of heaven; trusting Him and joining the company of others whose lives have found new direction in relationship with Jesus and has faith in Him.⁴

These definitions would help one to be able to understand how new believers can be maintained in the church. The meaning of the English word "maintain" used here can also enable one to be able to comprehend the information. According to *Collins English Dictionary* "maintain" means to continue or retain; keep in existence; it also means to keep in proper or good condition.⁵

³The New International Version will be used in the project unless other specified.

⁴ Lawrence O. Richards, "Believers," *Dictionary of Bible Words (DBW)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1985), 1:123.

⁵ Mark Thomson, "Maintain," *Collins English Dictionary* (Glasgow, UK: Collins, 2008).

Evangelism in the Bible

God is the initiator of evangelism. Since the fall of man in the Garden of Eden God has been on the move working hard to bring human beings back to Himself. Sin caused Adam and Eve to hide from God. God came seeking for them -the Creator Evangelist (Gen 3:8, 9). God has been working to restore humanity to Himself, since the fall of man and throughout the generations mentioned in the Bible. The same was true in the time of Noah, Lot, and Abraham. It was also true in the history of the Israelite nation. God chose Abraham by the time when all people were worshipping their own gods (Josh 24:2), and made covenant with him that through him all nations will be blessed (Gen 12:2, 3). Later God revealed His plan to Israel through Moses that they “will be a kingdom of priest and a Holy Nation” (Exodus 19:5, 6). Through Israel God had planned to evangelize the world. Beyond doubt God was and is the first evangelist who wanted humanity to perceive His Divine presence.⁶

Centripetal evangelism. This was the type of evangelism popular in the Old Testament whereby people of all nations were to come to worship the God of Israel in Jerusalem, while centrifugal was the common type in the New Testament.⁷ As people come to worship in Jerusalem they know the true God Yahweh and returned to their nation with the knowledge of the true worship of the God of Israel. In this way, evangelism went on in the Old Testament, taking shape of the centrifugal evangelism, as the gentiles who were exposed to the God of Israel believed. Nevertheless, “The

⁶ Robert G. Tuttle, *The Story of Evangelism: A History of the Witness to the Gospel* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2006), 4.

⁷ Walter C. Kaiser, *Mission in The Old Testament: Israel As A Light to the Nations* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2000), 9.

fact remains that the goal of the Old Testament was to see both Jews and the Gentiles come to saving knowledge of the messiah who was to come.”⁸

Centrifugal evangelism. This type of evangelism was seen in the ministry of Jesus going out gathering the twelve disciples, and throughout the generation afterwards. At first, Jesus worked among the lost sheep of Israel (Matt 10:5, 6; 15:24). After He trained the disciples He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God (Matt 10: 7). The apostles were concerned with the evangelisation, for that reason the deacons were elected to manage the material things for the widows, so that they devote their time to the proclamation of the word of God (Acts 6:2-4). When Apostle Paul joined the church, he became one of the greatest evangelist (Acts 9:15, 16), and the message spread to the rest of the world.

Retention of Converts

Retention of converts in the Old Testament was by settlement amongst God’s people, and emulating the symbol of the true worship that was in Israel. Those who believed in the God of Israel migrated to live among the Israelites. This was seen during the exodus from Egypt (Exodus 12:37, 38). The Egyptians, who believed the first nine plagues were due to the wrath of God, might have emulated the pass over sacrifice. When their first born survived, they decided to move with the Israelites out of Egypt and were part of the Israelite company, though they became rebels among them because they were in the process of being nurtured (Joshua 6:22-25; Matt 1:5; Heb. 11:31). Ellen G White mentions this about them: “Many of the Egyptians, however, who were now among them, had been accustomed to a luxurious diet; and these were the first to complain. At the giving of the manna, just before Israel reached

⁸ Kaiser, *Mission in The Old Testament*, 10.

Sinai, the Lord had granted them flesh in answer to their [clamours]; but it was furnished them for only one day.”⁹

Rehab and her household were the only ones saved from Jericho and were assimilated into the community of Israel. Ruth is another outstanding example of retention. She decided to move from Moab and live with her mother-in-law in Bethlehem, where she got married, bore children and continued to worship the God of Israel (Ruth 1:16-18; 4:14). Both Rehab and Ruth are mentioned in the genealogy of the Jesus (Matt 1:5, 6).

Naaman, the Syrian leper, is another example of those who believed in the God of Israel but could not settle among them. When he was healed he requested to take some soil from Israel to build an altar in his home so that he could continue to worship the God that healed him by offering sacrifice (2 Kings 5:17, 18).

In the New Testament, the early church retained their new converts by several means. Prayer, Bible study, fellowship, sharing food and witnessing Christ dominated their experiences (Acts 1:14; 2:42-47). They were caring for one another, sharing properties and food (Acts 4:32-35). New believers were encouraged to hold firm to their faith in God with all their hearts (Acts 11:23).

Barnabas was a mentor to Paul, as he brought him from Tarsus to Antioch where they stayed for two years, and they taught numerous people that led to the establishment of the church at Antioch, and the name Christians was given (Acts 11:25, 26).

The older in faith were nurturing the inexperienced: Aquila and Priscilla brought Apollo home and “explained to him the way of God more adequately” (Acts

⁹ Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, complete Publish Ellen G. White Writings [CD ROM] (Silver Spring, MD: The Ellen G. White Estate, 2008).

18:24-26). The believers in Corinth encouraged him (Acts 18:27, 28), and he became a great preacher in Achaia and the Church in Corinth (1 Cor 3:5, 6).

Public Evangelism

When plans for public evangelism are made known to the church very early in the year, it gives enough time for preparation. All church members can fit in the strategic plan for the evangelistic events. The committees for the evangelistic meetings need to be formed one year ahead of time, so that they know when to start their work and report regularly to the Church board, which will assess and evaluate the progress on the ground preparation to ensure that there is hope for the success of the evangelism plan. The preacher or the evangelist must be chosen and notified very early at the conception of the plan; as the ground preparation goes on the preacher will also be preparing the message to suit the audience and be involved in the ground preparation if he is not invited from far.

The plan for evangelism must start with training of the entire members of the church. The training of the members must be the first thing to do, because when members are well trained, then evangelism will be successful, so there must be seminars on how to conduct public evangelism. Members must know their responsibilities during ground preparation, during proclamation of the message and what to do during post-evangelism time:

Pre-public Evangelism

Pre-public evangelism programs should include church preparation and ground preparation. Church preparation is an intended program that should be planned to prepare the church for the public proclamation of the Gospel. These programs include revival and training of the Church members. Ellen White said, “The Lord does not now work to bring many souls into the truth, because of the members who

have never been converted, and those who were once converted but who have backslidden.”¹⁰ So for the church to move out in the power of the Holy Spirit there is need for revival.

During the revival meetings members can pray for one another confessing their sins to each other so that they may be healed spiritually (James 5:16), and be prepared to be used by God. When the church is reconverted and filled with the power of the Holy Spirit as in the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:4); the result of the proclamation would be amazing. It must be clearly understood that “conversion is an act of God. It is a new birth; a person is transformed to become part of a new creation.”¹¹

So no one can take credit to oneself. It would also be wrong to work very hard to bring people to the church in order to win man’s approval, appreciation and promotion. When pastors and members work hard, it should be in response to the commission given by the Saviour.

Ground preparation is very important in any public evangelism. In ground preparation, several activities can be done. For any evangelism to be successful prayer is priority in the life of the pastor, the church or the evangelism team. When the venue is already chosen after praying for the direction from God, then training can follow. The training can be given to the entire church or the team members. Training of members is paramount Ellen White suggested that, “In labouring where there are already some in the faith, the minister should at first seek not so much to convert unbelievers, as to train the church members for the acceptance cooperation.”¹² When the church is prepared in this way then ground preparation can follow.

¹⁰ Ellen G. White, *Evangelism* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1987), 110.

¹¹ Peter Maiden, *Discipleship* (Colorado Springs, CO: Keswick Ministries and Authentic Media, 2007), 11.

¹² White, *Evangelism*, 110–111.

Visitation is the foundation of success of public evangelism. Through visitation the church can get acquainted with the people that later would be invited to the meetings. In His ministry, Christ, went everywhere preaching the gospel. “And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people” (Matt 9:35).

When he came to the house of Zecchaeus all the people who were there grumbled, and Jesus said “For the son of man came to seek and to save what was lost” (Luke 19:10). Ellen White declared that “The Saviour mingled with the men as one who desire their good. He shows sympathy for them, minister to their need won their confidence. Then He bade them “follow Me.”¹³ When people are visited before the public proclamation, the first contact develops acquaintance and later on would build relation and confidence.

When time comes to invite them for the evangelism series, they will readily accept because relationship has been built. Therefore, relationship with the people to evangelize cannot be underestimated.

From time to time large evangelism campaigns are held. Experience proves that churches that gain most from them are those that have already worked hard at establishing good relationships with (people) whom they are then able to invite along.¹⁴

Therefore, ground preparation is of great importance in public evangelism. The evangelism series is supposed to be planned for harvesting the believers who have been receiving Bible studies long way before the public preaching of the word started.

¹³ Ellen G. White, *Ministry of Healing* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 1942), 143.

¹⁴ Prime, *Active Evangelism*, 103.

During the visitations, some interests for Bible studies can be established. These would later qualify for baptism at the end of the evangelistic series. However, they are to be led gradually into the truth, and allow them to grow into spiritual maturity. Another activity that can be done as ground preparation is community services: it can be civic program of promoting clean environment, this makes the church popular. When the time comes to distribute the hand bills and advertise for the evangelistic meetings people would willingly come to attend. A few nights before the meetings begins showing of biblical films can also be of advantage in making advertisement. Furthermore, seminars before the public proclamation are some of the activities that can be conducted for ground preparation. It may be health seminar, family life seminar and other seminars not on controversial subjects.

Public Preaching

During the public proclamation of the gospel there are things that need to be taken into consideration seriously. These are prayer band, time keeping, presentation of family life and health lectures, preaching of the word and appeals. It is important to have members continue praying to God for success of a campaign. The success of any evangelism depends on God's power. The Holy Spirit, the great teacher is the only one who can empower the speaker (John 14:25, 26); and impress the truth in the hearts of the hearers, convict them and bring conversion. Ellen White said, "By earnest prayer and diligent effort we are to obtain a fitness for speaking. This fitness includes uttering every syllable clearly, placing the force and emphasis where it belongs."¹⁵ So prayer sessions can continue even as the program runs.

God does His work at the right time. He created the world in appropriate time, and He completed and rested in time (Gen 2:1-3). Time should be allotted for every

¹⁵ White, *Evangelism*, 175.

activity and strictly kept. People of the post-modern world are very busy and time conscious. The time for the evangelistic meetings if well planned and followed it is a step to success. When the public address system and the seats are set in place on time it encourages the audience to come early for the meetings. Each part of the presentation is to start and end in time “there is time for everything, and season for every activity under heaven” (Eccl 3:1).

Family life and health lectures are also parts of evangelistic series. People sometimes are attracted to evangelistic campaign because of these lectures, when presented lively to the point. Others might be suffering from lifestyle diseases or addiction and when through the lectures they are able to identify their health problem, and shown how to live a healthy life this groups will also make decision to continue learning more. Family life lectures can address some of the audience’s problems, and when they find solutions to their problems, some can make the decision to join the church.

The major part of the evangelistic meetings is the proclamation of the word of God. In his book *Saturation Evangelism* Peters said, “Evangelism does not take place until the good news has been orally, intelligently and understandingly communicated.”¹⁶

There may be other methods of reaching out to make disciples, but would not replace the proclamation of the word of God. To communicate the gospel intelligibly so that it would be understood by the audience needs the wisdom that is provided by the power of the Holy Spirit. As the preaching goes on, periodic appeals can be made and the Holy Spirit can touch people’s hearts to decide for Christ and be saved. Blackwood said, “Evangelism is the art of allowing oneself to be used as a channel by

which the Holy Spirit communicates.”¹⁷ The evangelist is just an instrument in God’s hand to accomplish His mission of salvation of humanity.

Post Evangelism

When the public proclamation is ended, still the work of making disciples has not ended. This is a beginning of another phase of evangelism. Bill Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) has developed strategy of evangelism based on three elements: “preparation, proclamation and preservation” that these elements “provide an effective frame work to achieve our [BGEA] stated goals to reach and disciples the lost.”¹⁸ The idea of the elements (3-Ps) use by BGEA is similar to pre-evangelism, public evangelism and post evangelism. So after the public series ends, there is the work of nurturing those baptised at the end of the campaign and following up those who are not yet baptized; but have shown interest to continue learning more truth.

Evangelism and Retention

God’s principle of evangelism is that the preaching of good news of salvation is to be preached by men and women to all humanity, and it is not given to the angels. The three angels with the eternal gospel (Rev 14: 6-12) symbolize the servants of God involved in preaching the eternal gospel. The angels are those who have faith in Jesus and are His disciple, and will continue to make others also disciples. In the Bible, the

¹⁶ George W. Peters, *Saturation Evangelism*, 6th ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1977), 19.

¹⁷ Andrew W. Blackwood, *Evangelism in the Home Church* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon-Cokesbury, n.d.), 78.

¹⁸ Lon Allison and Mark Anderson, *Going Public with the Gospel* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003), 42, 43.

preaching of the word of God has been symbolized by casting of seeds in the parable of the Sower and the weed in Matthew 13.

In farming, after casting the seeds, the seeds germinate and then follows the time for caring of the crops until harvest time comes. Then the crops are stored. So, after evangelism is done, there should be time to follow up new believers and take care of them so that they grow into mature Christians in a gradual process.

The second coming of Jesus in the book of revelation is considered to be the time of harvest and putting harvested crop into store (Rev 14:14-16). Public evangelism should harvest people into the kingdom of God as a farmer harvests his crops and puts the crops in store. However, human beings are not the same as crops; they are very complex in a way they behave. They are created with the free will of choice, and sometimes can make wrong decisions that make them wander away from the church, after knowing the truth of salvation and accepting Jesus as their personal Saviour. But the principle is the same just as caring for planted seeds. So, new believers require commitment, time, effort, knowledge, hard work, and wisdom from God to care and maintain them in the Church.

