

**PENTECOSTALS IN RETREAT:  
CHANGING CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS IDENTITIES**

**by**

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**I declare that "Pentecostals in Retreat: Changing Cultural and Religious Identities", is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.**

*Roger D Gorman*

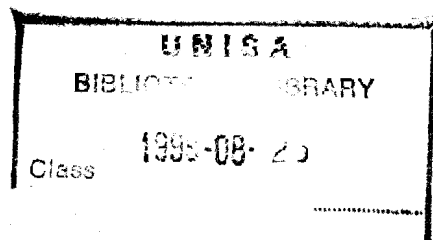
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## SUMMARY OF DISSERTATION

This study is about the identity of Coloured Pentecostals living in Retreat, Western Cape. It concerns the effects which social change has upon boundary markers and worldview. It uses Robert Schreiter's semiotic approach to culture. Schreiter says that social change along with boundary markers and worldview are the basis for changing identities. This study applies Schreiter's approach to a case study to see if it will work. The study considers the traditional Coloured Pentecostal Culture's identity represented by the older generation of Pentecostals in Retreat. It then considers some responses to those traditional boundary markers and worldview given primarily by the younger generation of Pentecostals. It then suggests some possible solutions to the problems which have been identified as the reasons for the changing cultural and religious identity of the Coloured Pentecostal Culture.



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**Title of Dissertation:**

**PENTECOSTALS IN RETREAT: CHANGING CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS IDENTITIES**

**Key Terms:**

**Culture; Coloured; Boundary; Boundary Markers; Worldview; Pentecostal; Holy Spirit; Inculturation; Identity; Social change; Worship; Experience; Pneumatic; Economic**

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Our arrival in Cape Town during rush hour traffic on the N1 National Road gave us little time to see the beauty of the city in which we would live. We were scheduled to meet the governing board of our church in the Western Cape in just two hours. Our thoughts were varied as we tried to find our flat, get settled a little and then find our way in our new hometown to the suburb of Retreat for a meal with the board members and their wives. What new adventures lay in our future as we began to work with the people identified to us only as "Coloured"? We had much to learn over the next few weeks -- what it meant to be living in a new country, serving people in a new culture and striving to keep our mistakes to a minimum. I have yet to ask how successful we were!

The table set in the corner was loaded with delicious looking food, much of which we had never seen before. My wife and daughter surveyed the choices to be made and spied one dish which looked very familiar -- American style "onion rings". How good it was of our hosts on our first night in Cape Town to provide such an American food as onion rings! They skipped all the other tantalizing food, heaped their plates with the onion rings and went back to their seats to enjoy their food. They quickly discovered that the "onion rings" were anything but "onion rings". To their surprise they learned that calamari looked like, are cooked like, but didn't taste like, "onion rings"! Although my daughter learned to enjoy calamari, along with her dad, both of them had a difficult time that night.

Our introduction to the food and people of the Cape has been a source of delight to many as we have shared our "experiences" of becoming acculturated in a new country, culture and lifestyle. It has been, and still is, an enjoyable experience throughout the fourteen years that we have lived and worked in the Cape

**Peninsula.**

**This study is about people. It is not about buildings or plans or dreams. It is about the people who live in the area of the Cape Peninsula called Retreat. It is about people identified as both "Pentecostal" and "Coloured".**

### **1.1 The Research Problem**

**The central purpose of this dissertation is to study the cultural identity and worldview of the people who live in Retreat, Cape Peninsula who call themselves "Pentecostal." It will also consider how the recent political and social changes in South Africa have affected their identity.**

**This study will attempt to find out what makes a person Pentecostal from the viewpoint of those who say that they are "Pentecostal". It will in the words of Schreiter (1985:57) consider the perspective identified as "emic"-- the view from the inside. At the same time since I am not a member of their culture, mine will be an "etic" (outside) view, as I investigate their culture. It will try to establish the identity and the boundaries of being Pentecostal in Retreat. It asks a simple question, "What makes a person Pentecostal?" Although the question is simple in its make-up, the answers to it prove not to be as simple at all. How does "being Pentecostal" affect the people's outlook on life? Does it change the way they approach the conditions in South Africa at this time in its history? Have the changes which have taken place in South Africa caused similar changes within the Pentecostal churches of Retreat?**

**By focusing on the identity of the Coloured Pentecostals, one will be able to better understand and interpret the effects of the changing conditions in South Africa on the Pentecostal churches of Retreat. Following Schreiter's (1985) understanding of identity – boundary markers, worldview -- and social change, I hope to be able to show how these issues are being affected by the tremendous changes which have come to South Africa. Identity, in any of its forms, expresses who a group of people are. It shows who is in and who is outside a particular group. In searching for Pentecostal identity, I am seeking to find how**

the Pentecostals of Retreat decide what allows one person in and what keeps another person out. These factors will be found in their boundary markers and their world view. At the same time, identity is, in many ways, in a constant process of change. As society in general interacts with a particular culture, i.e., Coloured Pentecostals of Retreat, change has to occur. Whether that change is considered good or bad forms a part of this study of Coloured Pentecostal identity. If change is rejected, what will happen to the existing culture? These are some of the areas which will be under consideration as I find the answers to the question of what makes up Pentecostal identity. Although the word 'retreat' can also be defined as losing ground or declining, I use it in this study solely for the purpose of geographical designation – Retreat is a geographical area of the Western Cape.

## **1.2 Reasons for study**

The reasons for doing this study can be divided into two main divisions:

**(1) Personal and (2) Missiological.**

### **1.2.1 Personal Reasons for Study**

There are several reasons why I have chosen the Coloured Pentecostals for my study. Although some of them are personal in nature, when added to the missiological reasons, they represent valid reasons for undertaking this study.

#### **1.2.1.1 Co-Labourers**

I work among Coloured Pentecostals daily. I serve as Principal and Administrator of Cape Bible Training Centre which is located at 11 Southgate Road, Retreat. The Training Centre, which began before my wife and I came to South Africa, operates in a formerly designated group area for "Coloureds". The

majority of the students belong to the group called "Coloured" although we are open to all people and have had European, Indian, Zulu and Xhosa students attend and graduate. I minister primarily in the Coloured Pentecostal churches every week-end. The better one's understanding of the Coloured Pentecostal identity, the better one will be able to work with them as co-labourers.

#### **1.2.1.2 Appreciation of Culture**

I have chosen this culture because I have grown to love the Coloured people and appreciate their culture and way of life. That is not to say that I have agreed with everything that I have discovered as I have laboured with and among them. I have found myself changing, in some ways drastically, as I have attempted to identify with them as they meet the challenges of our changing country. My wife and I realized before coming to Cape Town that it would be us who would do the most changing in respect to our lives and culture. I have not attempted to make the students at the Training Centre "Americans". They cannot become Americans since they are South Africans. I have tried to become South African as much as possible so that I could understand their culture and be accepted by them. The exchange has been mutual as we have shared together in classes, worship and daily living.

#### **1.2.1.3 Increased Awareness**

I have chosen to study the culture of Coloured Pentecostals because I want to understand better the way these Pentecostal people deal with the issues which they confront on a daily basis. It is among these Pentecostal pastors and members with whom I am attempting to build a relationship and whom the Training Centre is assisting in the preparation of their workers. I want to know more about their worldview and their lives as Pentecostals. I am the one who, in this situation, approaches this topic as the learner. I must continually be learning if I am going

to be able to effectively help them understand what the Bible is saying to them at this time in our lives and in the situation in which not only they, the Pentecostals, live but in which I, too, live. I do not operate with a normative understanding of who is (or is not) Pentecostal. The research attempts to discover from the people's own viewpoint what is or is not Pentecostal. I therefore do not judge the research answers right nor wrong, since they are the beliefs of those who were interviewed or the result of sermon analysis. See Section 1.5 for discussion of the sources of this study.

## **1.2.2 Missiological Reasons**

Although these are valid personal reasons for undertaking this study, there are also missiological reasons for doing so. There are two important reasons for considering the Pentecostal people of Retreat in this study.