Jesus prayed that those whom the Father gave Him should not be lost, and He kept them by the name the Father gave Him (John 17:12); and among the disciples only Judas who chose to be lost. So, sometimes the church can do their best to retain new believers in the church because of one's decision some of them yet will walk away from the back door; because "the front door is wide open but the back door has become a large revolving door that never stops turning."¹⁹

¹⁹ Tanner, "Designing A Program for the Assimilation of New Members into the Life and Ministry of the Local Church."

The entire membership involvement is needed to narrow up the large back door and it requires some effort from the mature members. Mature members can be patient with the new believers when they understand that “nurturing stage of Christian life takes a lot of time and energy.”²⁰ Furthermore, if the church is willing to put in some of their times to labor in nurturing those who newly joined the church, the young in faith will be strengthened and progress will be seen in the growth and the development of the church.

Apostle Paul in his ministry set a good example of caring for young believers. He and his colleagues in their second missionary’s journey visited the churches they established in the first journey, delivering the letter sent by the elders in Jerusalem, “encouraging and strengthening the brothers” (Acts 15:30-33, 36-41). In addition, his letters were word of encouragement to believers so that they remain firm in the faith, and not backslide and be lost (Heb10:38, 39). It is the church’s responsibility to be concerned with the new believers; strengthening them in the faith, so that they become true disciples of Jesus that will be welcomed into God’s Kingdom at the second coming of Jesus (Matt 13:43).

Nurturing and Discipleship

The new believer needs to be nurtured. This can be done by giving deeper Bible studies, seminars and equipping them in discipleship. Dodson in his book *Gospel-Centered discipleship* stated that “discipleship is sharing the gospel to win people to Christ.”²¹ He further mentioned that churches are divided over the approaches of discipleship that “Some organizations focus on nurturing Christians,

²⁰ Fukui, “Overview of Retention Project in Northern Asia-Pacific Division.”

²¹ Dodson, *Gospel-Centered Discipleship*, 28.

while others focus on making Christians.”²² The two approaches can be practical in the third phase of evangelism – post evangelism. The new believers would be nurtured to become strong Christians in the faith and get involved in disciple making; while the emphasis toward those not baptized is to make them Christian. Therefore, there are no short cuts to Christian maturity. Warren said, “There are no short cuts to maturity. It takes years for us to grow to adulthood, and it takes a full season for fruits to mature and ripen. The same is true for the fruits of the spirit. The development of the Christian character cannot be rushed. Spiritual growth, like physical growth, takes time.”²³ If new believers are to be retained in the church, preachers need to get away from the tradition of “hit and run” evangelism.²⁴

Relationship in Retention

Believers can be converted to the church; the greater task is how to maintain them in the faith. Here comes the “success in personal evangelism is more dependent on the quality of interpersonal relationships than it is on formal Bible instruction and preaching.”²⁵ The new believers need to find good company with the old members of the church; So that they develop good relationship with their Lord Jesus.

To succeed in helping the church maintaining new members in the church one need to learn from Master Jesus; how patient He was with the apostles in explaining things to them, even toward the close of His ministry when they ask about the time of

²² Dodson, *Gospel-Centered Discipleship*, 28.

²³ Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life : What on Earth Am I Here For?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 217.

²⁴ G. T. Ng, “The Leaky Bucket Syndrome and How to Fix It” (presented at the Summit on Nurture and Retention, Silver Spring, MD: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2013), accessed January 18, 2015, www.adventistarchives.org/the-leaky-bucket-syndrome-and-how-to-fixed-it.pdf.

²⁵ Peter J. Prime, *The Gospel of Love and Real Evangelism* (Silver Spring, MD: The Ministerial Association of General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist, 2009), 146.

restoring the kingdom to the Israel, yet with humility Jesus explained things to them what they would have understood long time (Acts 1:6, 7).

Jesus, personally, had a wonderful ways of dealing with those who believed in Him. Therefore, personal ministry in evangelism is “A thermostat and thermometer in measuring spiritual and evangelistic temperature of the church as a whole and its individual members.”²⁶ The older members can actively encourage the new believers by taking them out for witnessing. “When a believer gets out to witnessing for the Lord, heaven is stimulated beyond description and all efforts are gathered to strengthen and equip the believer for such a noble task.”²⁷

Visitation. Visitation should continue even after the public proclamation is ended. Evangelism is a continuous process. What has been done in pre-evangelism can start again. One can also define evangelism as gospel cycle, if it continues rolling the effectiveness can be realized. When a wheel keeps on rolling the revolution increases, momentum is gained and the velocity increases also, as the study of natural law in physics can explain.²⁸

When public evangelism is strategically planned to keep on rolling like a wheel; without abrupt stop after the public proclamation is ended, the Church will grow. People will keep on coming to the church because of the continuous evangelism activities. Then evangelism has no end or limit when it becomes a life cycle of the church - one face of evangelism ushers into another one; and the LORD will add daily

²⁶ Prime, *The Gospel of Love and Real Evangelism*, 146.

²⁷ Juvenal Balisasa, *Witnessing for Christ: A Key to Personal Spiritual Growth* (Ghana: Alive, 2010), 41.

²⁸ James H. Bunn, *The Natural Law of Cycles: Governing the Mobile Symmetries of Animals and Machines* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2014), 14.

to the church those who are saved as he did in the days of the early believers (Acts 2:47).

Woolsey said, “It is by visiting and studying in the homes that we achieve the desired result – decisions. This is why visitation has been called ‘the lifeline of evangelism.’”²⁹ The older church members can by their lives be good example to the new convert not to hurt them, and this can be done by applying two primary things for discipleship: by being active in sharing one’s faith and being friendly with the “Younger in the faith to demonstrate how to be older in faith.”³⁰

When Jesus finished His dedicatory and commitment prayer of fasting in the wilderness (Matt 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13, NKJV), then He started His public ministry by finding followers who will be His disciples. The account on how He found the first four believers: Peter, Andrew, John and James are in the gospels (Matt 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20; Luke 5:1-11 NKJV), and also the calling of Peter, Philip and Nathaniel are recorded with deferent perspective in John 1:40-50 (NKJV).

Later He also called Mathew who is also called Levi (Matt 9:9; Luke 5:27 NKJV). Jesus was very friendly with people; His words were full of kindness. Peter and his friends did not find it difficult to follow Him, even Matthew. They all abandoned their livelihood and whole-heartedly followed Jesus wherever He went preaching the kingdom of God. After Jesus went to heaven the believers continued to fellowship together (Acts 4:32-37); “The fellowship [in Acts4:32-37] may probably

²⁹ Raymond H. Woosley, *Evangelism Handbook* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1972), 45.

³⁰ Dodson, *Gospel-Centered Discipleship*, 15.

have served also as a process for nurturing the faith of the recent believers and helped to establish them in their newfound faith.”³¹

Consequently, keeping company with the new believers after baptism cannot be undermined. It will help the believer to continue learning as they associate with the mature believers; their faith will be nurtured and they will stand firm in the midst of temptations and the test of faith.

Personal invitation. Personal invitation is an inducement of interest in a person. The person invited will have a high self-esteem of being valued; that can build a good relationship between the invitee and the inviter, though the inviter might have the aim for inviting. Jesus invited his first disciples to become fishers of men (Matt 4:19; Luke 5:10).

According to Luke version, the response of Peter to the invitation met with low self-esteem and remorse: when he said, “Depart from me for I am a sinful man, O Lord!” (Luke 5:8). But Jesus assured him and his fellow fishermen by saying, “Follow Me and I will make you fishers of Men.” (Matt 4:19 NKJV); and Luke recorded it this way, “Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men” (Luke 5:1 NKJV). From that time, these disciples remained with Jesus.

Therefore, establishing a new believer in the faith from the time of conversion is essential. Menzer stated that, “when a person accepts Christ, our work is only just beginning. The first few years – and the first 24 hours – are vital in establishing a new believer’s walk with the Lord.”³² So new believers are not to be left alone by

³¹ Sampson Nwanmah, “The Concept of Church in West Africa” (Doctor of Philosophy, The Obafemi University Ile-Ife, 2006), 95.

³² Holly Menzer and Becky Broschat, “Helping New Believers Grow, Campus Crusade for Christ International,” accessed August 8, 2014, <https://www.cru.org/train-and-grow/help-others-grow/helping-new-believers.html>.

themselves after baptism; they need help to grow in the faith and become committed disciples and be involved in discipleship.

It seems, before Peter and his brother Andrew had full commitment in following Jesus, they had first missed Jesus for some time. It appears that Andrew was one of the disciples of John the Baptist, to whom he pointed Jesus, when he said, “Behold the lamb of God” (John 1:29, 40 NKJV), and Andrew reported to Simon Peter that they have found the messiah (v. 41 NKJV); this implied that they had been looking for Jesus. The two disciples of John the Baptist wanted to know where Jesus lives, may be next time when they need him they could come direct to the home, and Jesus invited them “come and see” (v.37-40 NKJV). The following day Jesus also found Philip and invited him “Follow Me”; and Philip in turn found Nathanael informed him about the messiah and brought him to Jesus as he too believed in Jesus as the King of Israel, although he first doubted (John 1:45-50 NKJV). When Jesus found Matthew the tax collector also called Levi He said to him “Follow Me,” immediately Matthew got up and followed Him (Matt 9:9; Mark 2:13,14; Luke 5:27, 28).

Several women were also followers of Jesus, among them were Mary Magdalene, Joanna the wife of Cuza, Susanna and others (Luke 8:1-3); these women supported Jesus and the twelve disciples with their own means, and some of them must be the witnesses to the death of Christ on the cross (Luke 23:49). On the resurrection morning on Sunday Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome went to the tomb, and they found Jesus had resurrected (Mark 16:1). There were women faithful followers of Jesus. Most of them probably came because of the many miracles they had witnessed, and through the great teaching of Jesus. Therefore, pastors, and church members when they are closer to the new believers as Jesus did,

more believers will be retained in the church though some may backslide. Jesus nurtured His followers and retained a good number of them, although some of them turned back because they could not believe some of His hard teaching (John 6:54-60).

Huston explained that new believers' needs are similar to new born babies, who are cared by mothers and also need to know their father well. In a similar way new believers need Bible study to know the doctrine of the Church, learn to pray, praise God in a personal devotional life; and also in the church. By this one can be related to the heavenly Father.³³ They will keep on feeding on the spiritual milk until they will become mature in the faith (Heb 5:13, 14), and will not be deceived by false doctrine of the false prophets that Jesus prophesied that will come in the last days, and are many at this time (Matt 24:5, 11,24).

Love impacts. Programs can be planned to nurture the new believers after the public proclamation is ended. All the activities done without love for the people will amount to nothing. If one has faith, the money and all the ability to speak and convinced multitude; if there no love for the people, the proclamation done means “nothing” as said apostle Paul (I Cor 13:1-3).

McPhee said that we can win most people by impending judgment, through reasoning and eloquent advocate but “unless they can see that behind the warnings and behind the arguments, is our genuine love for them.” Then they can be truly converted.³⁴ An evangelist and his team should have practical love for the people; thereafter, the people can easily decide to follow Christ. The greatest need of a human

³³ David A. Houston, “Assimilating and Transforming New Believers” (Rosh Pinnah, n.d.), accessed August 8, 2014, www.gloriuschuruch.com/Assimilation-and-transformation.pdf.

³⁴ Arthur G. McPhee, *Friendship Evangelism: The Caring Way to Share Your Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1979), 57.

being must be love, as the Bible says “And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these all is love” (1 Cor 13:13).

Love relationship can be a cartilage that can win and maintain new believers in the church; “Through proactive love relationships many people may be made disciples of Jesus Christ even without formal Bible instruction.”³⁵ It was through action of love that Jesus was able to win confidence, and trust of people. Following the example of Jesus where all action is characterized by love for the people will win more believers.

The Spirit of Prophecy on Retention

Retention of believers must be the key to evangelism; the converts must be brought to the full knowledge of the Savoir and become the disciples of Jesus. Ellen White said, “Preach the word so that it will be easy to comprehend. Bring the people right to Jesus Christ, in whom their hope of eternal life are centred.”³⁶

The purpose of the proclamation is to bring people to Jesus, so that they accept Him as their personal savoir. The presentation should be clear so that the audience can comprehend. Truth clearly understood cannot be abandoned, it will be like the seed that has fallen in a good soil and can produce crops (Matt 13:18, 23). In this aspect there should be care in presentation of the topics. It should be done in a way that will motivate the people to hunger to know more, and put into practice; because the truth that remains as cognitive knowledge will not bring change in life, it is only benefited when practiced.

The “doctrinal subject” should be presented in a simple and clear way that is understandable. During evangelistic campaign more sermons should be on the

³⁵ Prime, *The Gospel of Love and Real Evangelism*, 145.

³⁶ White, *Evangelism*, 178.

“Practical godliness”³⁷ The audience in evangelistic meetings should be led into the truth gradually with consistence appeals drawing them to make decision, and starts putting into practice all that is taught, to build their character to become citizen of heaven as Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:20. The older believers should be exemplary in living mature Christian life and not “by living irreligious lives”³⁸

Therefore, those who have newly come to the faith should be patiently and tenderly dealt with. It is the duty of the older and mature members of the church to devise some ways and means to provide support, sympathy and instruction to those precious souls, so that they are not lost.³⁹ Plans should be made for activities that will bring both older and new believers together for fellowship and interaction to be acquainted and get involved in the ministry. In this way they will get encouragement, become strong in the faith and make others also disciples of Jesus.

The goal of baptism should not only be for increasing the membership record. There is a temptation of baptizing premature believers in order to make a good report, and win the favour of the administrators for promotion. This is not a good intention. The reason for baptism to some ministers can be dubious and have serious consequences upon the church, “Some ministers and churches are so desirous of securing an increase of members that they do not bear faithful testimony against unchristian habits and practices.”⁴⁰ Increasing the membership without experiencing a change in life will only ruin the church, because if the church is full of unconverted members it will not have any impact to the life of others within that community where

³⁷ White, *Evangelism*, 178.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 112, 113.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 19, 35.

⁴⁰ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for The Church*, vol. 5, Complete Published Ellen G. White Writings [CD ROM] (Silver Spring, MD: The Ellen G. White Estate, 1999).

the church exists. Therefore, the most important thing to think about is not only adding of new believers, but also nurturing and retaining them.

It is important to involve new members in church services; “When souls are converted, set them to work at once. They can labor according to their abilities, and grow stronger.”⁴¹ Not giving responsibility to a new believer could be one of the reasons for the high rate of church drop out in Juba District. New believers should be helped to identify their spiritual gifts (Roman 12:3-7, 1 Cor 12:4-11, and Eph 4:11-16); so that they can be able to experiment with them. If not guided to know their gift and use them, they can become weak spiritually and stop coming to the church because they are bored and there is nothing they can do. They should be part of “God’s building” in the plan of salvation as they labor for the salvation of others, they will become strong in the faith.

The Church Statement on Retention

It is very important to provide a continual encouragement and support to new church members. The Seventh-day Adventist Statement on Retention declares the following, “to discover their gifts and engage in ministry that fits those gifts.”⁴² In this way they will become strong and not abandon their new found faith. They should be provided with the opportunity to exercise their gifts in the ministry. By training the new believers, they can know that there are various gifts and they will know what gifts they have, and how they can use in the ministry.

New believers should be well instructed, “to the principles for which the church stands. They should not be asked to commit themselves without knowing

⁴¹ White, *Evangelism*, 355.

⁴² General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and Ministerial Association, *Seventh-Day Adventist Minister's Handbook*, 120.

what their commitment includes.”⁴³This means deeper Bible studies and other training after the public evangelism is of great importance in maintaining the new babies in the faith. New interest should not be rushed into water of baptism before proper instruction, how they should continue living faithful Christian life.

It is important to train new baptized members, since “much of the work of the church can and should be accomplished by the church members.”⁴⁴When new believers are well trained they can do much than what they can do without being trained. They should be trained in witnessing and giving Bible studies to their friends and relatives. This is how they can continue to grow in faith and become integrated into the Church life. When this is done the number of people leaving the church will be reduced, and the church will continue to grow.

After realizing the loss in membership, the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists conducted a survey during 2012 and 2013.⁴⁵ The analysis of the survey indicated that “a large majority of those who separate from the Church do so because of personal factors, rather than doctrinal reasons, and frequently without deliberate rejection of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.”⁴⁶

Then by the end of the summit on “nurture and retention” in 2013 they came up with the statement that, “We therefore affirm that building loving and Christ-like relationships within the local church must be an urgent necessity for the Seventh-day

⁴³ General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and Ministerial Association, *Seventh-Day Adventist Minister's Handbook*, 119.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 102.

⁴⁵ General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Survey of Former and Inactive Church Members*, Survey, Office of Archives, Statistics and Research (The Centre for Creative Ministry, 2013), accessed January 18, 2015, www.adventistarchives.org/exit-interview-an-international-survey-of-dropouts-from-the-seventh-day-adventist-church-pdf.

⁴⁶ General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, “Recommitting, Reconnecting, and Reconciling: Reviving Discipleship, Nurturing Believers, and Reuniting with the Missing.”

Adventist Church. We commit ourselves to God's vision of mission of Remnant Church."⁴⁷ It is right, through love, and practicing the way Christ showed love to people even to his enemies can be the means by which the Church can be able to maintain new believers in the Church.

When the older members not only talk about love but also in their daily interaction with the new believers show them practical love, the new believers understand that they are being cared for and they stay in the Church and become assimilated into the membership and own the church. However, there may be several reasons that drive people away from the Church. The result of the research presented at the summit shows that majority leave because of personal reasons. However, the tendency of leaving can be reduced when there is no prejudice from the older members against the new members. When they see love existing among the believers, they will not leave, instead they will be anxious to learn more and also get involved in the Church life, and become nurtured to grow in faith and the love of Christ, and become strong Christians

⁴⁷ General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, "Recommitting, Reconnecting, and Reconciling: Reviving Discipleship, Nurturing Believers, and Reuniting with the Missing."

CHAPTER 3

DESCRIPTION OF LOCAL SETTING

The History of Seventh-day Adventist Church

The Seventh-day Adventist message came at a time when the country was still one –Sudan. There were several attempts to bring the gospel into the country from 1927-1972, with little progress.¹ The first attempt after exploration survey in 1927 was by a minister, Farris Basta Bishai an Egyptian with his family who came to Khartoum in 1953. By 1955, through Bible Correspondence School they managed to establish a Sabbath School with eleven members.² Later there was another attempt in 1974, a South Sudanese Ret Chol a graduate of Middle East University who was appointed to direct the work; even so there was no much progress.³

The attempt that led to success was by the initiative of a South Sudanese layman. Fulgensio Ida Okay now a retired pastor who was a teacher in Masaka Training Institute in Uganda.⁴ He had a dream of many Churches and the voice told him “Go enter the Church,”⁵ and he was in dilemma not knowing which church to enter. Then he was given a clue in the dream that in front of all the churches there was a Bible. His interpretation of the dream led him into reading the Bible through in

¹ Don F. Neufeld, ed., *Seventh-Day Adventist Encyclopedia*, Revised. (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1996), 708–709.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Fulgensio Ida Okayo, “Retired Minister, Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Juba, South Sudan,” interview by Author, June 24, 2016.

⁵ Ibid.

1973. As he read the Bible, he discovered the Sabbath, and immediately decided to keep the Sabbath with his family, and he started looking for a church that prays on Saturday Sabbath. In May 1975, he found one in Kampala. He continued worshipping there, and in 1976, he returned to Sudan, and got work with May Vocation in Wau where he started Bible study with the students who were from Eastern Equatorial; then he returned to Uganda and was baptized on 22nd August 1977.⁶ These students were convicted of the truth as it was from the Bible and were persuaded to go back home share the message with their people and most of these sharing resulted in establishing churches in Magwi and Loa when the missionaries came. Later, a teacher by the name Okayo, was transferred to Torit where he continued with Bible studies. In the course of time he had communication with Pastor W. Lusingo the Stewardship director from Afro-Middle East Division, through Mr. Aventore Bilal, and that led to the coming of the missionaries—the family of Dr Gerald Whitehouse and John Sense.⁷

The work started officially in 1980 and 1981 with the coming of two missionaries, Pastor David Ogillo with his family from Tanzania and, the Mission Director, with his family from America; and they established Munuki Clinic in Juba in 1982.⁸

After the independence of South Sudan, three fields were established in 2012: Greater Equatorial Field, Greater Upper Nile Field, and Greater Bahr El Ghazal Field, now administered by South Sudan Attached Territory of East-Central Africa

⁶ Fulgensio Ida Okayo, “Retired Minister, Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Juba, South Sudan,” interview by Author, June 24, 2016.

⁷ Neufeld, *Seventh-Day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 708–709.

⁸ Ibid.

Division.⁹ In the midst of all the political instability and financial crisis of the country, still God's work is growing. The current unaudited membership of the three fields is twenty seven thousand three hundred and sixty five.¹⁰

Socio-Cultural Background

Socially, South Sudanese live communal life in rural and urban areas. The rural population is denser than the urban according to the census conducted in 2008.¹¹ In the rural localities people live according to their clans for various reasons: for security, fellowship, solving families' issues and clans problems. Whereas, in the urban set up, a few families from the same ethnic group may stick together but in small numbers because of urban setting, people live in pieces of leased plots or rented houses. South Sudanese in general share many things in common; they like handshaking and are hospitable. However, the long period of war has made people sometimes aggressive and violent. Coupled with other imported life styles from the neighbouring countries, the western world influenced some changes in the culture. Most people from more than sixty-three tribes live in Juba;¹² and Bari is the indigenous tribe. Juba has become a multicultural and multi-ethnic city. The headquarters of the Seventh-day Adventist work is in South Sudan.

The common language spoken in Juba is the local Arabic that developed from the Arabic and some indigenous dialects. The Juba Arabic (the colloquial Arabic) is

⁹ General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Office of Achieves and Statistics, *Seventh-Day Adventist Yearbook 2012*, (SDA Yearbook2012) (Silver Spring, MD: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2012), 64–65.

¹⁰ South Sudan Attached Territory of Seventh-day Adventist, Office of Executive Secretary, *Third Quarter Statistical Reports* (Juba, Central Equatorial State: South Sudan Attached Territory of Seventh-day Adventist, 2016), 1.

¹¹ Matthew LeRiche and Matthew Arnold, *South Sudan: From Revolution To Independence* (London: Hurst, 2013), 5.

¹² *Ibid.*, 4.

spoken in many towns and some villages, and has become the common language spoken in homes and markets. It is also the language being used in spreading the gospel in many parts of the country because it is also spoken in many rural areas. It is widely spoken in the way Koine Greek was used in the New Testament.¹³

Geographical Setting

Juba is the capital city of the Republic of South Sudan formerly situated in Central Equatorial State and now Jubek state after the creation of the 28 states. It is a cosmopolitan capital of the state. It is located along the River Nile 200 km North of Nimule from Uganda boarder. It is bordered by several towns: Torit to the East along the way to Kenya, Bor capital of Jonglei state to the North East, Kajokeji County to the South, Lainya and Yei Counties to South West, Rokon County and Mundri Counties are to the West.¹⁴

The head office of Seventh-day Adventist Church is situated in Munuki administrative Payam, along Belfam and Gudele roads at the roundabout. Juba district has five organized churches: Juba Central Church, Munuki Church, Rock City, Mal Church, and Gudele Church. The Companies (branches) are Mount Zion, Lologo, Sherikat, Miyasaba, and Salama. Juba Central Church was the first church established in South Sudan when the missionaries came, and was organized in 1984¹⁵. From here the gospel went out to most parts of South Sudan, and even some parts Sudan.

¹³ Craig L. Blomberg, *Jesus And The Gospel: An Introduction And Survey*, 2nd ed. (Nashville, TN: B&H, 2009), 13.

¹⁴ M H. Kanyane, James Hoth Mai, and Deng Abot Kuol, *Liberation Struggle In South Sudan: Critical Issues For Consideration* (Wansbeck, South Africa: Reach, 2009), 3.

¹⁵ Seventh-day Adventist Juba Central Church, *Membership Record Book 1*, 1984, 1.

Statistics of Juba District

The adult attendance on Sabbath in the two churches of Juba district under a study in this research—Juba Central and Rock City, one can find that the attendance on Sabbath is bigger than the membership record and the actual members are less than in the membership record. This indicates that others are floating members—members whose membership is not recorded in the church register.

Table 1. Statistics of Juba Central and Rock City Church and the Branches 4th Q 2015

Churches		Juba Central Church	Branches: Mount Zion-1, Lologo-2, Miyasaba-3, Sherikhat-4				Rock City	Branch Salama-1	Total
Branches			1	2	3	4		1	
Members Added	Baptism	46	0	6	10	6	4	0	82
	Profess Faith	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Transfer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
TOTAL		46	0	6	10	6	4	0	82
Members Lost	Death	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Transfer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL			0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Statistics Report		611	32	36	38	44	78	35	874
Church Attendance 7 th Sabbath 4 th Q 15		436	42	29	32	112	139	43	833
Difference		-175	+10	+7	+6	+68	+61	+8	-41

In Juba Central Church there are 175 members unaccounted for, and it can be assumed that either they are missing or moved to other places without official membership transfer. On the other hand the Rock City church attendance is more by 61 and this can send two messages: they are either in the Bible Class being prepared for baptism or some of them did not transfer their membership, they are just floating in the church. These floating members, when asked they even have no genuine reason for not transferring their membership. They are just comfortable to let their

membership remain where they were baptized, but yet they want to participate fully in the church where they don't hold membership. This is an indication that they are ignorant about the importance of membership transfer, and there is a need for educating the church about membership transfer.

Methodology

There are several research methods that I could have used in project. The method I preferred for this project is the qualitative method.¹⁶ Interview was used for data collection; and it is “an efficient and practical way of collecting information that [one] cannot find in a published form.”¹⁷ This method provides an opportunity for interaction with the members and getting more information from them as respondents. The instrument that was used for data collection was a schedule of questions, and it was semi-standardized questions –these were structured relevant questions under well arranged conceptual heading.¹⁸ The set of semi-standardized questions used in this project were in Appendix B. So twenty old church members, ten men and ten women were interviewed. Ten men and ten women were interviewed using open-ended questions, which gave high chance of expressions to the interviewee. Only twenty members chosen because in qualitative method of research “the number of persons interviewed is much smaller than the number of those surveyed.”¹⁹ The twenty members were all from Juba Central Church. Since Rock City Church is within Juba city and is situated in the same socio-cultural setting of Juba central church, so by

¹⁶ Nancy Jean Vhymeister, *Quality Research Papers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014), 41, 42.

¹⁷ Paivi Eriksson and Anne Kovalainen, *Qualitative Methods In Business Research* (Singapore, India: Saga, 2008), 80–81.

¹⁸ Bruce L. Berg and Howard Lure, *Qualitative Research Methods For The Social Science*, 8th ed. (New Jersey: Pearson, 2012), 116–118.

¹⁹ Vhymeister, *Quality Research Papers*, 161.

observation it is also facing a similar problem. Therefore, the analysis of the interview from Juba Central church was used to develop the program that was implemented in both churches.

A similar research on nurture and retention was conducted by the General Conference “The Centre for Creative Ministry, an American Research Group,”²⁰ whereby qualitative research was done and the result was quantitatively summarized. However, in this research, qualitative method was used whereby data collection and result was expressed mainly in figures and a few in percentages. This method was chosen because it deals with facts and people.²¹ Furthermore, the use of interview in collecting information provided the opportunities of gathering more data that was useful for designing the program to be implemented to solve the problem of the loss of new members especially those won through public evangelism.

The assessments of public evangelism conducted in the two churches under the study can revealed that retention of new members especially convert through public evangelism needs solution. Below is a table that gives the number of converts through public evangelism conducted between 2009 and 2015 by the two churches.

In this table, there is a simple formula to help one calculating the loss and retained members: Members lost (ML) is obtained by subtracting Members maintained (MM) and Members Transfer (MT) from baptism (B). Thus the formula $ML = B - (MM + MT)$; and Members Retained (MR) is $MR = MM + MT$. There are various reasons for new member’s loss. One can agree with the findings that the majority of the new members are lost due to the influence of the world, no fellowship,

²⁰ David Trim, “Retention and Reclamation: Apriority for the World Church” (at the Annual Council of General conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2015), 10.

²¹ Vhymeister, *Quality Research Papers*, 161, 162.

personality clashes with old members, returning to former life styles, and the power of habit.²²

The baptism recorded on tables below was gathered from the Greater Equatoria Field baptism report file.²³ There is a challenge in recording membership in Juba Central Church as shown on table 1. Two old church register books were lost with all the information, the only book available is the first book when the church was organized. Since there was no consistent program for post baptismal class, it was not even easy to follow up with the new members. It becomes difficult to trace the new members baptized from 2012 to 2014. Only a few of them together with some who were baptized in 2015 were engaged in a consistent program of nurturing and retention. Table 2 gives some detail of new members baptized through public evangelism conducted by Rock City Church. Being a new church, they have a concern for follow up of new members.