### **1.2.2.1 Growth of Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches**

In the foreword to *The Spirit Said Grow* by noted Pentecostal historian Vinson Synan, Peter Wagner (1992:ii) said: "*In all of human history, no other non-political, non-militaristic, voluntary human movement has grown as rapidly as the Pentecostal-charismatic movement in the last 25 years*"(italics in original). The Pentecostal/charismatic churches form a major section of the Christian community in Retreat. I have identified over forty churches which are Pentecostal/charismatic in doctrine, belief or character. A listing of these can be found in Appendix A, along with a map of the study area. Synan (1992:11) also says that "it is obvious that in any analysis of church growth around the world, the Pentecostal-charismatic family cannot be overlooked. By God's grace, it is a twentieth century phenomenon to gladden the heart of every Christian."

While this study's central theme does not deal with the dynamics of church growth, any group of people who are a part of a fast growing section of Christian-

ity is missiologically important. According to the South African Central Statistical Service, in 1994 “85 percent of the Coloured people live in the Cape Province.” It is not the designation of “Coloured” which makes this study missiologically important. It is the fact that I am studying the cultural identity of a group of people who are themselves a part of this fast growing section of Christianity. Studying the identity of this group of people is important in the study of missions. How the Coloured Pentecostals of Retreat react to the changing situations in South Africa may help other sections of Christianity handle the same changes. Cultural identity is a crucial missiological issue.

### 1.2.2.2 Re-shaping of South African History

The period of this study falls within a time in South African history where cultures are being reshaped, ideologies rewritten, and traditions reformulated. The challenges of the new South Africa force people to rethink their traditions and views of society in general and more specifically their religious lives in the light of the changing democracy in which we now live. It is not possible to stand still – to remain as one has always been. The reshaping of government, economic situations, and lifestyles will not allow the church to remain isolated from the mainstream of events. No longer can one hide behind one’s “private” life without consideration for other human beings living in the same or similar situations. Pentecostal/charismatic people are having to face these same changes just like everyone else. Pentecostal/charismatic people have in the past held strongly to traditionalistic<sup>1</sup> tendencies. Chapter Two considers the traditional view, as found in the responses to the questionnaire.

The Pentecostals have often used their traditions as the walls behind which they have hidden to keep themselves from becoming involved in the

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<sup>1</sup> I use the term traditionalistic to mean those things which have become part of the expectations of many of the Pentecostal churches. These expectations do not always have as their source any backing from the doctrines of the church but have become such a part of the way the people live that they are as important as issues of doctrine.

**“world.” Their interpretation of the “world” usually encompasses the thought pattern that everything not of the “church” is evil. The opening up of democracy in South Africa confronts the Pentecostal/charismatic people with a multiplicity of new ideas and situations. How they react to these new situations will force a change in the boundaries of their identity and worldview. The re-negotiating of identity and worldview in the new South Africa shall impact the church for years to come. It cannot be ignored for it will not go away. Identity and worldview are the central features of this study. Changing worldview and identity will shape the responses of Christianity to its mission as defined by a particular section of Christianity. Missiological studies, similar to this one, attempt to show how the changes which are occurring within a particular section of Christianity affect their own view of their role in society as a part of Christianity as a whole.**

### **1.2.3 The Unique Character of This Study**

**One can rightly ask the question, is there need for another study of the Coloured people? Haven't there been other studies concerning the various aspects of the Coloured community? If so, why another study? What makes my study unique? A brief review of some of the publications that have been written about the Coloured people will show how this study deals with a specific issue that has been neglected by others; that is, the identity of the Pentecostal/charismatic Coloured community, seen from a missiological vantage point.**

**Aeschliman (1983) wrote his doctoral thesis on the Coloured churches in Mitchell's Plain but it concerned all the independent churches in Mitchell's Plain. He did not write about just one selected group as I am doing -- the Pentecostals. Also, my research covers a geographic area which is not included in Aeschliman's study. While he considered the independents only, I am including both**

independent<sup>2</sup> and mainline Pentecostal churches. Aeschliman's views, while interesting and thought provoking, did not attempt to show the cultural identity of one particular section of Christianity. His typology also represents his view of the independent churches of Mitchell's Plain. This study considers only one section of Christianity, namely, the Coloured Pentecostals of Retreat.

Wilmot James (1996) co-edited a book about the political freedom which the Coloured community achieved after the 1994 elections. That book dealt with the issue of Coloured people from a political viewpoint whereas I am studying them more from a religious viewpoint -- the identity of Coloured Pentecostals. In my interviews, I do have a section about membership in political parties, but political issues are not the overriding factors in my study. Since many of the changes which the Coloured Pentecostals have faced are a direct result of political changes, the views expressed by the various authors in Wilmot James' book were helpful to me in order to better interpret the effects which political change has brought to the Coloured Pentecostals.

Several authors have written about the Coloured people from a historical perspective. Among these writers are Macmillan (1927), Marais (1957) and Lewis (1987). Each of these authors presents the development of the Coloured people in terms of their view of history. My study is not concerned with describing the history of the development of the Coloured community. It presupposes that the development has taken place. What the study does, is to consider whether older Pentecostal churches have a different view of Coloured Pentecostal identity than more recently established churches. Along with that will be the consideration of the ages of the respondents as to similar differences. Historically speaking, I do not attempt to trace the origins of the Coloured people nor do I try to trace the historical development of the Pentecostal churches in the research area. My study is a "synchronic" study that attempts a depth analysis of identity formation

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<sup>2</sup> The term "independent" is usually associated with AIC's, the African Independent Churches. I use the term to mean those churches which do not belong to any mainline denomination such as the Assemblies of God. Independent churches may have more than one branch but do not qualify to be called denomination in the regular use of that term.



at the present time.

Macquene (1993) investigated the role of women in her own Pentecostal church, the Pentecostal Holiness Church in the Western Cape. However, her study is limited to the issue of women in one particular church. While I also have questions about the role of women and will deal with this issue as it relates to Coloured Pentecostal identity, I am not exclusively writing about women in Pentecostal churches. Macquene's work deals exclusively with this issue. Nevertheless, her study has been useful to me in analyzing the role of women in Pentecostal churches.

Van der Ross (1979) wrote about issues which, he felt, gave a false picture concerning Coloured people in general. His book is not primarily concerned with any local area but about the Coloured people of South Africa in general and the myths which have arisen about them. My study deals primarily with religious matters as they concern the Pentecostal people in one specific area, Retreat, Cape Peninsula. Myths, as such, are not discussed unless some specific myth should be mentioned by a respondent in relation to Pentecostal identity.

My study then is unique from the publications and studies previously mentioned for the following reasons:

- ▶ It is primarily religious rather than historical or political.
- ▶ It deals with a specific culture, namely that of the Pentecostal/Charismatics.
- ▶ It covers a limited area of research, namely Retreat, Cape Peninsula.
- ▶ It is a study about identity and its relationship to social change.

While this study is different for the reasons mentioned above, it, at the same time draws from their knowledge, understandings and interpretations of the "Coloured" culture as presented from each of their perspectives. It is not possible for one book, article, or dissertation to present a complete understanding of any issue. It is when one considers an issue from multiple sides and through the eyes

of many people that a clearer understanding arises. Even then, it will not be complete. This study is an attempt to provide one more side, one more set of eyes, concerning the issue of Coloured Pentecostals.

### **1.3 Definitions of terms**

It is important that here at the beginning, I state the definitions of the terms as I use them in this study. In so doing, I give my own interpretation of the words as well as draw upon others for clearer understanding.

#### **1.3.1 Coloured**

The definition of the term Coloured is a very controversial one. There does not seem to be any single definition which is acceptable to all of the Coloured community. Rasool (1996:55) says that "...Under apartheid, this included a wide variety of people from a variety of ethnic, racial, cultural, social and linguistic backgrounds...." This in itself is not a definition of the term Coloured. As mentioned above, I do not use the term in any derogatory way but simply as a means of identification of the people whom I am studying. Perhaps, what Lewis (1987:4) says about the issue is the most helpful: "the solution to this dilemma, I suggest, is to accept that Coloured identity is a white-imposed categorisation. But it is one that for a variety of reasons came to be adopted by sections of those people so described."

The term "Coloured" was given by the South African government many years ago to distinguish a certain group of people from others on the basis of the colour of their skin. As a result, the term often has connotations which are not pleasant, even to the point of being derogatory. It has been used to degrade this group of people just because they were different from others solely on the basis of colour. However, I do not use the term Coloured in any derogatory manner. I use it for the sole purpose of identifying the people who are presently living in the

area of my research, a previously designated "Coloured Group Area." I use it because it forms a part of the culture under study at the present moment. I cannot change the term unilaterally on my own. That must be done by the people themselves.