Table 2. Juba Central Church Converts Greater Equatoria Field File 2012-2015

Public Evangelism	Baptism	Members Maintained	Members Transferred	Members Lost	Members Retained
2012	0	0	0	0	0
2013	43	0	0	0	0
2014	113	0	0	0	0
2015	63	0	0	0	0
Total	219	0	0	0	0

Considering Table 3 below the baptism through public evangelism from 2009 when Rock City Church was established up to 2013; the number of new members were 107. Out of this numbers 33 (35.31%) were lost and 74 (79.18%) were retained.

²² James W. Zacharison, "Assimilating and Retaining New Members in the Church," n.d., 5, accessed January 18, 2015, [evan-keepingnewmwmbwe.pdf](#).

²³ Greater Equatorial Field, *Baptismal Report File, 2015 2009*.

Supposed the church had known earlier the developed strategy for nurturing new believers that will be explain in chapter 4; then the retention rate would have exceeded 74%. The church was doing visitation and some Bible studies as the means of retention. The loss rate will be reduced and the retention rate will increase when the syllabus for training new members is followed.

Retention is not only an issue in Juba district, neither is a problem of Greater Equatoria Field alone, it is a problem facing the Seventh-day Adventists world Church and the entire Christian’s denomination.²⁴ For this reason the General conference of the Seventh-day Adventist church came with the plan of publishing *In Step With Jesus* a series of four books for instructing new members.²⁵ With the idea of having special Bible study Guide for new believers a strategy has been developed and it will be explained further in chapter 4.

Table 3. Rock City Converts from Public Evangelism 2009-2013

Public Evangelism	Baptism	Members Maintained	Members Transfer	Members Loss	Members Retained
2009	19	15	0	4	15
2010	2	2	0	0	2
2011	50	41	0	9	41
2012	30	10	0	20	10
2013	7	7	0	0	7
Total	107	74	0	33	74

²⁴ Donkor, “Discipleship: Towards A Biblical Approach.”

²⁵ General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Sabbath School and Personal Ministries Department, *In Step With Jesus: New Members Study Guides Series in 4* (Silver Spring, MD: Pacific Press, 2012), 1.

Data Collection

Data collection was through interview. Interviews were conducted to twenty members of Juba Central Church. The respondents were ten men and ten women. The eleven questions were open ended, and divided into three sections: Means of joining the church, Church involvement and discipleship, and the reason why others leave the church after accepting the truth and baptized. All the twenty members gave their views to all the questions.

Interview Analyses

The interview analyses are done using five tables. The first number 4 and the second table number 5 explain the means of joining the Church and the duration taken in Bible class before baptism. The third table deals with the involvement in church activities and discipleship; while the fourth table explains the testimonies of the respondents, and the fifth table analyses the reasons for leaving the church after baptism.

Table 4. Means of Joining the Church

Respondents	Number Interviewed	Personal Ministry	Public Evangelism	Choir	Literature Evangelism
Men	10	9	1	0	0
Women	10	5	2	0	3
Total	20	14	3	0	3

One can understand from the analysis of *table 3* that people who joined the church through personal ministries were more compared to people who joined the church through public evangelism and other means. The retention rate is more through personal ministries (that is 70%) than public ministries, which is only 14%. This means, therefore, that if more effort is exerted in training church members in

personal ministries, most of the converts through this ministry will be maintained in the Church, although public evangelism cannot be neglected.

Table 5. Duration in Bible Class

Respondents	1-3 Months	4-11 Months	1 Year above	Total Respond
Men	4	1	5	10
Women	3	2	5	10
Total	7	3	10	20

From table 5 one can deduce that people who are well instructed in baptismal class more than three months can remain in the church for a long time, than those who might have joined the church because of emotional motivation or influence of peer group and the desire to search for some opportunities. New baptized members who remain in the Bible Class for further instruction can be retained longer in the church, than those who might have been baptized too soon for the sake of making good report.

New church members who are involved in church life through further Bible studies, or given responsibility in adult Sabbath school class and also who are involved in outreach programs and other church ministries cannot easily abandon their faith.

In table 6 below, the three highest ranking areas that involve new members have proved to be good means of retention in Juba Central Church. These include continued Bible studies, giving them responsibilities, and involving them in various ministries of the church equivalent to 50% (that is 10/20) of the respondents and this was nurturing stage; whereas 40% (8/20) were involved in outreach activities:

Table 6. Church Involvement and Discipleship after Baptism

Church Involvement	Men	Women	Total
Visitation/Witnessing	4	0	4
Home Bible Study	2	1	3
Preaching	3	0	3
Elected to office	2	1	3
Literature Evangelism	0	2	2
Other Church Ministries: Community Service	3	1	4
Given Responsibility in Adult Sabbath School Class	4	2	6
Continue in Baptismal for Sometimes	4	6	10

Visitations, community services and public evangelism, giving home Bible studies, and 60% (12/20) respondents were involved in in-reach programs: Adult Sabbath School Class, elected into offices, and included in the preaching Schedule. Therefore, when new members are well nurtured, and are involved in activities within the church and in outreach program more of them will be retained.

Table 7 confirms that when a person understands the truth taught, and after baptism gets involved in church ministries, and continue to learn more in personal Bible studies, reading of the spiritual books, and participates in church Bible studies will be retained in the church. 70% (14/20) said understanding of the truth has been the means of their retention in the church, while 60% (12/20) said it was involvement in the church ministries that has kept them active in the church, and 14% (7/20) said the desire to learn more truth retained them in the faith.

Table 7. Old Members Testimonies of Retention

Activities	Men	Women	Total
Understanding of the Truth Taught	5	9	14
Involvement in Ministries	9	3	12
Desire to Learn more	5	2	7
Charity from the Members	3	2	3
SDA Friendship	1	2	3

The three top reasons for youth leaving the church are lack of friendship/relationship, lack of programs or involvement in church activities and the peer group influence outside the church. For adults, the strongest reasons for leaving the church are three: lack of friendship/relationship, lack of programs or involvement, marriage issues and some problems in family relationship. The general observation in the above table indicates that both adult and youth can leave the church when there is lack of friendship/relationship, lack of programs and lack of involvement, marriage issues and persecution by the family.

Table 8. Reasons for Leaving the Church

Reasons	Adults	Youth	Total
Work and Sabbath	4	4	8
Education & Sabbath	1	3	4
Wealth/Financial Needs	4	2	6
Appetite/Life Style	2	0	2
Marriage Issue and Family persecution	8	3	11
Lack of Friendship/Lack of relationship	9	11	20
Misunderstanding with Members	4	3	7
Lack of Program/ involvement	9	7	16
Lack of encouragement	2	4	6
Peer group	2	7	9
Lack of Nurturing	4	4	8
Hurried Baptism	6	3	9
Personal Weakness, Compromising Truth	3	2	5
Church Politics	1	0	1
Isolation/worldliness	2	5	7
Lack of Training in Witnessing	1	1	2
Lack of Pastoral Visit	2	0	2

Conclusion

The analyses of the interview conducted to the twenty members of Juba Central Church were presented in five tables above. There were three sections of the questions: means of joining the church, Church involvement and discipleship, and the

reasons for leaving the Church. The result of the interview from Juba Central Church was used to develop the program for both churches, since they have similar problems and characteristics.

Out of twenty respondents, 14 of the members said they were converted through personal ministries, and 3/20 were converted through public evangelism and also 3/20 were converted through literature evangelism. The analyses show that more members who joined the church through Personal Ministries were retained. This is because in personal Bible studies close friendship is developed. Also new members who take more than three months learning in Bible Class stay longer in the church than those who are rushed into baptism. Lastly, the twenty members interviewed were involved in different ministries of the church. Some of the possible reasons responsible for lack of retention of new members after public evangelism in Juba Central Church can apply also to Rock City Church and other churches within the district.

In the next chapter, the strategy for the retention of new member after public evangelism have been developed, implemented and evaluated. The period for the strategy took one year. Recognizing the importance of nurturing and retaining new believers, the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists published a new volume *In His Steps*, consisting of a series of four books that will be used as Sabbath School Study Guide for the new members.²⁶

²⁶ General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Sabbath School and Personal Ministries Department, *In Step With Jesus: New Members Study Guides Series in 4* (Silver Spring, MD: Pacific Press, 2012), 1.

Besides the study guide, through this research a syllabus was developed. In the syllabus, the new members will review once more the fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist, be trained to discover their spiritual gifts.

In addition they will be trained homiletics skills to equip them for participation in Sabbath School program and be able to preach during prayer meetings.

Furthermore, they will also be taught church history, be trained in personal ministries, how to witness through visitation, Bible studies and in public evangelism.

CHAPTER 4
PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION
AND EVALUATION

After establishing the reasons for loss of members in the two churches, this chapter now deals with the program development, the objectives for having viable post baptismal program, the strategy for nurturing and retaining new believers, implementation and evaluation of the program.

Program Development

The findings from the previous chapters have enabled the identification of the problems of retaining new members in the two selected churches of Juba District, and the goal is to maintain new believers in the church and especially after public evangelism. Therefore, the objectives are drawn, and the program was designed with the outline and syllabus for implementation. Below are the objectives for establishing consistent post baptismal class for the purpose of retaining the new believers.

Objectives

The main objective of the project was to nurture the newly baptized members. This was to be realized by ensuring that new church members are retained and integrated into the church family and its activities both now and in the days to come as a continuous life process, which defines them as a people of faith in light of the teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church family.

The goal of maintaining new members in the church can be achieved through the objectives of nurturing and integrating new members into church life. They can be

nurtured through continuing Bible studies on the doctrines and prophecies, answering questions on difficult biblical texts, and teaching them the history of the church. In addition, involving them in church activities was done through integrating them into the church life. The activities included but not limited to witnessing, personal ministries, and open-air preaching or in public evangelism programs. Furthermore, the clerks were trained in proper membership records keeping and the transaction of membership, so that there can be accurate statistical records, and proper accountability of membership standing from time to time.

Below are the strategies that was used and proved to be successful in nurture, retention and integration of newly baptized members. These strategies were voted for full adoption by the two churches after they were successfully implemented during the course of this research. (The approvals of the two churches are in Appendix A). These strategies when implemented carefully, will help minimize the lost of membership.

The Strategy

The strategy is to revive the post baptismal class, and rename it as “Discover Class” and encourage the new believers to join the class. The strategy involves also appointing spiritual guardians immediately after baptism, so that they will be friends to the new believers and help them in spiritual growth by accompanying them to church meetings and programs, visiting them in their homes. In addition, the strategy will involve grounding the new believers in the fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and direct the new believers in getting answers to their questions from the Bible to strengthen their faith and nurture them to growth in the knowledge of the word of God.

Furthermore, the strategy will involve teaching the new believers the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and organizing them in small groups using the

New Members' Bible Study Guide, entitled *In Steps With Jesus*. In addition, the strategy will entail conducting training on simple ways of preparing sermons, delivery and homiletics skills, so that they will be engaged in preaching to strengthen their faith. The strategy will also involve them in church activities through participation and performing in Sabbath School program, and during prayer meetings as well as training them in witness through visitation and doing Bible study, take them out for public ministry. Finally, the strategy will include a graduation ceremony for those who will complete the syllabus of the discover class.

Program Implementation

Letter of permission to carry out the research was written to both Juba Central Church and Rock City Church, and the replies were also received, and letters for the invitation of the participants for the seminars for clerks and the Personal Ministries Leaders were written and sent to the churches. All the correspondences are in the Appendix A.

It took one year to implement the program, and the program involved conducting several trainings. The district pastor of Juba and the executive Secretary for South Sudan Attached Territory were involved in conducting the seminars for the clerks and personal ministry leaders of the entire district. Some elders were involved in leading the discover classes in the two churches under study. To implement the program, the outline below was followed:

1. Syllabus for New Members
2. Revive post baptismal class
3. Assigning Spiritual guardians
4. Study the fundamental beliefs
5. History of the Seventh-day Adventist

6. Teach them in small groups
7. Training in homiletics skills
8. Spiritual Gifts discovery
9. Involvement in church activities
10. Training of personal ministries leaders
11. Training of Church Clerks
12. Practical visitation
13. Training in Giving Bible study
14. Participation in Public Ministries

Syllabus for New Members

A syllabus for instructing the post baptismal class was developed. This syllabus took one year to implement in order to provide ample time for nurturing and training the new members. The newly baptized members were nurtured to become mature and integrated into the church life. The syllabus outlines what need to be taught to the new members. Within the one year, they had a separate class. The teachers were regular members of the local church. Some were elders and others were members who were knowledgeable and had the gift of teaching. Time for learning was during Sabbath School, Sabbath afternoons, and on Sundays.

They have separate classes with special “Bible Study Guide for new members.”¹ It is a series of four Bible study guides. On Sabbath afternoon, they do Bible study answering questions on the fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist,² studying the Seventh-day Adventist church history,³ sharing some reading

¹ General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Sabbath School and Personal Ministries Department, *In Step With Jesus: New Members Study Guides Series in 4*.

² General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Seventh-Day Adventist Church Manual* (Silver Spring, MD: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2010), 156–166.

from the spirit of prophecy as a group and encourage personal reading of the spirit of prophecy books that are available -*The Great Hope*, and others. Furthermore, they were trained in outreach activities, so that they know how to conduct personal Bible studies and participate in public evangelism.⁴

Objectives of the class: By the end of one year, the newly baptized believers would have become mature in faith and experience growth in spiritual maturity. They can stand firm in trials and temptations; became a disciple of Jesus, well equipped with knowledge to bear witness for Christ. They would have developed passion, gained knowledge and courage to do visitations and conduct Bible studies. Within one year they would have participated in home visitations, giving personal Bible studies and open-air preaching, which is part of public ministries in witnessing. They were given some assignments to keep them busy nurturing themselves to grow spiritually. Below are the assignments that they were expected to accomplish.

The syllabus. The new believers were involved in reading the Bible daily following a one-year Bible reading plan, asked to invite at least one person every Sabbath. They were engaged in giving one Bible study in a week, also participated in Sabbath School class and the afternoon Bible Studies on Saturdays and Sundays, and furthermore, Practiced memorizing key verses from study guides -*In Step With Jesus*. Below is the explanation of the four sections of the syllabus, the topic that was taught in each quarter of the year, and the exercises that they did regularly to strengthen their faith and become mature Christian.

³ Richard W. Schwarz and Floyd Greenleaf, *Light Bearers: A History of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church*, Rev. (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2000), 656–658.

⁴Materials for the trainings in personal witnessing, homes visitations, and giving personal Bible studies are taken from the publications of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist prepared by the department of Sabbath School and Personal Ministries, 2010.

Table 9. New Members' Syllabus

Meeting Time	Topics/Titles	Practical exercise
Section 1: Bible Doctrines and Church Administration (First Quarter)		
New Members study Guide: Book one , study during Sabbath School class, for 13 Sabbaths	<i>In Step With Jesus: The Journey Begins</i>	Study each day, the readings for the quarter
Month One: Saturdays and Sundays Evening	Answering Questions on Fundamental beliefs, and difficult Bible Texts	Study again at home
Month Two: Saturdays and Sundays Evening	Answering Questions on Fundamental beliefs, and difficult Bible Texts	Study again at home
Month Three: Sat and Sunday Evening	Church administration and disciplines	Revise the handout, and read the Church Manual
Section 2: Adventist History (Second Quarter)		
New Members study Guide Book Two , study during Sabbath School class, for 13 Sabbaths	<i>In Steps With Jesus: The Power of Love</i>	Study each day the readings for the quarter
Month One: Saturdays and Sundays Evening	The Advent Movement	Reading from the <i>Great Controversy</i>
Month Two: Saturdays and Sundays evening	The Great Disappointment	Reading from the <i>Great Controversy</i>
Month Three: Saturdays and Sundays evening	The Progress of the Church after the Great Disappointment	Reading from the <i>Great Controversy</i>
Section 3: Adventist Lifestyle (Third Quarter)		
New Members study Guide Book Three , study during Sabbath School class, for 13 Sabbaths	<i>In Steps With Jesus: The power of the Word</i>	Study each day the readings for the quarter
Month One: Saturdays and Sundays evening	Devotion and Worship	Do personal Bible study. Conduct family devotion in the morning and evening. Remember Sabbath preparation; attend worship, and prayer meetings.
Month Two: Saturdays and Sundays evening	Relationship (Marriage)	Behave well in the community of believers and none believers in regard to friendship and marriage.
Month Three: Saturdays and Sundays evening	Personal Life	Be a good example to all people. Live a true Christian life
Section 3: Discipleship and Church Involvement		
New Members study Guide Book Four , study during Sabbath School class, for 13 Sabbaths	<i>In Steps With Jesus: The Power of Mission</i>	Study each day the readings for the quarter
Month One: Saturdays and Sundays	Spiritual Gifts	Each member discover his/her gift(s)
Month Two: Saturdays and Sundays	Witnessing	Go out for visitation in two or three
Month Three: first week Saturdays and Sundays	Discipleship	Start Bible study with a friend
Month three: week 2 and 3 Fridays, Saturdays & Sun	Open air preaching	Go as a group
Month three: Forth week On Sabbath	Graduation to adult class	Conduct it in on Sabbath's afternoon. For all members

Source material. Several books were used for instructing the new members, the *Fundamental Beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist* used for revising the doctrines, *Light Bearers: A History of the Seventh-day Adventist Church* used for teaching the history of the church.

The following books published by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Sabbath School and Personal Ministries Department, were used for training in outreach: *Personal Ministry Hand book*, *Keys to Personal Witnessing*, *Motivating Members to Witnessing*, and *Giving Personal Bible Studies*. However, the main tools used for instructing the new believers were the Bible and *In steps With Jesus*-the new study guides for instructing the new members. The materials help the members to grow in their relationship with Jesus, power of love, the word of God, and to understand the mission of the church and get involved in discipleship.

Reviving Post-Baptismal Class

The implementation of this program started in late September 2015 by acquiring permission from the two churches. Before starting the implementation of the program there was a post-baptismal class in Juba Central Church, but it was not consistent. After meeting with the church board, and receiving the approval to carry out the research, the name Discover Class was accepted.

On the other hand, in Rock City church there was no post-baptismal Class, however when the need was shared with the church board it was accepted and a discover class was also introduced in Rock City Church too. To revive post-baptismal class in Juba Central church and established it in Rock City Church under new name: discover class, it took three months from November to December 2015.

The new believers who first joined the discover class in Juba Central Church were eleven. Later, the number grew to more than fifty and three and more classes

were formed. Whereas in Rock City Church there was no class for new members, and after baptism of five people in the last quarter 2015 they were enrolled into the post baptismal class.

Studying the Fundamental Beliefs

All the fundamental beliefs were studied within three months according to the syllabus. Emphasis was given on the difficult doctrines. This took the whole of the fourth quarter 2015. The list of the Fundamental Beliefs studied is found in Appendix C. Bible Studies were conducted on Sabbaths and Sundays afternoons, for one hour and sometimes it took one and a half hours when there were more questions to answer and other question took more time to answer with further explanation and illustrations.

Therefore, during the studies more time was given for asking and answering questions and the new believers were able to discover more truth from the Bible studies that had helped them remain in the church.

Spiritual Guardians

Spiritual guardianship was first introduced in Rock City Church when five persons were baptized. When they were received into membership and given the certificates, then immediately in front of the church, spiritual guardians were assigned for each of them who took care of them by visiting, share with them some encouraging Bible text that helped them to stand firm in times of trial and temptation. The new believers were also advised to feel free to sharing with their spiritual guardian any problem facing them in the new faith, and ask questions that might have been bothering them, so that the guardian would help them through the Bible, and also by sharing their personal experiences.

Teaching Seventh-day Adventist History

The new members were taught a brief history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This started from the time when William Miller began preaching of Christ's advent to the time of the disappointment when Christ did not return in 1844; then followed by the time of the formation of the small group after the disappointment. The group continued to study the Bible and discovered more truths that gradually resulted in the development of the doctrines of the church. Then came the period of church organization, whereby the Church prepared for mission under the name Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The new members were also taught the local history of the church, explaining how the Seventh-day Adventist church was established in Sudan and now South Sudan. Furthermore, the members were informed of the several attempts that were made to bring the message into the country; and the progress that took place over the years and the establishment of the three fields and the formation of South Sudan Attached Territory under East and Central Africa Division. The outline of the Church history is in Appendix D.

Teaching in Small Groups

The discover class members were taught in four small groups. They were put in different group according to the time they were baptized. The study guide series determines the members in a small group: they are named Class A, B, C, and D respectively. The teaching in small group took place on Sabbaths and Sundays: on Sabbath morning when church divides into class for study, and on the Sabbath afternoon; then on Sundays afternoon. Both on Saturdays and Sundays afternoon they were learning other lessons according to the syllabus explained above.

Training in Homiletics Skills

The new members were also trained in homiletics. They were trained how to prepare, and deliver sermon. This was done in preparation for their involvement in running the Sabbath programs, and also leading in prayer meetings during mid-week, opening and closing of the Sabbath, the outline for the training is attached to this report as Appendix C. They led in three Sabbath school programs: on 14th May 2016, 20th August 2016 and the last was on 1st October 2016, when the first group completed the syllabus and graduated.

Spiritual Gifts Discovery

The members of the first group of the discover class were taught simple ways to know their spiritual gifts on the 23rd of January 2016r. The steps were as follows. First, a Bible study was given on spiritual gifts and then the members were divided into groups of four to five members, and each was given a form to fill. The material used for discovering spiritual gifts are in Appendix C.

Each person filled the gifts that one assumed they had. And then the gifts assumed as being possessed by an individual were confirmed by a different person when the forms were exchanged. Then, each group agreed on the spiritual gifts a person had. The final confirmation was done by the class that served as the church.

Involvement in Church Activities

During the post-baptismal period, the new members were involved in various activities of the church. They were given time to run the first part of the Sabbath school program, opening and closing the Sabbath, and even going to the pulpit during divine service. During divine service, they were assigned to read the scriptures, read the tithe and offering promotional material and chairing worship program; and they did it well because the homiletics training had equipped them with knowledge and the

skills that enabled them to perform well. In addition, they were also taken out for visitations and open-air preaching so that they started acquainting themselves with the outreach activities. In Juba Central Church, some of them were also involved in Hospital and prison ministries and prayer band. Furthermore, some of them who were identified with the gift of services were elected to serve in the deaconry office.

Training of Personal Ministries Leaders

The Seminar on Personal Ministries was first conducted to personal ministries leaders for the whole district for two days, on 2-3 April 2016; the Evangelism and Personal Ministries Director for South Sudan Attached Territory and Juba District pastor was also involved in conducting the seminar. Furthermore, two seminars on personal ministries were conducted in Rock City on 27th February 2016 and on 5th March 2016 and it was for all the members. Another seminar was conducted especially for new members from both Rock City and Juba Central Churches. They were brought together at Juba Central Church for four days over weekends, Saturdays and Sundays spreading over two weeks. The total hours taken for the training was seven hours. The outline of the seminars is in Appendix C.

In these training events, the new members were taught about the importance of involvement in personal ministries, witnessing by visitation and doing Bible Studies, and also participating in public ministries through open air preaching and evangelism campaigns. The first group that graduated on October 1, 2016 were taken two times for home visitations organized by the church in April 2016 and September 10, 2016. They also participated in open air preaching conducted by the Juba Central Church in Muniki town block 107, on the last three Sabbaths of October 2016.

Training Church Clerks

Training for Church Clerks for the entire district was done in collaboration with the district pastor and the Executive Secretary for South Sudan Attached Territory (SSAT) for two days from 12-13 March 2016. The material used was the Church Manual and a Manual for Church clerks prepared by Pastor Samuel Makori who was the Executive Secretary for East African Union. A follow up meeting was conducted on 18 October 2016 to know how the clerks are progressing in keeping the membership record.

Training in Visitation and Bible Study

An intensive training was conducted to all the new members from both Rock City and Juba Central Church. The training was for two weekends from 17 - 18 September 2016 and 24 – 25 September 2016. In these trainings, they were taught the importance of personal ministries in winning people to Christ, how to do effective visitation, and witness for Christ. Second homiletics training was also conducted during this period of training.

After the training, all the new members together with the Juba Central Church members went out for visitation on September 9, 2016; and they returned to the church and gave encouraging testimonies. From the testimonies, many old and new members learned the benefits and the challenges of being rejected and also enjoy the blessing of sharing the word of God and praying for the sick and other needs. They testified that the exercise was good and should continue always. The outline of materials used is in Appendix C.

The New members were also trained how to conduct personal Bible studies. In this training they were introduced to the Bible study chain using “secret Bible

Concordance.⁵ Each of them was shown how to mark Bible lessons in one's own Bible, and this equipped them with the material for teaching new interests seeking the truth or wanting to become members of the Church. After the seminar, they also practiced among themselves how to conduct Bible study. At the end of the training, they were provided with the content of the Bible index and the texts for thirty-three lessons that will be planted in the Bible.

Graduation of the New Members

The graduation of the new members was colourful and educative. The old members who have not undergone such training were puzzled to see how knowledgeable the graduating new members were. It was conducted on Sabbath October 1, 2016 in the afternoon for the whole church. The graduating discover class and their instructors conducted all the programs from Sabbath school to divine service and the closing of the Sabbath that day, and it was successful.

The graduation ceremony was conducted in the afternoon. The new members demonstrated the knowledge they discovered when they joined the discover class. They were able to recall all the fundamental beliefs chronologically, expound biblical teaching on the doctrines of the church as taught by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. They also narrated the history of the Church. Finally, each one of them was awarded a certificate of completion of the training according to the syllabus, and integrated into the regular adult Sabbath School class. Some of them joined existing classes and others formed a new class under the name discipleship class.

⁵ General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Sabbath School and Personal Ministries Department, *Giving Personal Bible Studies* (Silver Spring, MD: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist, 2010), 34–37.

Program Evaluation

Discover Class Strategy

The strategy for nurturing and retaining the new members was successful. Discover classes were formed and new members were regularly received. Progressive studies using the new members study guides were done every Sabbath. When the post-baptismal program was revived, there were only one class of eleven members, and at the time of concluding this research all four classes had been formed. From twenty-one members that joined, fifteen of them graduated, six remained in the class to complete the lessons they missed because of being absent for a long time. Below is the syllabus that was developed and used in training the new members.

Post Baptismal Syllabus

The syllabus that has been developed for the implementation of this research has worked successfully. It was designed to take one year for proper nurturing, equipping and integrating the new members in church life. Some scholars suggested three months for nurturing new members; however, following the four series of the study guides for new members it requires one year to complete the books. For this reason, the implementation of this project has taken one year. Below is the evaluation of the new members study guides, and the church board approval of the syllabus.

New Members Study Guides

The new members study guides are new materials published by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and they have not been used in the entire East and Central Africa Division. This is according to the Executive Secretary, Evangelism Personal Ministries and the Sabbath School Director for South Sudan Attached

Territory.⁶ That is to say, the division that started using these materials is the North America Davison. These materials were being used for the first time in Juba Central Church and their use was successful.

The series of four study guides is designed in four sub topics. To complete one book takes 13 Sabbaths. It is designed like the Sabbath School study guide for adults. The book has been published specially for nurturing and retaining new members. The first series is named *The Journey Begins*. This explains the challenges that face the new members, and the new members are encouraged not to give up though they may face some trials and temptations. In case one makes some mistakes, and sinned they are encouraged to confess their sin and continue trusting in the power of God for their salvation.

The second series is called *The Power of Love*. This explains the nature of God and the Christians' life styles. Here, the new members learned the kind of life God expects a faithful Christian should live. The third series three is *The Power of the Word*. This explains the important of God's word in the life of a Christian and how useful it is to a Christian. This encourages the new members to read the Bible daily for their spiritual growth and for remaining faithful to God. It motivates the members in discipleship based on Matt 28:19-20 (NIV). The fourth series deals with *The Power of Mission*. It educates the new members to understand the mission of the church -that is the salvation of humanity, so that they will be involved in this mission. The book under this sub title inspired and motivated the new believers to work for salvation of others.

⁶ Daniel Ogwok Ojwan, *Follow Up Meeting for Nurture and Retention* (Juba: South Sudan Attached Territory, August 10, 2016).