The issue of what to call the "Coloured" people is an important one. There has been much speculation and discussion about this issue. In an article in the *Cape Argus* on 31 July 1996, reporter Joseph Aranas presents the view of the Cape Heritage Development spokesman Joseph Little. Mr. Little says, "The name 'Coloured' was specially designed to destroy all ethnicity and tribal claims to land and political rights in the country." The article further states that "the Coloured or Khoi were made up of at least 12 tribes who lived ....in the southern, western and northern Cape." The Cape Heritage Development is wanting to go back to what they see as the origin of the "Coloured" people and be called Khoi once again.

In another article in the *Cape Times* on 4 December 1996 reporter Yazeed Fakier observes the following:

"Coloured and proud of it. Don't call me Coloured, I'm black. I'm not Coloured, I'm South African." These are among the most pressing issues now facing the Western Cape's "Coloured" population, who have suddenly found themselves at an identity crossroads in the 'new South Africa'.

Van der Ross (1979) argues that the idea that there is a special identity or culture called "Coloured" is all a myth. He maintains that (1979:5) "in fact, the Coloured people are probably the most heterogeneous population group in the country." If what he has presented is correct, then the identity of the Coloured people is bound up within that of other population groups. The issue of what to call themselves will be debated and discussed for a long time. Whether or not a consensus can be reached to a new or different name will not be known until sometime in the future. I will also discuss this identity crisis more fully in Chapter 4.

### 1.3.2 Pentecostal

One of the most vital terms which needs to be defined for the purposes of this study is the term Pentecostal. The issue of Pentecostalism is central to this entire study, since I am studying the culture of Coloured Pentecostals. Douglas, Elwell, and Toon (1989:290-291) define Pentecostalism to be "a movement in which gifts of the Holy Spirit...and especially speaking in tongues...are experienced." Douglas (et al. 1989) includes in this definition those churches which are considered to be main-line Pentecostals, such as the Assemblies of God, and charismatic churches, such as the Rhema Churches and Christian Centres. I have previously mentioned the term Pentecostal/charismatic as a single unit as I do not differentiate between Pentecostal and charismatic churches.<sup>3</sup> Both types of churches are found within the research area and have been included in this study.

Central to the definition of Pentecostal is the belief in the Holy Spirit baptism and the gifts of the Spirit which come upon believers once they have been filled/baptised with the Holy Spirit. In exploring the identity of the Coloured Pentecostals, I have not attempted to compare their own understanding of "being Pentecostal" with any academic definition. Rather, the Coloured Pentecostals of Retreat will define this term in their own way. This will become clearer in Chapters 4 and 5 as Coloured Pentecostal identity is discussed more fully and some suggestions are made concerning it.

### 1.3.3 Identity

As a basis for this study, I use the theological framework found in Schreiter's semiotic model which includes the issues of boundaries, boundary markers and worldview which will help show the identity of Coloured Pentecos-

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<sup>3</sup> I do not differentiate between Pentecostals and Charismatics because both groups believe in the charismata, the gifts of the Holy Spirit. While there are differences, i.e., in church structure and worship styles, for the purpose of this study, the belief in the workings of the Holy Spirit is the basis for considering them as a single unit.

tals of Retreat. In doing so, I attempt to show how the issues of social change affect Coloured Pentecostal identity. Therefore, when I use the term identity, I mean in a general sense those things which a group considers to be the boundaries and boundary markers which sets it apart from other groups. These boundaries and markers are both conscious and subconscious, that is, we may not realize that we have actually set certain distinct boundaries which result in an “Us-Them” situation. This makes us what we are and that makes them what they are. Some of these markers are learned by acculturation, simply by being a part of a group that already exists, such as family. Identity says, “These things make us what we are.” One’s identity can only change as one accepts a change in the markers which have been set. Identity can be found at three levels<sup>4</sup>: (1) the individual level, (2) the Church and (3) the culture. (See Figure 1).



FIGURE 1. THREE LEVELS OF IDENTITY

This study is concerned with the boundaries and boundary markers along with worldviews which are found among the Pentecostal people of Retreat. It will consider how developments in society today are changing or not changing their identifying boundaries and worldview.

Venter (1995:322) defines the identity of a congregation this way. “*Identity*” includes “that persistent set of beliefs, values, patterns, symbols, stories and style that make a congregation distinctly itself”, expressed in “rituals, sign symbols, language - in conversation, sermons and hymns

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<sup>4</sup> Studies which consider other primary domains, as Schreiter uses the term, would have differing levels of identity than the ones I have. The shapers of identity would change according to the particular field under study.

(Carroll et al. 1986:12,14) Identity answers the question who the congregation is (*italics in original*).” This study is about the people who make up the congregations of the Pentecostal/Charismatics churches in Retreat. Their identity is expressed by their various symbols and signs, operating within what Schreiter (1985:62) calls “semiotic domains.” In this case, I am considering the religious domain of the Coloured Pentecostals, as well as its relationship to other domains of Coloured culture. As Kritzinger (1995:369) points out about religious identity:

Every religious community bases its sense of identity and calling on the fact that it has received truth (or salvation, peace, enlightenment, etc.); the difference lies in the ways in which religious communities understand their relation to the received reality: is it sufficient to preserve it, or must it be passed on actively and deliberately, in order to effect change in people or in society at large?

Is the Pentecostal community “effecting change in people or in society at large” in the Retreat area? This study attempts to show some of the ways in which the Pentecostal people of Retreat express their identity and whether or not it is touching the society in which they live. It also investigates how the changes presently occurring in society are affecting that identity.

I want to also include at this point one idea of Schreiter’s about the formation of identity. Schreiter (1985:105) says,

Group boundary gives one of the most basic forms of identification by dividing the world into “us” and “not-us.” That boundary appears in roles, in status markers, and in the line between publicly discernible behaviour and privately held truth. Such markers, of varying strength within a society, form a prime source of identity. They tell us who we are in ever greater progressions of definition.

Boundary markers are those areas of a group’s life that sets it apart from

another group through some special idea, ideal, belief or action. In the case under study, these distinguishing boundary markers are primarily religious. One pastor gives an example of a boundary marker by saying that if a person is Pentecostal it means that you don't have to ask that person if one is a Christian because "if you haven't accepted the Lord Jesus Christ in your life and you say you are a Christian, you will never say you are Pentecostal." In making this statement, this pastor has clearly drawn a line which marks when a person is Pentecostal. I will discuss more of these boundary markers and how the social changes are affecting them in Chapters Two and Three.

#### **1.3.4 Worldview**

Schreiter (1985:63) says that "...two principal components in identity ..(are) ... the formation of group boundaries and the structures of worldview." Another writer who considers worldview as an important dimension of culture is Charles Kraft. Kraft (1979:53) defines worldview as "... the central systematization of conceptions of reality to which the members of the culture assent (largely unconsciously) and from which stems their value system. The worldview lies at the very heart of culture, touching, interacting with, and strongly influencing every other aspect of the culture." Kraft (1979:54-56) says that worldview has five major functions: "...explanation... evaluation.... psychological reinforcement....integration ...and perception."

Worldview "explains". It gives meaning to what is happening in order for a group to understand the circumstances it is facing in terms which it can comprehend. Worldview "evaluates." It provides a value system so that the group can distinguish between issues and can assess the importance of any given issue or situation. Worldview "reinforces." It provides psychological support to the identity of the group. Worldview "integrates." It allows for the reception of new ideas and then provides a means of integrating them into existing conceptions. Worldview allows for differences in "perception." It

allows for some freedom of perception among the individual members of a group.

The worldview is that component of a culture that helps to explain why something happens and forms the underlying basis for most, if not all, decisions made by individuals within that culture. In particular the Pentecostal culture has certain codes, signs and symbols which are used to "reinforce" their belief system and to "explain" why things happen to them as they do. This will be covered more fully in Chapters Two and Three.

### 1.3.5 Culture

One must also explain the relation between culture and identity. Culture has been defined in various ways. Venter (1995:318) says that "culture consists of a repertoire of historically conditioned responses (signs) to social and material conditions, constructed by a group (signifiers) in the form of behaviour or practices, which function to interpret, transmit, and transform common social meanings."