The new members study guides are good. However, using them alone is not sufficient. There is a need for new members to receive well rounded training. In order to equip them for mission of the church, the suggestion given by Zacharison is necessary.⁷ He suggests five ways of assimilation and retention of the new members: teaching the essential Adventist beliefs and the life style, providing spiritual guardians, providing opportunities for training system, using Sabbath School as the basis for training, and using the small group system. Based on these suggestions a syllabus was developed and implemented.

Approval of the Syllabus

The syllabus was presented to the church board of the two churches of Juba Central and the Rock City for approval and adoption. The Juba Central Church board after careful analysis of the syllabus and their evaluation based on their practical observation of the experiences of the life and participation of the new members in the church, voted on November 6, 2016 to adopt the syllabus for church and its branches including the primary school. Their observation to add local church policy as part of the syllabus with emphasis on church disciplines was also incorporated. The Rock City Church also voted on November 12, 2016 to adopt the syllabus in their local church and Salama branch.

Nurture and Retention

The implementation of the strategy for nurturing and retaining the new members was successful in the two churches. In Rock City, the five members that were baptized at the starting of this project remained active members in the church. This is because right after baptism spiritual guardians were assigned to take care of

⁷ Zacharison, "Assimilating and Retaining New Members in the Church," 6.

them by visiting and helping them to find answers to their questions from the Bible. They also encouraged them in time of trials and temptations, and were close friends to them; the other old members were also encouraged to be friendly to the young in the faith.

The new members were also introduced to the discover class whereby they continued studying the essential doctrines deeper. An elder who was well trained in pastoral ministry was assigned to facilitate the implementation following the syllabus for the class. The success of the program in Rock City Church led some old members who did not undergo post-baptismal class to showed interest in and joined the class, so as to be knowledgeable in what was being taught to the new members.

In Juba Central Church all the members baptized between October 2015 and September 2016 who joined the discover class were retained in the church. This means the project implementation was successful. Table 10 below shows the retention and growth rate of new members of Juba Central, where there was more concentration on the implementation of the project due to its large membership and its better setting for doing the research.

Table 10. Retention and the Growth Rate

Period	Baptism Reported to the Field	Missing (Travel or migrate)	Joined Discovery Class	Completed Discovery Class				Graduate (Retain Rate)
				A	B	C	D	
2014	No Report		6	✓	✓	✓	✓	
4 th Q 2015	43	35	8	✓	✓	✓	✓	18.6%
1 st Q 2016	28	24	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	14.3%
2 nd Q 2016	0	0	0					0.0%
3 rd Q 2016	19	15	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	14.3%
Total	99	77	22					22.22%

At Rock City Church, all the five members who joined the discover class at the beginning of the project, were all maintained. Therefore, the retention rate at Rock City Church was 100%. More than 10 old church members also joined the class. Since they were not having the new members study guides they took the Book of Revelation instead, and that also deepened their understanding of the word of God.

Table 11 below shows that members who undergo post-baptismal class stay in the church. City evangelism was conducted in 2014 for three weeks in Juba. One year later, some of the newly baptized members were no longer coming to the church. This supports the hypothesis that nurturing new believers through post-baptismal class is helpful in church member retention.

Three of the centres experienced loss of members within a short time while only two centres--Sherikhat and Salama succeeded in maintaining all their new members. When the elders of the two centres that retained their members were asked how they managed to retain the new members, the reason was that they engaged them in continuous Bible studies, visiting them in their home, and involving them in church services. This confirmed the finding in Chapter 3, when new members continue further Bible studies and get involved in church activities after baptism they will remain in the church. The details are shown in Table 11 below:

Table 11. City Evangelism October 2014

Location	Baptism	Missing	Retained
Durupi	7	2	5
Jebel Market	7	4	3
Miasaba	19	15	4 (21%)
Sherikhat	18	0	18
Salama	26	0	26
Total	77	21 (27%)	56 (73%)

Another public evangelism was conducted in Miasaba branch by the women of Juba Central Church. The evangelism was for three weeks from 24th October 2016 to 14th November 2016, and at the end of the campaign, ten new believers were baptized. Spiritual guardians for the new members were assigned, at least two members for one person. They exchanged contact numbers and the clerk of Juba Central Church prepared a record for follow up on the nurturing plans. The record contained the names of the new members, their cellular phone numbers, the names of their mentors (Spiritual guardians) and their contacts.

The post-baptismal program that they engaged the new members in was visiting the new members in their homes and continuing Bible studies in the evenings of Saturdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays for a period of six months. Two elders were assigned to be in charge of the program. One year later an assessment was done to see how many of the members were in the church or those who went somewhere else but still remained faithful and active. The elders used the baptism report of 14th November 2015.⁸ Out of the ten new members, three were women and seven were men. Six of them remained in Miasaba Company/Church, two moved to Juba Central Church, one moved to another state, and only one went missing. So the retention after the women evangelism was 90%, compared to the city evangelism where only 21% was retained. There were two factors that contributed to the low retention rate after the city evangelism: First there was no proper ground preparation and secondly there was no well-planned post-baptismal program. Furthermore, none of the new members were assigned spiritual guardians.

⁸ Paul Manasseh Bimo, *Baptism Report*, Juba District of Seventh-day Adventists, Office of the district Pastor (Juba: Greater Equatorial Field, November 14, 2015).

The activities for the campaign organized in Miasaba by the women were also evaluated using an instrument developed during this research work. The grading of the result ranged from poor (0), fair (1), good (2), very good (3) and excellent (4). This tool is in Appendix B. There were three sections of the instrument: section one evaluating ground preparation to ensure whether a campaign can be done or not; section two evaluates the activities during the series; and section three soliciting suggestions for post-evangelism activities for nurturing, training, and integrating new members into the church life, so that they are retained in the church.

The form for the evaluation of this campaign was given to the seven members of the committee that was elected to supervise the campaign. They completed the form individually, and then their individual results were summarized in one form to give the general results of the evaluation. The final results of the grading show that the ground preparation was very good, and the programs during the preaching were also very good, that is the reason the retention rate was 90% as indicated above.

Summary of the evaluation is in Table 12 below:

Table 12. Evaluation of Women Campaign

Members of Committee	Summary of Ground Preparation (Grade)	Activities During the Series (Grade)
1	3	3
2	3	4
3	3	3.3
4	2.4	3
5	3.6	3.2
6	2.7	3.2
7	2.9	3.3
Result	20.6/7 = 2.9, 3 (very good)	23/7 = 3.2 (very good)

Evaluation by the New Members

The last evaluation was done by the new members in the discover class from both Churches at Rock City and Juba Central. The form used for the evaluation is in Appendix B, and it has seven questions. The questionnaire forms were given to 17 new members who were baptized between 2008 and first quarter 2016; their ages ranged from 18-46. Two were baptized in 2008 and 2009, five in 2014 nine in 2015 and one in 2016.

Below are the seven questions used and the analyses of the responses. The responses to the interview were coded and fed into SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Scientists) in order to generate the frequencies and percentages of the responses. Below are the seven questions used and the analyses of the response:

1. How did you become a Seventh - day Adventist?

How one joined the church can also affect one's retention in the church. Most of those who were instructed in the discover class joined the church through personal Bible studies, followed by those who grew up in Adventist homes. This confirmed the hypothesis that those who join the church through personal Bible studies tend to remain in the church.

Table 13. Means of Joining the Church

Response	Frequency
Personal Bible Studies	8
Grew Adventist Child	4
Public Evangelism	2
Media (FM Radio)	1

Analysis of the interview conducted to 20 old members found in chapter 3, whereby it was established that those who joined the church through personal

ministries remains in the church longer than those who joined through public campaign.

2. How did learning in the Discover Class help you in the understanding of the word of God?

Instructing new members after the baptism is one of the main strategies to retain new members in the church, as they continue learning God’s word in the discover class their knowledge of God’s Word increases, and they become strong in the faith, as expressed in Table 14 below:

Table 14. Learning in the Discovery Class

Response	Frequency
Increased the knowledge of God’s word	16
Make one strong in the faith	1

3. How did participation in Church services: Sabbath School, opening and closing of the Sabbath, and worship been helpful to you?

Involvement of new members in church programs helps them to get detached from the world and remain faithful, and grow spiritually, as indicated in Table 15 below.

Table 15. Participation in Church Services

Response	Frequency
Transformed life and brings near to God	4
Strengthen one’s faith and relieves from the cares of the world	4
Helps one grow spiritually	3
Enhanced one’s knowledge of the Bible and practices	2
Helps one to make more friend within the church	2
Helps one in discovering talents	1

4. What do you think has help kept you active in the Church?

New members who know the truth and practice the truth they know remain in the church; furthermore, those who receive encouragement and participate in church services remain in the church, as shown in the table below.

Table 16. Things that Keep New Members Active in the Church

Response	Frequency
Knowing Bible Truth	8
Encouragement and Participation	6
The love of God in the lives of believers	4
Singing in the church	4
The power of God	2

5. What is your experience in sharing your faith with others who are not Seventh-day Adventists?

It is true that there are challenges in sharing the truth one knows with others who are not in the church. However, eight new members also said that in their experience of the new faith they loved to share God’s word with non-members. Below is the table analyzing the experiences of new members sharing God’s word with non-members.

Table 17. New Members Experience in Sharing their Faith

Response	Frequency
Challenges from oppositions	8
Loved to share God’s words	8
Strengthening faith and increased knowledge	2

6. What do you enjoy in the Discovery Small Group?

Considering the table below new members enjoy discussing and sharing the Word of God. In addition, they are passionate for a changed life. Furthermore, they love to be in a place where their questions are answered, see the table below.

Table 18. Things New Members Enjoy in the Discovery Small Group

Response	Frequency
Discussing and sharing the word of God	7
The experience of change life	6
Biblical answers to questions	5
Practical love of God among believers	2

7. What do you think can help in retaining newly baptized members in the Church?

The finding in this research in chapter 3, agreed with evaluation of the new members that when new members are nurtured through teaching them of the Word of God, involving them in church activities, involving them in fellowship and visiting them when they are absent, remain in the church. The table below gives the summary.

Table 19. What Retain New Members in the Church?

Response	Frequency
Nurturing through teaching	10
Involvement in church programs	6
Fellowship and visitation	6

In conclusion, the program that was developed and implemented proved to be helpful in the retention of new members. For the time the syllabus was implemented consistently, the loss of membership in the two churches under study was minimized as compared to the previous years when there were no programs for nurturing and retention of new members. The next chapter is the summary, conclusion and recommendation.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATION

Summary

Retention of new members is a challenge that has been experienced in many Seventh-day Adventist churches, and the entire Christendom. The Churches in Juba District were facing a similar problem. Therefore, a project on retention of new members was developed and the program implemented to solve the problem of losing new members. The project was implemented in Seventh-day Adventist Churches at Juba Central and Rock City in Juba District. Juba Distinct is the first organized church in Greater Equatoria Field, and Rock City is one of the fastest growing and stable churches within the district.

Insufficient ground preparation for public evangelism seems to be one of the reasons for losing new members. Lack of ground preparation has led some new believers to be baptized prematurely without being rooted in the truth. To ensure the ground preparation for any evangelism is properly done, an instrument has been developed to evaluate evangelism plans from the ground preparation to the completion and the post-evangelism program for nurture and retention of the new members. The evaluation form is in Appendix B.

Second reason for loss of membership has been due to inconsistent program for post-baptismal class in the case of Juba Central Church and for Rock City Church there was no program at all. During this project the post-baptismal program has been made effective and consistent in Juba Central Church and also established actively in

Rock City Church. A syllabus for nurturing and retaining new members was developed and implemented. The syllabus takes one year to complete. In the syllabus, every Sabbath the new members were taught separately in their class from the beginners A, B, C, and the senior Class D. Besides this they have been reviewing the 28 fundamental beliefs, church history, simple homiletics skills, spiritual gifts discovery, how to do witnessing and conduct personal Bible studies. Furthermore, they were taken out for open air preaching and were involved in the church program and then integrated into the church life. At the end of one year the first batch that covered the syllabus graduated in October 2016.

Conclusion

The developed strategy for nurturing and retaining the new members through this research project will help the two churches involved in this project and other churches in Juba District in their nurture and retention programs. Churches in other places of the world may benefit from the findings of this research. Lastly, this research is left open to future researchers who can pick it up from where it is and carry it further to develop more strategies for nurturing and retaining new members, so that the loss of membership will be minimized to the lowest degree.

Recommendation

The research on retention has been done by several persons. This is also an attempt to add to what has been done by others. However, it was not done in the whole of Juba District, neither in the entire field nor in the whole South Sudan attached Territory, but it was done only in two churches of Juba district. It is believed that this research will be of help in the whole district and the entire field. Therefore, it is recommended to Juba Central and Rock City Churches to adopt the plan of post baptismal class that has been outlined in this research by assigning spiritual guardians

immediately after baptism, and to register every new member in the discover class and teaching them according to the syllabus recommended in this research.

Secondly, all the companies under the two churches dealt with in this project should plan to order the study guides series for the new members through the Field office. Thirdly, Teachers for the discover classes should be appointed by the church board and should not be changed every year for the purpose of developing skills, and gaining experience since it is a new program in the District, and the Field. Fourthly, the administration of Greater Equatoria Field should promote the program for post baptismal to all the churches and the companies within the territory, to ensure proper nurture and retention of the new members, in order to control member loss immediately after conversion.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
CORRESPONDENCE

Seventh-day Adventist Church
South Sudan, Juba
6 September 2015

District Pastor/Church Boards
Seventh-day Adventist Church
Juba District

Subject: Permission to research on membership retention After Public Evangelism

Dear Pastor/Board Members,

I am a student at the Adventist University of Africa, Advent Hill, Ongata Rongai, Magadi Road, Private Bag Mbagathi, 00503 Nairobi, Kenya. I am taking Master degree in Pastoral theology. I have chosen two organized churches and four companies in Juba district to conduct this research under the Project title:

**Strategy for maintaining new Believers in the Church
After public Evangelism in Juba District,
Greater Equatoria Field**

Below are the two organized churches and four companies:

1. SDA Juba Central Church
2. Rock City SDA Church
3. Sherikat SDA Company
4. Durupi SDA Company
5. Salama SDA Company
6. Munuki 107 SDA Company

Upon completion of this research a copy of the research will be provided to the two organized churches that supervise the other companies. The research outcome will be a resourceful material to guide the churches in minimizing the loss of new membership after public evangelism and provide strategy in maintaining new believers in the church. Attached herewith is a copy of the letter of introduction from the dean.