To this we can add Luzbetak's definition to get a clearer picture. Luzbetak (1988:156) says

...culture is (1) a *plan* (2) consisting of a set of *norms, standards*, and associated *notions* and *beliefs* (3) for *coping* with the various demands of life, (4) shared by a *social group*, (5) *learned* by the individual from the society, and (6) organized into a dynamic (7) system of control (*italics in original*).

The Coloured Pentecostals of Retreat can be classified as a culture because there are "norms", "standards", "notions" and "beliefs" which are shared by a group of people. This Coloured Pentecostal culture can then be described as consisting of various domains, among which are the religious and socio-political. Coloured Pentecostals do have boundary markers which can be identified and which are learned by those people who make up this culture



group. Newcomers into these circles have to quickly learn these boundaries so that they can become enculturated into the fullness of the Pentecostal family which makes up these various Pentecostal churches. It would be more accurate to speak of the Coloured Pentecostals as a sub-culture rather than a culture.

Luzbetak (1988:171-172) says the following about sub-cultures:

At times the term *culture* is employed when it would be more proper to speak of *subcultures*. A society may include a number of subgroups, the members of which interact with one another more closely than with the rest of the total society. The subgroup has its own values, mores, kinship norms, folklore, ritual, traditions and group consciousness over and above those that they share with the broader society to which they also belong. Subsocieties are there partly dependent on and partly independent of the larger social entity; they partly adhere to their own rules of the game of life and partly follow those of the larger social grouping. The actual boundaries of such subsocieties are sometimes difficult, if not impossible, to define because of the complex overlapping that occurs. Sometimes the discussion of sub-cultures is greatly simplified by treating them as if they were indeed cultures unto themselves. (*italics in original*)

I consider the Coloured Pentecostals to be a sub-culture of the culture group which had been given the designation by previous governments as Coloured. Unless otherwise indicated, I use the terms culture and sub-culture interchangeably in reference to the Coloured Pentecostals. I consider sub-cultures further in section 4.2.

Identity and culture, then, are closely related. Similar terms, such as signs symbols and belief patterns, are used to describe both identity and culture. Each one of us has several interrelated areas of cultural identity. Figure 1 shows us how the church forms only a part of the total identity of the Pentecostal people. Our identity is like concentric circles each connected with the other and not complete without the other. Identity and culture are so closely

related that it is difficult to separate them into individual terms without some overlapping occurring. Every one is a member of some culture group although at the same time one's identity can be expressed in various ways, all of which make up one's total identity. For instance, the group of people I am studying are South African. Yet South African does not express their total identity since they are also designated as Coloured and as Pentecostal. Each part of the identity gives a clearer picture of who they are. However, each of the separate identities has certain distinguishable signs which sets it apart from the others. One can certainly be designated as Coloured without being Pentecostal. One can also be South African without being Pentecostal<sup>5</sup>. In other words, identity and culture are related concepts and are not easily distinguished from each other.

These definitions form the basis for this research study. Since boundaries and worldview are essential aspects of identity, this study will be considering what the boundaries and worldview are which shape Coloured Pentecostal identity. It will also be considering the role of socio-political change in formulating and reformulating these boundaries and worldview. It is impossible to completely separate the ideas of boundaries and worldview into two distinct categories. For that reason, there will be an intermingling of these ideas throughout this study.

#### **1.4 Assumptions regarding this study**

There were certain things which I assumed to be true for the purposes of this study. I made the following assumptions about the people involved, their beliefs and about myself as the researcher.

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<sup>5</sup> Since I use the terms Pentecostal and charismatic to refer to the same group of people under study, whenever I use either term I am referring to both groups.

#### **1.4.1 All the churches studied have similar Pentecostal beliefs**

I assumed that by the fact that the churches call themselves Pentecostal/charismatic there were certain beliefs which they all agreed upon by the use of that term. It does not mean that everything that one church believes is also believed by each and every other Pentecostal church but that there is a central core of belief that each one holds in order to be called Pentecostal. I have discovered over 40 churches in the research area which identify themselves as Pentecostal/charismatic churches. Since they give themselves that designation, I assumed that there were certain beliefs which were common to them all.

#### **1.4.2 Cooperation of pastors and members**

I assumed that the pastors involved in the churches would be willing to cooperate for interviews and be open to the questions. I also assumed that those directly involved in helping me with the member interviews would receive cooperation from the members of these churches. Without the cooperation of the pastors this study would not have been possible. I have found in the past that since I am a missionary<sup>6</sup>, most pastors have been friendly and helpful whenever I have been in contact with them. I discovered that having the designation of missionary allowed more access to the churches than the fact that I was the principal of a training centre. Even the churches which did not respond to an invitation to send their students to the Centre allowed me access to their church since I was a missionary with my church. I did not pursue this issue during the interviews and therefore do not know the reasons for this differentiation. The Training Centre in which I am involved is also located within the research area and has helped to train many workers from

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<sup>6</sup>I use my church's definition of missionary – one who is involved in cross-cultural ministry outside the country of birth.

these churches under study. Because of these things, I assumed that the pastors and members would cooperate for the purposes of this study.

#### **1.4.3 I understand Pentecostal terminology**

Another assumption is that I understand the terminology which is used in the Pentecostal churches. I have been involved in the Pentecostal movement for 36 years. I have served my own denomination as a pastor, Conference Christian Education Director, teacher and missionary. I assume that I know what the various terms, symbols and signs mean. I have worked among the Pentecostal churches in Retreat for thirteen years so I assume that I am able to interpret the sign system and symbols as presented by the Pentecostals under study. I believe that my own involvement in the area under study gives me a first-hand knowledge of the various Pentecostal churches and therefore a greater awareness of the things which will be presented in this study. I consider it an asset to have this knowledge already and not have to learn the sign system as an outsider would have to do.

#### **1.4.4 There is a Coloured Pentecostal identity**

I assumed that there were enough distinguishing markers for the group of people known as Coloured Pentecostals to speak of a distinct culture on its own. I accepted the fact, also, that the culture has been going through a time of transition. That transition plays an important role in this study. Just how are the elements of transition affecting the Coloured culture? One of the issues that will be taken up in this study is the changing identity of this culture. Chapter 4 will consider this issue more fully. It will, of course, be limited to the opinions of the Pentecostal people of Retreat as to how this identity is evolving. At the same time, I can in many respects agree with the views of Van der Ross (1979:2) who argues that there is not a culture exclusive

to the Coloured:

This essay addresses itself to the myth of Coloured identity, in the sense that it is claimed by some *that there is a special identity, peculiar to the Coloured people*. They have, according to this claim, *an identity which they share with no other population group*, and this sets them apart in a very special sense (italics in original).

The question could be asked of any culture anywhere in the world – is there any culture that has never been touched or influenced by some other culture? What I am saying is not that the Coloured people have a culture entirely distinct from all others, but that they do have enough differences from other cultures to be classified as a culture on their own.

I knew that I would find within the Retreat area a culture of religious people who call themselves Pentecostal/charismatic. The Pentecostal Movement is such that it has been given recognition as a particular part of Christianity in its own right. Missiologists have studied this movement in various parts of the world. Gary McGee had edited a comprehensive work entitled *Initial Evidence* which discusses the teachings concerning Pentecostal belief about the evidence of the reception of the Holy Spirit. Walter Hollenweger's *The Pentecostals* and Harold Smith's *Pentecostals From the Inside Out* are other examples of writings concerning the Pentecostals. Another excellent book is Russell Spitzer's *Perspectives on the New Pentecostalism* which considers Pentecostalism from the Charismatic viewpoint. Vinson Synan has written several books about the growth of the Pentecostal/charismatic movement around the world. The continued interest in the Pentecostal people indicate that there are special boundary markers and worldviews which distinguish Pentecostal people from other Christians. This study is asking what those things are among the Pentecostal people of Retreat, Cape Peninsula.