Thanks,

Paskwale Pacoto Okeny

Master Pastoral Theology

Copy: SDA Juba Central Church Board, Rock City SDA Church Board, Elder Sherikat SDA Company, Elder Durupi SDA Company, Elder Salama SDA Company, Elder Muniki 107 SDA Company



Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Sudan

Greater Equatoria Field of the Seventh-day Adventists
Muniki Block 1 SDA Compound
Gudelle-Airport Road
Bilpam Road Roundabout
P.O BOX 247, Juba,
South Sudan
Tel +211912334372 +2119123334373

March 1, 2016

Paul Manasseh Bimo
District Pastor
Seventh-day Adventist
Juba

Subject: Training of Church Clerks Seventh-day Adventist Church Juba District

Dear Pastor Paul,

I would like to greet you in the blessed name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have recognized the importance of training the local Church Clerks and the assistants, so that there is accuracy in the recording of membership, and reporting. Therefore the Greater Equatoria Field Executive Secretary together with South Sudan Attached Territory counterpart has planned two days Seminar for the local Church Clerks and the assistant. The date and the time as specified below:

On Saturday 12 March 2016, arrival 2:30 pm to 3:00 pm, the training will be from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm

On Sunday 13 March 2016, arrival 8:45 am to 9:00 am, the training will be from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.

Please, be punctual so that we gain much from what will be presented. Let God keep you all in health as we are looking forward for the training. This letter also serves as an official invitation to all the Local Church clerks and their assistant for Juba District of Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Please, convey this message to all the local Churches and the companies.

Thanks,

Paskwale Pacoto Okeny
Executive Secretary
Greater Equatoria Field
South Sudan
Juba

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRES

Questionnaire for Assessing Retention of church members After Public Evangelism

Name of the Church: _____ District: _____

Date of gathering the information: _____

Section One: means of Joining the Church

1. How did you become a member of Seventh Day Adventist Church?

2. If through Public Evangelism, how long was the public evangelism that leads to your conversion? _____

3. How long have you been in Baptismal Class (Happiness Class) _____

4. When were you baptized? _____

5. What happened after you were baptized? Did you continue in Baptismal Class or immediately integrated to adults class? _____

Section Two: Involvement in Discipleship after Baptism

1. How were you involved in Church activities after baptism? _____

2. Did you bring any of your friends or relatives to the church after your baptism?

3. How long did it take for them to be baptized? _____

4. What do you think has help kept you in the church up to now?

Section Three Reason for leaving the church

1. What do you think are the reasons for the majority of believers leaving the church?

(a) For the Youth: _____

(b) For the Adults: _____

2. What do you think if done can help retain both youth and adult in the church?

(a) For Youth: _____

(b) For Adults: _____

Program Evaluation for Discover Class

Date: _____

Name: _____ Age _____

Date of Baptism: _____

1. How did you become a Seventh-day Adventist Church?

2. How did learning in the Discovery Class help you in the understanding of the word of God?

3. How did participation in Church services: Sabbath School, opening and closing of the Sabbath, and worship been helpful to you?

4. What do you think has help kept you active in the Church?

5. What is your experience in sharing your faith with others who are not Seventh-day Adventist?

6. What do you enjoy in the Discovery Small Group?

7. What do you think can help retained new baptized members in the Church?

PUBLIC EVANGELISM EVALUATION

Location: _____ Date: _____

Speaker for Bible topics

Speaker Family Life:

Speakers for Health Lectures:

Grade: Poor (0), Fair (1), Good (2), Very Good (3), Excellent (4)

A. GROUND PREPARATION

S/No	Explanation (Activities)	0	1	2	3	4	Total
1	Selection of venue						
2	Visitation						
3	Bible Study						
4	Films show at the site						
5	Seminars or training of members						
6	Formation of Committees						
7	Did the committee do their work?						
8	Is the meeting site convenience?						
9	Involvement of Church Board in planning						
10	Members involvement in ground preparation						
11	Cooperation of members						

	Total the Grades 1. Horizontal and 2. Vertical						
	Divide Total Grade by 11 Activities, write result						

B. ACTIVITIES DURING THE EVANGELISM

S/No	Explanation (Activities)	0	1	2	3	4	Total
1	Members participation						
2	Committees participation						
3	Time Keeping						
4	Family life lectures						
5	Health lectures presentation						
6	Bible Teaching						
7	Singing						
8	Keeping attendance record						
9	Reception						
10	Prayer Committee prayer session						
11	Managing Evangelism fund						
12	Cooperation of members						
13	Use of visual aid: picture role or video projector						
	Total the Grades 1. Horizontal and 2. Vertical						
	Divide Total Grade by 13 Activities, write result						

C. What Activities after Evangelism series ended?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

APPENDIX C

SEMINAR OUTLINES

Spiritual Discovery

Simple Way to Discover Ones Spiritual Gifts:

1. Study the Bible text on spiritual Gifts

(a) Romans 12

(b) 1Cor 12

(c) Eph 4:

(d) Matt 25

2. Let the believers form groups. Three persons in one group

3. Provide each person with a piece of paper, and each person should write on the paper what he/she think has the ability and the knowledge to do. Write at least one and maximum five things that you can do in the church for God.

4. Exchange your papers and each one check his/her friend's paper to confirm what the friend say about himself/herself whether it is true, remember to be honest with your friend.

5. Read the paper of your friend to the group of three to confirm if your friend says and what you say is true.

6. Read the friends supposed Gifts to the entire group. The talents, skills and the abilities confirm by your friends and the entire group are your spiritual Gifts. You need to practice them to multiply. If don't practice even the only one you have will be taken away from you. Remember the parable of the talents Matt 25:1-13.

7. Talents, skills or ability can only become spiritual gifts when used in the church to build the body of Christ the Church Eph 4:

Witnessing for Christ

Introduction

The ECD theme for 2016-2020 should motivate us to achieve the strategy set by the General conference of the Seventh-day Adventist, "Total Member Involvement." East and Central Africa Division theme "Mission Priority, its Harvest Time," and "Every Member a Missionary" We individually are expected to win one and loose none! We can achieve this goal when we are actively witnessing for Christ.

You witness what you see, know and experienced (Acts 4:16-20)

The experience of the two disciples of John the Baptist, John1:29.

We need to have the desire to save sinners, like Jesus did, Luke19:9, 10; we need to have the passion for salvation of people without discrimination.

Moses pleaded with God to forgive the sin of the Israelites or blot his name form the book of heaven. (Exodus 32:32)

Paul said, "Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!" (1Cor 9:16 NIV).

Jesus wept over Jerusalem "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem...." (Mathew 23:37)).

John Knox proclaimed, "Give me Scotland or I die." O what a commitment and a devoted life to God's and his service.

Henry Martyn, landing on the shore of India, and cried, "Here let me burn out for God."

What will you do for God in this 21st century with all the truth that you have?

Call to Witnessing

- Witnessing to save souls is the solemn priority of God's remnant church.
- The work will never be finished until God's people are motivated and involved.
- God's work will be finished when all church members are involved in witnessing.

21 Secrets of Getting Motivated to witness

1. Love 2Corinthians 5:14.
2. Knowing other truths and the remnant church history motivates.
 - a. Truth received into the heart motivates.
 - b. The shortest time, the judgment, and Christ's soon return motivates.
 - c. The spirit of the three angels' messages motivates. (Revelation 14: 6-13)
 - d. The Laodicean message motivates. (Revelation 3:14-22)
 - e. The sanctuary message reveals an all-powerful Mediator –the centre of motivation. The 1844 message and the great disappointment.
 - f. Understanding Zechariah 3 and 4 motivates.
 - g. Understanding fulfilled prophecy motivates.
 - h. Experiencing the truth about conversion, consecration, and "partaking of the divine nature" motivates. Through conversion is essential, reconversion is needed. We need the Converting power of God, so that we understand the need of the perishing world. Consecration of life qualifies us to have part in God's work. As we communion with God daily, we value, love each soul and work with all perseverance as did Christ.

The experience of Ephesus is example to the church today (Revelation 2:1-7)

3. Pray to the Lord of harvest (Matthew 9:5-38). Pray daily as you go out to work so that God leads to you somebody who separately needs to be saved. The members with limited ability should form a prayer groups. Those who are able and are willing to go out should be involved in outreach.
4. Share the joy of witnessing. Share the experience of witnessing it contagious, it will encourage another member.
5. Be enthusiastic
6. Stress the "privilege" first and the "responsibility" second. All of us have the privilege to witness for Christ, and we have been given the responsibility by Jesus when He said, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations...." (Matthew 28:19-20).
7. Aim at total involvement. All members are to get involved in witness. There is nothing impossible with God (Luke 1:37).
8. Use a simple plan. "The very simplest modes combined with united action equal result.
9. Use participation form, so that one can choose what to do in witnessing. Pray Together and let each make two choices of areas of participation.
10. Engage participants in planning, goal setting and evaluation
11. Work together toward target dates and provide rest periods.
12. Conduct regularly scheduled support and training meetings that facilitate constant improvement.
13. Try to fit activities to abilities, but be careful-don't limit God.

14. Recognize that “Many would be willing to work if they were taught how to begin.

Basic format on the Job training:

- a. Devotional study 10-15 minutes
- b. Practical instruction and role-playing 20-30 minutes
- c. Working door-to-door work 1-2 hours
- d. Sharing experience 20 minutes

15. Teach successful methods. Members are motivated by success. Here are a few general methods:

- a. Constantly claim Christ’s love for souls and the power, wisdom and continual guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- b. Christian grace and mannerism –how to be kind and tactful.
- c. How to watch for interest daily and cultivate friendships.
- d. How to use the tones of the voice properly.
- e. How to start a visit with FORT –Family, Occupation, Religion, and Testimony.
- f. How to develop and use their testimony in various situations.
- g. How to cultivate or develop interests through media interest (e.g. Salvation 94.0 FM), literature evangelist interest, other interests, and how to use survey.
- h. The important of and how to listen.
- i. How to disagree agreeably and never argue.
- j. How to prepare for, start and give Bible studies.
- k. How to mark the Bible for study.
- l. How to make each study Christ-centred.
- m. The important of, and how to get a decision for Christ. before teaching the testing truths.
- n. How to obtain and use effective illustration.
- o. How to tactfully get decisions.
- p. How to deal with specific objections and difficult texts.
- q. How to reclaim former members.

16. Keeps materials available.

17. Utilize the “command” appropriately (Matthew 28:19-20). We should wake up and willingly and faithfully do the work of God. Ministers are to encourage members to labour for God, and they are not supposed to labour on behalf of the members. We robbed God of His glory if we withhold the service of heart and life (EGW). We have been given responsibility, and it is the duty of every member to share Christ with the world. This is an obligation that we are hold accountable for if we do not take it seriously. If we neglect the responsibility of working for the salvation of others we shall be guilty and be condemned by God.

18. Stress blessings promised. There are blessings as we work for the salvation of others: your faith will be strengthened and you will grow in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus and close relationship with God.

19. Contrast the blessings with the curses.

20. Challenge them to add to Christ reward. By bringing souls to God you are adding stars on the crown of Jesus; and you are also being exalted.

21. Persevere and God will give success. Your positive, perseverance attitude will motivate members.

(General Conference Sabbath School and Personal Ministries Department, *Motivating Members for Witnessing* (USA, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2010), 5-32)

Personal Witnessing

Personal witnessing is a very interesting subject. Below are helpful principles:

1. The commission:

In the OT “You are my witnesses” (Isaiah 43:10); in the NT Peter says, “We are His witnesses” (Acts 5:32), witnesses to the world (Revelation 10:11)

2. We have won: On the cross our Lord Jesus has already won the victory with Satan in the Great Controversy.

3. Success envisioned: When many members go out for visitations, hearts will be convicted by the Holy Spirit, and the spirit of conversion will be seen.

4. Personal witnessing is most exciting: The seventy sent by Jesus returned with joy (Luke 10:17). Just have the courage to begin witness to those around you.

5. Greatest happiness. Choose to be a soul winner and you will be happy in your life.

6. Joy to Christ: Bringing a follower to Jesus will not only bring joy to the member but it is a great joy in heaven (Luke 15:10).

7. Following and fishing: Jesus calls us to become fishers of human beings (Matthew 4:19).

8. Every Convert needed: Every convert must be convert-maker. All those who have the truth become debtors to the world.

9. Never think God cannot use you: The Samaritan woman became effective missionary, what about you; do you think God cannot use you? He can!

10. Unlimited potential: Through God’s help you can do great things to save the life of others.

11. The meaning of witnessing: Personal witnessing simply loving individuals into a loving relationship with Jesus. To be a witness one must have a very close fellowship with Jesus (1John 1:3).

12. Pray: Be with Jesus through earnest prayer (John 15:27).

13. Witnessing is overflowing with the compassion of Jesus. As you share what Jesus has done for you the blessings of following Him, people will thirst for the same experience.

14. Eager responds – how to get it: It is when the love of Jesus possess us and we know Him daily as Paul said in Timothy 1:12.

15. Grandest and saddest Moment: The grandest moment in a person’s life is when he accepts the gift of salvation and saddest, sadder than the moment of death, is when he reject Christ and follow Satan.

16. Don’t fear: Witnessing is not hard. It is easy. YOU CAN. Salt doesn’t have to work hard at flavouring food. Light doesn’t have to work hard at lighting room. Success in witnessing is possible to every member. But there is fear among our members that no one is interested and willing to listen. Experience shows that many are waiting your witness.

17. Witnessing without fear: Witnessing is easy to those who understand our true commission and hard to those who don’t (Acts 5:32).

18. What is the result of this? Let’s dig out some secrets: As bearer of the truth you need not to judge people you are calling them whether they hear or not. You need not to argue with them to convince that you are right. God will convince them by the Holy Spirit. Therefore don’t be afraid God has not given us the spirit of fear (2Timothy 1:7).