## **1.5 Limits of study**

**Every study has clear limits without which it would become too general in nature or simply a compilation of previously known facts. The more I became aware of the limits for this study the better I was able to address the issues which originate from the analysis of the research and the presentation of the material involved. These limits do not in any way invalidate the material or the research that makes up this study.**

### **1.5.1 Not a doctrinal study**

**This research study is not a study of Pentecostal doctrine as such. By this I mean, I am not studying the doctrine of the various churches with the idea of comparison of what they believe one against another. I will not in any way try to prove any belief as right or wrong. This study has shown that belief in the form of doctrine is not the overriding issue which makes up Pentecostal identity. Other issues such as worship, emotional demonstration, and the experiences found in living out one's beliefs are more important than doctrinal beliefs. In fact, the members of a Pentecostal church have differing opinions as to what makes up the doctrine of their church. It is evident that if someone was not in agreement with what was happening in one's church, one would not be attending that church. Therefore, I am not trying to present a doctrinal study as such. It is, however, understandable that doctrine, or belief, will feature in the study. The question I asked at the beginning could be answered in a narrowly doctrinal way, "What makes a person Pentecostal?"**

**When asking this question, I have discovered some of the things that the Coloured Pentecostals believe. For the purposes of this study, however, the belief systems of the churches and people are used to indicate the identity of the sub-culture called Pentecostal and not for purposes of doctrinal correctness or comparison. I am not going to be comparing one church with**

another church according to doctrine. Neither am I going to compare independent churches with mainline churches for the purposes of doctrinal issues. Any comparisons will be strictly for the purpose of highlighting Pentecostal identity. For this study, there is no “incorrect” doctrinal belief, since I do not ask normative doctrinal questions. What has become evident in the course of the study, is that, from the Coloured Pentecostal view, there is a difference between Pentecostals and non-Pentecostals. Some of these “differences” will be discussed throughout the study.

### **1.5.2 Geographic limits**

There are also geographic limits to this study. The area which I have defined as Retreat is highlighted on the map by a heavy black border. This geographic area I call Retreat. (See map in Appendix A.) It is only in recent years that the smaller areas within this boundary have become commonly known by their separate names rather than by the collective name of Retreat. Although it does not make up a part of this research, there has been a tendency to identify the place where one lives by the sub-division name rather than by Retreat. The reasons for this are not quite clear to me. It does indicate, however, that there is a process of change going on that is causing the inhabitants of “Retreat” to view their geographic surroundings in a new way and that the boundary markers for identity are therefore changing.

### **1.6 Limitations of the study**

There are also limitations of which I needed to be aware while pursuing the research. The more familiar I am with the limitations, the better I would be in overcoming them, by not allowing them to cause inaccuracies or distortions in the analysis of the research material and the presentation of the study. These limitations do not, however, invalidate the material or the research that

makes up this study.

### **1.6.1 Ability of interviewers**

The accuracy and quality of the information presented by the interviews is determined to a large extent by the ability of the interviewers. My own ability as an interviewer increased as each interview took place. I interviewed twenty (20) pastors and by the final interview, I was more able to ask follow-up questions than in the first interview. I found follow-up questions to be as important as the primary questions of the interview (See Appendix B). My ability is limited by the fact that I am not a trained anthropologist. Had I taken courses directly involved in anthropology, the interviews might have been even better.

Since I also used helpers to interview the church members, their answers have also been affected by their individual ability and the time allowed for the interview. I have used four graduates of our Training Centre and two current students who have all lived in the research area for long periods of time and who attend some of the churches under study. The differences in the answers given depend upon the ability of the interviewers. I had several preparatory and follow-up sessions with the interviewers to try to get the most out of the interviews. The sessions were for the purpose of training the interviewers. The training included how to use the interview schedule, how to approach the interviews, how to deal with the people being interviewed, as well as other factors which could arise during the course of the interview. One important fact was stressed, namely that the answers were to be the answers of the respondents and not what the interviewer thought the respondent meant. But the fact that the students are not trained researchers means that there was a limit placed upon the information which they presented.



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## 1.6.2 Translation accuracy

The primary language of my study area is Afrikaans although the vast majority of the people can and do speak English as well, with a few being able also to speak some of the African languages. Because the mother tongue of the pastors is Afrikaans, most of the sermons which I have analyzed are in Afrikaans (See section 1.7 for sources). I have only a limited ability to communicate in Afrikaans and there are still many phrases and concepts of what is called "kombuis Afrikaans" that I have not yet mastered. As a result, as I studied the sermons in Afrikaans, I may have missed some of the idioms or local meanings of certain phrases. By using an Afrikaans dictionary, one can quite easily miss some innuendo which is of importance to the theme of the sermon.

For the above reasons, I have had each of the sermons translated into English so that after I have studied them in Afrikaans, I can go back and recheck my evaluations in the English translation. I have used people who are themselves involved in Pentecostal/charismatic churches as translators since they are familiar with the use of the language of Pentecostals. Because the translators' home language is also Afrikaans, they are able to accurately translate the sermons into English. The ability of the translator to catch the intended meanings of the use of the Afrikaans terms will directly affect my ability to understand what has been said. I have not relied upon just one person to translate but rather have used five different people to translate the sermons into English. On those occasions where I was present during the preaching of the sermon, I had a better understanding of the translation because I heard the message as it was delivered and was able to see from the response of the people a part of the intended meaning of the sermon.

I did not, however, limit myself to analysing sermons where I was personally present. I had sermons recorded from various Pentecostal churches in the area, from both mainline Pentecostal churches and from various

independent churches. One or two of the pastors were recorded more than once in order to get a better opportunity of exploring their worldview. On a couple of occasions, the recording was not as good as others so that a few words were not clear enough to transcribe. On those occasions, the missing words were identified by question marks (????) or by leaving a blank in the sentences. All of these things indicate some limitation in the study. The transcriptions of four of the sermons can be found in the Appendix C. These translations were made with the knowledge and permission of the pastors concerned, even though the pastors did not always know when a sermon was being recorded. This approach was followed to eliminate the possibility of a pastor preaching a specially prepared message "for the researcher".

As mentioned previously, the primary language of the study area is Afrikaans. I had to be careful when doing the sermon analysis that I did not read into the Afrikaans something that was not there. I had to be careful that I did not mis-interpret the meanings of the usage of Afrikaans. I was well aware that some Afrikaans terms are difficult to translate directly into English. Often at the Training Centre, I stand and listen to the stories the students are telling each other trying to learn more Afrikaans but also trying to understand what is being said. Many times I have missed the point of the story since I could not understand the colloquial Afrikaans. On some of the occasions when a student has noted my uncomprehending look, I have been told that the story could not be translated into English because it would lose its meaning by doing so. I realized that the language issue was one in which I would have to be extra careful.

### 1.6.3 Personal limitations

Perhaps the greatest limitation involved in a study of this nature is the person doing the study. The study will be characterized by my own ability to understand and to "make sense of" the material gathered during the sermons,

the interviews (both of pastors and members), and the participation in the worship services of the churches in the study area. The fact that I am not an anthropologist means that I have not been trained to the extent that many other researchers have been. It does not mean that I do not have the ability to interpret the material but it does mean that my interpretations may be less “sophisticated” than that of a highly trained anthropologist. On the other hand, my personal experience and understanding gained from involvement in Pentecostal churches most of my life and in particular involvement in the Pentecostal churches within my study area does give me a distinct advantage over an “outsider” researcher, however “sophisticated” his/her research training may be.

I have gained experience in completing the Honours degree in Missiology through UNISA as well as experience through the many hours of studying and preparing lectures to be taught to Pentecostal people through our Training Centre. The study will be a personal study in that I am closely involved with the people whom I am studying.

Because of my familiarity of Pentecostalism, I have attempted to not allow that fact to cause me to present a one-sided or a preconceived viewpoint. The more I became aware of my personal involvement in Pentecostal churches, the more carefully I tried to not let this become a problem.

## **1.7 Sources of Research Material**

There are four sources which provided the information on which this study is based: (1) Pastors’ Interviews, (2) Members’ Interviews, (3) Sermon Analysis, and (4) Participant Observation.

### **1.7.1 Pastors’ Interviews**

After identifying all of the Pentecostal/charismatic churches I could find

in the Retreat area, I was able to interview twenty of the pastors of these churches. Since the study began, I have been able to locate more churches than I had found at the beginning of the study. The pastors were chosen at random, that is, no attempt was made to choose certain pastors from certain religious groups. Forty (40) percent of the pastors interviewed came from mainline Pentecostal churches and sixty (60) percent from independent Pentecostal/charismatic churches. The ages of the pastors were very evenly divided between younger and older pastors. There was also an even balance between older churches established before 1980 (12) and younger churches established after 1980 ( 8).

The same questions were asked to all the pastors, (see interview schedule in Appendix B), with follow-up questions where answers needed further explanation. All but one of the pastors gave me permission to use their names in this study. Any use of the name of a pastor in this study is for the purpose of illustrating some particular point and not to exalt or downplay that pastor's opinion or belief. The interviews proved fruitful and have played a major role in the formation of this study.

### **1.7.2 Member Interviews**

Seventy-five (75) members of the Pentecostal churches in Retreat were interviewed by my helpers. These members were also selected at random from acquaintances of the interviewers and from referrals by various individuals. In some cases the answers from the members are not as extensive as from the pastors. This may be as a result of the members not having the same amount of theological training as the pastors or from the fact that the members have not learned the details of their church's beliefs. At the same time, these interviews may show that there is a difference in what the pastors believe makes a person Pentecostal and what the members do. These differences as well as the similarities are presented and analysed in this study.

### **1.7.3 Sermon Analysis**

The sermon is the primary means of instruction in many of these Pentecostal churches. In the course of my teaching at our Training Centre, I discovered that very few Pentecostal churches in Retreat had regular teaching sessions for the people who attended their services. The sermon was the main way in which the pastor could tell his<sup>7</sup> congregation what to believe, to expect, or any of the other things which sermons entail. Therefore I felt it necessary to study actual sermons that were preached in these churches so that I could analyze what was being preached.

The sermons, I felt, would give me a good source of information on the worldview of the pastors. I have discovered that what a pastor says from the pulpit is seldom questioned by the members. The worldview of the pastors, then, would be transferred to the members of the church. Sermons also contain boundary markers which Schreiter maintains are part of the process of establishing identity. Sermon analysis would indicate which of these boundary markers and worldview are stressed and taught to the people. The sermon also could show how the pastors react to the changing situations of our country. Samples of these sermons can be found in Appendix C.

### **1.7.4 Participant Observation**

The last source of information comes from what Spradley (1980) calls "participant observation." Spradley (1980:51) says about this method that "participation allows you to experience activities directly, to get the feel of what events are like, and to record your own perceptions. At the same time,

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<sup>7</sup> Although a few of the interviewees indicated that a woman could be a pastor, I did not find any women who were actually pastoring a Pentecostal church. All pastors I interviewed were men.

the ethnographer can hardly ever become a complete participant in a social situation.” Although Spradley is referring directly to ethnographic research, participant observation was one of the methods which I used in order to gather information. Not only have I attended the services of many of the Pentecostal churches within the study area in my position as missionary and Training Centre Principal, I have also visited churches for the direct purpose of being a participant observer. I found that it was often difficult to look at what was happening through the eyes of a researcher rather than through the eyes of one who is also a Pentecostal believer, reaffirming and celebrating his Pentecostal identity in such a service. I attempted to see what caused certain things to happen in the services, who participated and to what extent. I tried to put aside as much as possible my own Pentecostal background and to see the services through the eyes of the people of Retreat. I found that extremely difficult because I had been so used to just enjoying the services and participating as a brother in Christ. Nevertheless, these observations have been a help in analyzing the material gained through the other three sources mentioned.

#### **1.7.5 Analysis of research**

The analysis of the research material is the most important part of this study. In doing this analysis I have been careful to look for the markers which indicate a group boundary, an element of worldview or a component of the sign system which is used by Pentecostals. Often these markers are hidden within the words of the people being interviewed or the sermons preached. I had to reread the research material a number of times so that no marker was missed.

In analyzing the sermons, each paragraph was considered on its own for any markers, signs or elements of worldview. Then the overall sermon was checked as to the emphasis of the entire sermon. Sometimes within the

context of the sermon there will be side hints to other issues besides the main emphasis of the sermon itself. These hints have been cross-checked with the other sermons to see whether or not this is a major sign, symbol, boundary, or boundary marker of the Pentecostals or just a side issue with the pastor giving the sermon. Cross-checking the sermons show whether or not there are major themes which are preached. If so, these major themes would indicate dimensions of identity within the Pentecostal community.

The analysis of the pastors' interviews involved a careful reading of the answers to the questions. As mentioned above, some answers generated additional questions, not found in the interview schedule, in order to obtain a clearer image of what the pastor was saying. The pastors' answers were then cross-referenced to see if there were issues, boundary markers or worldviews that were recurring within the different interviews. Again, if there were recurring ideas in the answers of the pastors, then it indicated that those things were of primary importance in establishing Coloured Pentecostal identity.

The same applies to the members' interviews. The difference lies in the fact that the pastors' interviews are more detailed than the members' interviews, resulting in more material to analyze, thus giving a broader view of Pentecostal identity. However, I obtained seventy-five (75) member interviews as compared to only twenty (20) pastor interviews. This has allowed me to get responses from members who attended churches other than the churches whose pastors I interviewed. There will be comparisons of opinion between the pastors and the members where similar views are expressed or where there are opposing views on the same issue. This is not merely a study of what the pastors see as Pentecostal identity. It is a study of Pentecostal identity in general in the Retreat area, therefore the views of the members are just as important as the views of the pastors.



## 1.8 Overview of study.

A church's sense of identity will in many ways also show its sense of mission. A church's sense of boundaries will determine whether or not it will reach out beyond its boundaries or whether it will allow the boundaries to become a wall of separation between itself and those outside of its walls. From the evidence found in the interview schedules and sermons, the boundaries of the Coloured Pentecostals of Retreat are affecting their sense of mission, i.e., their reaching out to other people who do not believe as they do. A church's sense of mission is also seen by its worldview. The Coloured Pentecostals' strong belief in the work of the Holy Spirit and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in each believer's life has far-reaching implications as to the programs of the church and to the daily lives of its members in their witness for Christ. Identity issues and mission issues then are very closely related. In studying the identity of the Coloured Pentecostals, I also study their sense of mission.

Since boundary markers and worldview are both components of identity, it is difficult to separate them. In Chapter Two and Three, I look at Schreiter's two main components of identity, namely boundary and worldview. In Chapter Two I present the traditional boundary markers and worldview primarily demonstrated by the older generation of pastors and members. In Chapter Three I present some of the responses to these traditional boundaries and worldview and show some of the ways in which social change has affected these boundaries. There will be indications of new boundaries, what Schreiter (1985:66) calls "transgressing" of boundaries, i.e., when a boundary is being stretched to accommodate some type of change. The research indicates that there are changes taking place within the Pentecostal community. These changes are important in the developing of an identity which will lead the Pentecostal people into the next century. Although boundaries and worldview are considered in separate chapters, they are bound together in

**their formation of identity.**

**In Chapter Four I consider Coloured and Coloured Pentecostal Identity and attempt to show the correlation between the two identities. In Chapter Five I present my own missiological response to Coloured Pentecostal identity. I offer some tentative suggestions for the identity crisis in the CPC. I also consider the responses which were given in the interviews in light of the missiological impact upon the Coloured Pentecostal community.**

## CHAPTER TWO

### Traditional Coloured Pentecostal Identity

#### 2.1 Introduction

Dr. Vinson Synan, one of the leaders of the Charismatic Renewal Movement in the United States, had just finished a talk to the pastors and leaders of a Pentecostal denomination. He put on a short video of a national gathering of the Charismatic/Pentecostals which took place in Kansas City, Missouri (USA). Without knowing it, though, Dr. Synan had just crossed a boundary line of the local Pentecostals. Immediately after showing the video, the two pastors sitting in front of me turned to me and began to ask questions about what they had seen. The questions were not about what God was doing among the people outside the traditional Pentecostal movement, but about what they had seen in the video -- women in pants, with earrings, and wearing make-up -- all praising the Lord. They could not begin to see how these women were even saved, much less filled with the Holy Spirit. A boundary marker had been crossed, and on that occasion, crossing it meant difficulty for me in the days ahead as the discussion continued for several weeks including a meeting with the leaders of the local church conference and all the ministers of my own denomination. In defending the grace of God for all people, I, too, had crossed a sacred boundary marker. In this chapter I consider some of the boundary markers and the worldview which the Pentecostal people have established that I have identified as being part of the traditional Coloured Pentecostal identity.