19. You need to speak and speak correctly: Avoid the two extremes the Devil is happy with.

- a. When a member thinks the witness must be very boldly and sometimes insensitive and even obnoxious.
- b. When a member feels the life he lives is sufficient witness. You harvest what you show and you get fish out of water when you go fishing.
20. **Silent witnessing is not enough:** You must go out and witness verbal. Influence is what you are. Witnessing is what you say. There must be a balance of silent and verbal witnessing.
21. **Don't wait –ability comes with action:** Satan will keep you from starting. The more you share the more you love to share.
22. **Christ will guide to interests who fit you:** “If the teachers of His Word are willing, the Lord will lead them into close relation with the people.” Welfare Ministry p. 101).
23. **First priority –don't be distracted:** Read the instruction Jesus gave to the seventy two (Luke 10:4).
24. **Preparation and action -5 steps:** In Acts 22: 14, 15 Paul was told that:
 - a. God chose him
 - b. To know His will
 - c. To see the Just One
 - d. To hear the voice of His mouth
 - e. And to be His witness to all men of what he had seen and heard (John 3:11) Peter and John were bold, they knew that they had spend time with Jesus (Acts 4:13).
25. **One method alone:** “Christ method alone will give thru success in reaching the world. The saviour mingled with men as one who desire their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘Follow Me’” The Ministry of Healing, P.143.
26. **Danger! Mingling too much?:** Jesus was in the world but not of the world. We must constantly anchored in Christ the Rock so we can safely reach out into the world to draw others to Him.
27. **Love:** “Witnessing begins with love, not lecture. People don't care how much you know until they know how much care.” (Richards, P.24).
28. **Holy Spirit:** The Holy Spirit is the unequivocal necessity in personal witnessing. He knows everything there is to know about both you and your prospect (John 14:26).
29. **Personality –utilize your own:** We need to express God's love in a way that corresponds to our personalities and not try to imitate others (Samaan, p.42).
30. **Where to find interests:** You cannot Judge from the outside. All people from works of life and status need the gospel. Even those who claimed to have everything in this world are desperately in need of God. There are things that money cannot buy e.g. Joy, peace and happiness, and life its self.
31. **Everyone:** Everyone has a burden, longs for peace and wants love and happiness.
32. **Numberless opportunities:** Friends, family, work associates, neighbours, casual contacts at streets and in travel, etc., provides you with limitless possibilities for finding someone to whom you can witness.
33. **The value of one-a one soul audience:** One soul is of great value to God (Desire of Ages, P.578). “The work of Christ was largely made up of personal interviews. He had a faithful regard for the one soul audience.” (Christ Object Lesson, P.223).
34. **God is passionate about one:** He is passionate about you and your personal witnessing to save even one person for eternity.

35. Remember their value, to attract and win: When you go out to share the word of God with people remember that God value them, even if only one person (Christ Object Lesson, P. 197).
36. **Compulsion words versus love and needs:** Don't just say what you wanted to say, but with love identify the needs of the people you are witnessing to (Rinker, PP. 17-2).
37. **Programs or Persons?:** It is easy to be so totally obsessed with a witnessing program that one becomes insensitive and blind to the feelings that one can determine with God's guidance.
38. **React or acts?** Don't wait to react, act first with smile, firm handshake, an affirming word or prayer: Often small gesture open wide door of larger witnessing.
39. **Do medical missionary work –help people feel the touch of Jesus:** Teach people health principle and you must be trained in health principle and Health Evangelism before starting this. Still without the training you can visit people in the hospital and pray for them God can work our miracles and heal the sick.
40. **Always be alert to see heart needs:** Put people first above everything else. Have "Eyes to see the heart needs of another person." (Rinker, P.22).
41. **Take time to properly befriend your neighbour:** Have a genuine interest in your neighbour, not until when they are dying then you will come to their help.
42. **Ask your neighbour for a favour:** Like when Jesus asks the Samaritan woman for water.
43. **Listen:** "... cooperate with the Holy Spirit. As you study with your interested friend, he /she will say and do things indicating to you his/her degree of understanding and conviction. You need to keep both ears and eyes open to ascertain where your interest is in his/her thinking." (Robert A. P 37).
44. **Facilitating listening:** Ask appropriate question and listen with interest.
45. **Watch the countenance:** "Jesus watched with deep earnestness the changing countenance of his hearers." (The Desire of Ages, P. 225).
46. **Tone of the voice:** Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman "...with a beautiful countenance and sympathetic spirit..." (The Desire of Ages, P. 253).
47. **Persuasive power:** This comes with the communion with God. (The Ministry of Healing, 512).
48. **Enthusiasm:** Research shows that effective verbal communication 7%, tone of voice is 38%, nonverbal is 55%. Saying something with excitement is contagious.
49. **Don't argue:** We need not to win the argument and close the mouths of people, but we do need to open their heart.
50. **Illustration:** Use something they are familiar with, if possible things they can often see.
51. **Emphasize blessings:** Stress blessing rather than the dos and don'ts.
52. **True view of God's needed:** Many think of God as only keeping His eyes on their sins and to strike them with punishment. Let people see that God is interested in their total well beings (John 0:10).
53. **Be Positive about Scripture:** Show the truth from the scripture and let the people see for themselves.
54. **God's timing-quietly wait on the Lord:** A story of a non Christian carpenter was working in a house of a Christian and the Christian compel to say something, but went away in another room, two hours later the carpenter asked with curiosity what the picture of the cross on the wall meant. That was an open door to share more about Jesus Christ the saviour of the world.

55. **Binding rules and cautious methods:** It is good to follow rules, but we should also be cautious to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit, because people differ from one to another.
56. **Don't say too much:** excitement is good, but be careful not to say very many things that the person's mind will not absorb all or digest well.
57. **Force of the will:** Your student need to yield their will to Jesus, unless they do this, they can decide for Jesus but fail to make the changes expected.
58. **Offer assurance of salvation:** People need and desire the assurance of salvation.
59. **"How to" Needed:** People may want to but don't know how to accept Christ. People don't know these:
- That a personal decision for Christ is necessary.
 - That Christ is standing at the door of their hearts.
 - That Jesus will enter their lives if they pray and invite Him to be their personal Saviour. (Eims, PP. 103, 104).
60. **Leading a person to accept Christ-important tips:** Put them on the level on their level. Take your place as sinner being saved along with the rest of the sinners. Then others will listen to you.
61. **Don't heat people with "you sinners" first:** "Refrain from telling him he is a sinner." God will do that. State that "God knows all about him and loves him.... It is God's love that pens heart and not sin." Read what Jesus said John 12:32).
62. **Tips of moving various people towards decision:** there are several ways of leading different people to make decision to accept Christ as their saviour. You can do this by asking different questions that suit their states of life.
63. **Questions for a non Christian:** Two questions have proven helpful with a non Christian.
- "By the way, are you interested in spiritual things?" The answer "Yes" or "No."
 - "What do you think a real Christian is?" The answer will usually refer to externals. Then you will share the joy you find in your relationship with Jesus.
64. **Temperaments-witnessing to people of varying temperaments:**
Sanguine: They are the life of the party. They seem always to be happy, but they long for and need attention, acceptance and approval. They are the first to be inspired and respond at evangelistic meeting. But they can be the first to leave the Church.
Melancholy: They are perfectionists, which can make them impatient with the habits and carelessness of others and critical of self and others when they cannot achieve the impossible. They often wear a mask, not wanting anyone to discover that they are hurting and depressed inside. They can say everything is alright when it is not. When working with them focusing on joy is an absolute necessity.
Choleric: They are the task charge people. They are able to take charge virtually any situation, and they direct others to act quickly. They want to lead, rule, and get the job done their way. They are the rule makers while the sanguine are call the rule breakers. They like to study prophecy. When they are convinced of something from the word of God, they will defend it to the death.
Phlegmatic: These are easy going ones-the calm, cool, and collected; the most well adjusted to life. Strong introverts, they ill avoid conflict at any cost. They love people. "Makes friends easily and are loved by everyone. However, they tend to procrastinate over almost everything, including Bible study and prayer." (Robbins, PP. 18, 19). They lack motivation.

65. **Focus on the responsive:** Often times are spend with professional Bible-study takers who love your company but have no desire to grow and make decisions. These are keeping you from billions to be reach with the message.

Revelation 14:6

Hosea 4:17; Matthew 10:14.

2Timothy3:7.

66. **Triumph promised:** Persevere in personal witnessing and God will richly bless you.

Habakkuk 1:5; Daniel 12:3.

Sources:

The General Conference Sabbath School and personal Ministries Department, May- Ellen Colon ed., *Personal Witnessing* (USA: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2010), 5-31.

Giving Personal Bible Studies

How to Give the Bible Study

- Pray earnestly. Without Jesus you can do nothing (John 15:5).
- a. To be successful you must have the power, presence, and guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- b. Claim the promise: Angels are ready to co-operate with you.
- Know the purpose of your visit or the Bible study. Make Christ the centre of the visit or the bible study. Make the bible study attractive to gain a positive decision.
- Prepare well: Highlight important points, jot down comment and illustration to use. Make it interesting, but not too long.
- Dress appropriately.
- Have plenty materials to use: study guide, Bible , tracts and support booklets if available.
- Be optimistic. Never think or talk of failure.

What to do when you arrive at the Study

- Be punctual.
- Be enthusiastic, cheerful, relaxed and friendly.
- Keep the first visit brief. Usually people are busy.

How to present the Bible Study:

- Begin with prayer.
- Read the introduction or review its high points.
- Read the questions and let them share the answers.
- As they share complement them on their good answers.
- Always listen and ask questions to be certain.
- Make brief relevant comments as you move along.
- a. Build instructions on their understanding.
- b. Don't preach. Bible studies are done by interactive discussion.
- c. Don't tell your students everything at one sitting.
- Use appropriate illustration: Keep them short and relevant to the lesson and he people.
- Move at the student's pace. Constantly listen and watch the eyes and body language.
- Remember always to b kind and tactful. Build bridges, not wall.
- a. Make presentation in gentle tone.
- b. Keep in mind the following: your success also depends on your ability to find your way to the heart (Gospel Workers P.193). Be kind and gentle, never sharp. "The

tones of the voice have much to do in affecting the hearts of those that hearts.”(Testimonies Vol. 2, p.615).

- Stress the blessings over the requirements (John 10:10; Psalms 84:11).
- Stick to the subject. Don't take all the freeway exits or you will never reach your destination.
- Never introduce ideas for which the student does not have sufficient background and is not prepared to receive.
- During the first six studies, it is vital to anchor the student's faith in the Bible.

More Tips for Success:

- Be understanding.
- Listen to hear needs, concerns, and understanding.
- Get a firm decision for Christ before you introduce testing truths.
- Know how to meet opposition. Let them know it is not your word, but the word of their Father Jesus Christ, and encourage them to do God's will. Use John 7:17.
- Be tactful and smooth. Don't be rude and make anyone angry.
- Don't argue. You may win the argument and lose the soul.
- Be intensely interested in the person. Constantly pray for the love and tact of Jesus.
- Offer complements whenever possible and appropriate.
- Agree on every point possible.
- Don't be embarrassed about questions you cannot answer. No one knows everything.

Steps for Completing the Study

- Finish the study guide questions and build interest in the future lessons.
- At the end of the lesson briefly review the key points, and ask for adhesion at the end of every study session.
- Make direct personal appeals. Emphasize the blessing God longs to give.
- Pray as soon as your students make a decision.
- Remind them of the next lesson.
- Lend a book if available to substantiate the subject.
- Test the degree of interest, by saying “I hope we haven't kept you too long. Remember the study should not take more than 40-60 minutes.
- Leave immediately after the study in order to help keep the truth fresh in the mind.
- Pray for your students every day and ask your local church and Sabbath School to do the same.

Four Steps in Gaining Decisions:

1. The information must be clear; and their question must be answered.
2. They must feel conviction that it is right and is what God wants them to do.
3. They must have a desire to do it.
4. They must take action and do it.

I pray that God bless each one of you, as you prepare to share the gospel with your relatives, friends, and neighbors.

Sequence of Topics

(This is adopted from the Personal Ministries Handbook, go one million editions, Sabbath School and Personal Ministries Department of the general conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2002).

A typical Sequence

1. The word of God

2. Daniel 2
3. The Second Coming of Jesus
4. Signs of the Second coming
5. The Millennium
6. The destiny of the Wicked
7. The Home of the Redeem
8. The prophecies of Daniel
9. Christ our High Priest
10. The Investigative Judgment
11. The Law and the Gospel
12. The Sabbath
13. The Sabbath in the New Testament
14. Origin of Sunday Observance
15. The origin of evil angels
16. The Work of good angels
17. The state of the death
18. Spiritism
19. The Great Controversy between Christ and Satan
20. The Seal of God and the Mark of the Beast
21. Jesus saves those who are lost
22. Faith
23. Precious promises
24. The ordinances of the Church
25. Christian Standards and duties
26. The human body as a temple
27. Prayer
28. The work of the Holy Spirit

Sequence Build around the Three Angels' Messages

1. Why you can trust the Bible
2. The origin of Evil
3. How to obtain Christ free gift of salvation
4. What will heaven be like
5. How to have a Happy Holy Marriage
6. The Biblical relationship of law and grace
7. God Test of loyalty
8. The Glorious Second Coming of Jesus
9. The meaning and the method of Baptism
10. A step-by-step study on the mystery of Death
11. The biblical Description of Hell
12. What Happens during the Millennium?
13. Bible facts about diet and Health
14. How God's love Bridges Freedom

The Faith of Jesus Sequence

1. What the Bible Teaches about God
2. The Bible
3. Prayer and Faith
4. The Second Coming of Jesus
5. Signs of the Second Coming of Jesus
6. The Origin of Sin
7. Salvation from Sin

8. The Forgiveness of Sins
 9. The Judgment
 10. The law
 11. The Day of Rest
 12. How to keep the Sabbath
 13. The Death
 14. The Church
 15. The Gift of prophecy
 16. Christian Standards
 17. Baptism
 18. The Plan of the Church Finance
 19. Christian Life
 20. God's Call to all of us
- The²⁸ Fundamental Beliefs
1. Holy scriptures
 2. Trinity
 3. Father
 4. Son
 5. Holy Spirit
 6. Creation
 7. Nature of Man
 8. Great controversy
 9. Life death Resurrection of Christ
 10. Experience of Salvation
 11. Growing in Christ
 12. Church
 13. Remnant and its Mission
 14. Unity in the Body of Christ
 15. Baptism
 16. Lord supper
 17. Spiritual Gifts and Ministries
 18. Gifts of Prophecy
 19. Law of God
 20. Sabbath
 21. Stewardship
 22. Christian Behaviour
 23. Marriage and the Family
 24. Christ Ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary
 25. Second Coming of Christ
 26. Death And Resurrection
 27. Millennium
 28. New Earth

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