## **2.2 Boundaries and Boundary Markers**

**Schreiter (1985:63) maintains that one of the two “principal components” of identity is “the formation of group boundaries.” Boundary markers are borders which have been drawn by groups of people that distinguish that group from another group. It is often difficult for the groups concerned to see clearly that a boundary does exist. The people involved may not realize that they are dealing with boundaries but they just know that “this” makes us different from “that” or “them.” Yet, that is what makes for boundary markers --- the difference(s) between “us” and “them.” The ministers who instigated the discussion about the video did not realise that they were talking about boundary markers of Pentecostal identity but rather, to them, they were considering the very beliefs which they had held for a long time and had been taught to be true. Neither would I have classified our discussion at that time as a crossing of boundaries. What I did realise was that there were limits which had been placed on who could and could not be saved and what these ministers felt was evidence of that salvation.**

**Schreiter (1985:65-66) gives the following information about the importance of boundaries in understanding cultural identity.**

**In some ways the nature of the boundaries is the most interesting part of the problem of the identity. The boundaries are the areas of ambiguity between two states, the “no-man’s-land” where the codes of neither I (internal) nor E (external) obtain. Boundaries are often supervised by specialists who know the territory and have experience of crossing over them and being able to return safely. In engaging in the semiotic description of a culture, one can get at the question of identity in both of these areas by trying to identify the boundaries and the signs that form the boundary markers.**

**Understanding the boundary markers of the Coloured Pentecostal Culture (henceforth abbreviated as CPC) will enable one to have insight into their**

identity. In this chapter we are talking about traditional CPC. To do so, we primarily consider the views of the “specialists” of the CPC, that is the older generation of Pentecostal believers.

I discuss the two main aspects of identity as Schreiter (1985) has described them -- boundaries and worldview. In doing so, I describe what the Coloured Pentecostals present as part of these boundaries. In this section, I discuss the issue of boundaries and boundary markers under the following headings: (1) Experiential Boundaries, (2) Dress Code Boundaries, and (3) Leadership Boundaries. In other words, this chapter considers what is termed traditional<sup>8</sup> Pentecostal identity.

### 2.3 Experiential Boundaries

Evidences of boundaries are seen in codes of behaviour, certain actions, or even certain people, which Schreiter (1985:67) says “tell what it means to be a part of [a] society.” I chose the title “Experiential Boundaries” because experience is a vital part of being Pentecostal. MacDonald (1976:62) says,

One of the chief contributions that Pentecostal theology has to make to the church at large stems from its championing of a dynamic experience of God. Belief in the availability of God's preternatural power and presence is foundational. It means a theology of a God-near-at-hand, who gives abundant evidence of His powerful presence in the church. This theology concerns itself with a deep and on-going experience in God.

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<sup>8</sup>By traditional I mean teachings and customs which have been handed down from family to family, generation to generation, or church to church. In the handing on of the teachings, customs, etc., they have become accepted by a large number of people as a part of the culture in which the people live.

Pentecostals want to experience something in their service of God. In a discussion with some students at the Training Centre, one student said, "Serving God is feeling good, dancing and jumping up and down. It must be exciting!" In other words, if one does not sense that something has happened to oneself, then that person questions whether or not he/she has really met God or been in a service of worshipping God.

### **2.3.1 The Salvation Experience as Boundary**

It is evident from the interviews that Pentecostals believe that a salvation experience is necessary to being a Christian as well as being Pentecostal. They, however, do make a distinction between being "born-again" and "walking the life." I discuss this boundary marker (salvation experience) under two sections: (1) The "Born-Again" Experience and (2) Living the Life.

#### **2.3.1.1 The "Born-Again" Experience**

A distinction is made by Pentecostals in their use of the term "Christian" as to its true definition. That is, distinctions are made between someone who is a nominal (in name only) Christian and a "born again Christian." Pastor Rhoda comments, "Being born again [means] repenting from sins, accepting Jesus Christ as your Saviour. But the other one, just plain Christian, obviously, he is just a Christian by name but not following Him as a disciple." Pastor Almano adds, "There is a born again Christian and then there is the one who is born a Christian by the fact of his parents are Christian so he calls himself a Christian. Then there is the born again Christian, the one who has accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour."

This view is based upon Jesus' teaching from John 3 where He speaks with Nicodemus and tells him that he must be "born again." Pentecostals believe that the experience of "being born again" is what makes a person a

**Christian. To Pentecostals being a Christian is more than just having the title “Christian” or just going to church. It is experiencing the saving power of Jesus. Pastor Erasmus explains this difference saying:**

**Many times people say ‘I am a Christian,’ but haven’t accepted Jesus Christ in their lives yet. So then they are not Christian. It is only the blood, by accepting Jesus Christ in your life that you become a Christian. There is normally a phrase that they are using when they have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ in their life. They say, ‘I am Pentecostal.’ Therefore, I don’t question them as to whether they have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ, because it is accepted [that one has] because if you haven’t accepted the Lord Jesus Christ in your life and you say you are a Christian, you will never say you are Pentecostal. You will just say you are a Christian. You can then ask questions to verify whether the person has really accepted the Lord Jesus in his life.**

**What the Pentecostals are doing is equating being born again with being Pentecostal. It is taking a biblical teaching concerning the salvation offered through Jesus Christ one step further by making that person who does accept Jesus Christ into being a Pentecostal. I have heard numerous sermons and testimonies about the need for people to be “born-again.” This need is what causes the Pentecostal people to reach out beyond the church to people outside so that they, too, can have this same experience. While this may show some evidence of being a component of worldview, that is, there are two kinds of people - born again and ‘lost’ – the markers indicated here are strong enough, in my opinion, to consider it as an indication of a boundary marker. I discuss evangelism more fully in sections 3.5 and 5.6.3.**

### 2.3.1.2 “Living the Life” as Salvation Experience

This boundary marker is an indication of Schreiter's ( :66) “codes of behaviour” and “certain actions.” It is an important issue among Pentecostals. They are vitally concerned that a person really lives as a Christian and is not just a Christian in name. It is when a person truly accepts Jesus Christ and lives the life that the person is accepted into Pentecostal circles. Member 4 says

a Christian is a person who accepted Jesus as his/her personal Saviour and Deliverer. This decision to follow Christ brings about change in the person's life, i.e., he/she is now born again. A Christian is a devout follower of Jesus, a person whose lifestyle speaks of his/her commitment to Christ.

As Pastor A. Hendricks says, “In other words, to walk his daily life before people and to live a clean life so that he can be proven that he is a Christian.” Gause (1976:115) expresses this idea when saying, “The surest evidence of the Holy Spirit-filled life is the Christ-filled life. It is a superficial emphasis to talk about the baptism in the Holy Spirit as giving power only for witnessing. It is empowerment for godly living. This is evident from the fact that the spiritual graces that identify holy living are called the fruit of the Spirit.” As I have heard on several occasions, “One must not talk the walk but one must walk the talk.” In other words, it is not enough just to say you are a Christian. A person must walk daily the life of a true Christian.

Seventy-five (75) percent of the members interviewed indicated their understanding of being a Christian in terms similar to those expressed above: “Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ”; “being born again”; “washed in the blood of Jesus”; “truly serving God.” To become Pentecostal a person will have to cross this boundary marker of “experiencing salvation” as the Pentecostals understand and teach it. Their overwhelming agreement as to what makes a person a Christian indicates that they have heard the gospel message of



**Jesus Christ and want others to hear and experience it in like manner.**

### **2.3.2 The Distinctive Pentecostal Worship Experience as Boundary Marker**

**Worship is a key ingredient in being Pentecostal. Venter (1996:9)  
speaks of**

**rites of intensification (which) are occasions which express a deepening commitment to e.g. 'shared beliefs and meanings', and so refers particularly to the great tradition. This rite repeats the (hi)story of the congregation, binds together the different groups in it, and transmits legacy. Rites of intensification recycle the community from the every day, by way of the extraordinary, to the everyday.**

**Regular Sunday worship to Pentecostals is a "rite of intensification" because it is during the time of worship that Pentecostals express themselves as intensely emotional people. Worship intensifies their beliefs and meaning of being Pentecostal. It is expressed in various ways, both old and new. Alford (1974:65) comments, "In Pentecostal worship, emphasis has always been placed on freedom of expression in worship, absence of formalism or ritual<sup>9</sup>, and creation of a spirit of reverence and love wherein the Holy Spirit Himself may lead and direct the congregation into meaningful, purposeful worship of God." When one attends a Pentecostal service, one quickly realises, as Oosthuizen did, that one is either a participant or an outsider. It is an amazing thing to sit in front of Pentecostal congregations, as I often do, and watch the movement of the people as they worship God. Pastor Lindsay expresses this intensity by saying, "There is an earnestness for God, there is a cry. People want to hear the Word. They want to give themselves over, they want to serve**

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**<sup>9</sup> I use the term rite as the manner which Pentecostals conduct their service not in the sense of a prescribed ritual which to many Pentecostals mean a strict order of service without any deviation whatsoever.**

**God.....they want to love Him.”**

### **2.3.2.1 Expressions of the Pentecostal Worship Experience**

**How do the Pentecostals “give themselves over”? It is seen in the manner that people express their emotions and experience a release of feelings in the presence of God. Member 47 says that it includes “hand clapping, dancing, amens, ‘praise Gods’ and preaching the gospel.” Member 1 says it includes, “worship, clapping hands, praising, serving the Lord in Spirit and in truth.” Member 53 expresses this part of worship saying, “..things [that] are associated with Pentecostals, e.g., speaking in tongues, prophesying, interpretation of tongues. Other things that some non-Christians make fun of, are dancing in the Spirit, clapping of hands, things non-Christians don’t understand.” Member 26 states that “for as long as I can remember, Pentecostals were not called by this term but they were called ‘hande-klappers’ (hand-clappers).” Member 60 states, “Pentecostal is revival; going to church to receive a blessing; giving yourself over to God, rejoicing and dancing before God.” “Giving yourself over” means the person has yielded him/herself to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit which may result in dancing before the Lord, speaking in tongues, prophesying or to any of the other gifts of the Spirit.**

**Aeschliman (1983:66) points out that**

**being emotionally oriented, the members of these groups are interested in the experience of the power of God, and their testimonies of being able to tap that power in healing, economic sufficiency, etc., indicate that they want a God that is at hand and is able and willing to intervene on their behalf in a world that is essentially unfriendly toward them and usually beyond their control. They are linked to God directly by faith, but that faith requires constant reassurance through evidence of divine power being available to them.**

**The signs of dancing in the Spirit, clapping of hands, moving of the body in time**

with the music, all help create an atmosphere where the people can worship God. It is a part of their being one with the Holy Spirit. Roelofs (1994:220) seems to agree when he says

By their enthusiasm, charismatics create a context in which they are able to have a religious experience. Awareness of their submissive position toward God is not only a precondition for this enthusiasm, but it is also continually re-experienced in the religious events that it evokes. The latter element is the prerequisite to keep the process going. As long as participants are convinced that they are receiving responses from God, they can keep their spirits high and will continue to look for points of orientation outside themselves.

Emotionally, these demonstrations allow them to release the feelings which may have been kept down during the week's activities at work or at home. But at church, they are free to express themselves through hand clapping and dancing to endeavour in their own way to draw closer to God. Psychologically, these various demonstrations of Pentecostal worship give the people the opportunity to renew their inner spirit by allowing the Holy Spirit to move through them as they attempt to gain the needed renewal for the week or day ahead. Spiritually, it allows the Pentecostal to experience the joy of serving one's God through speaking in tongues, hand clapping, dancing or any of the other things that identify one as Pentecostal. Fisher (1974:17) says,

In recent years social and psychological pressures have created a sense of alienation and depersonalization that plagues the individual. Affluence, particularly in the Western world, has freed man to think more about himself. The result has been that many have sought to validate their identity and to discover their purposes in life through subjective experiences.....

Although what Fisher says is only partly applicable to the CPC in that he speaks more to the Western world, Pentecostal worship is one of the ways that allows the individual worshipper to "validate one's identity" in one's relationship with God.

**MacDonald (1976:64-65) says that emotions can have a benefit to the individual.**

**...the real test of whether we have emotionalism is not the degree or intensity of emotions as measured by a psychometer. Rather emotionalism consists of the seeking and stimulation of emotions as ends in themselves, and not as the by-products of real experience in truth and in God. Emotionalism in this pejorative sense is "of the flesh," and we do not claim that there have not been those among us who were culpable of mistaking effects for causes in this manner. However, we would assert unequivocally that any genuine experience with the living God will leave an emotional wake in a man's psyche. This is not emotionalism but man's being humanized again by the liberating Spirit of God.**

**McLuhan (1974:134) puts the issue into perspective by saying, "Looking at the picture from a purely biblical viewpoint, current types of so-called Pentecostal worship run all the way from disorganized, uncontrolled emotional frenzy to profound, thoroughly scriptural and skillfully Christ-centered services."**

### **2.3.2.2 The Dance as Pentecostal Worship Experience**

**There is, in every place where Pentecostals gather to worship God, an area between the pulpit and the first row of seats which I call the "open place." It does not matter whether the room, hall or church is small or large, there will always be an open place. I have never heard anyone explain the purpose of the open place but it is evident that it is used for the purpose of allowing the people a place to dance before the Lord. This open place does not replace the altar where in more liturgical churches the Lord's table would be found. Whenever the observance of the Lord's table occurs, a table is placed within this area so that the people can participate in the sacrament of the Lord's table. However, the presence of the table does not mean there will be no dancing in the Spirit. There was no indication either during the interview schedules or during participant observation that the dance took on any "sacramental" character such as the Lord's table. It does,**

however, take place normally in this open place and plays a role in CPC worship.

Dancing in the Spirit is an important part of the traditional Coloured Pentecostal culture. It is the songs which are known as “quickies” that often are the songs that people dance to. Pastor Wilschutte says, “we still basically sing the old quickies and old songs. We love the hymn book songs very much. Although you have to put your foot down to get one in or you just get the quickies all the time, [they] will keep on flowing.” It is often the older generation that begins the dance even though all ages are permitted to participate in it. I have even seen children as young as eight or nine joining in the dance. Aeschliman (1983:84) draws the following conclusion from his observance of Pentecostal people.

It is difficult to escape the conclusion that this ‘dancing in the spirit’ is for some at least a religiously-accepted alternative to that which is expressly forbidden by the standards of their Church. It is certain that for some, especially for the young people, there are no religious overtones here at all, but at best they are playing at Church and at worst caricaturizing what is to some sincere Christians as an act of worship before God.

There may very well be instances where the descriptions given by Aeschliman would be true, but for the majority of those who participate in the dance, they see it as an act of worship which they do before God.

“Dancing in the Spirit” is one way that Pentecostals express their emotions as a release to the tensions and trials which they may have experienced during the past week. The dance becomes an opportunity for the people to display their zeal and love for their Lord. It may be true that not all of the “dancing” is “before the Lord” but of one’s own desire. It does not, however in any way negate the reality that to Pentecostals to “dance before the Lord” shows their love and fervour for the Lord. I have sat in many services and sensed the emotions building and the level of intensity rise until the right thing happens that will trigger the dancing. Hollenweger (1994:201) says that the dance is an example of the

**“oral quality of Pentecostalism” which consist of the following:**

**orality of liturgy; narrative theology and witness; maximum participation at the levels of reflection, prayer, and decision making, and therefore a reconciliatory form of community; inclusion of dreams and visions into personal and public forms of worship that function as a kind of ‘oral icon’ for the individual and the community; an understanding of the body-mind relationship that is informed by experiences of correspondence between body and mind as, for example, in liturgical dance and prayer for the sick.**

**I have also noticed that, in many cases, it is the old songs which trigger the dance. As Pastor Matthews comments, “[it is] the old ones, like the Afrikaans’ ones. I have noticed choruses which really don’t mean anything like, *Klim op die wa.....*” Member 36 says that “a lot of the old songs were just sung because they had a nice rhythm.” Pastor Adams says that many of the old choruses “didn’t have any meaning.” One must ask why is it that the old songs become the trigger mechanism which brings about the dance. If it is true like Pastor Matthews says that there is really no meaning to the songs, why do they cause such emotional reactions? It may be true that some of the “words” do not have literal meaning, but to the people who sing them and begin to dance in response to them, the choruses have meaning. It may be a more sub-conscious response than a conscious, rational response. Because it triggers a response from members of the CPC, it becomes a vital sign of identity.**

**In this day of fast paced change, do the old songs remind the people of a time when things were more settled and not changing? Do they remember the past times of worship or experiences which they do not have or see today? It is evident from the interviews that many traditional Pentecostal people long for a time that is past. Perhaps they think it was a simpler time when things were not changing so rapidly. It may be that today the events that are occurring around them seem to be out of their control and they dream of what used to be. What is important, however, is the fact that to these Pentecostals, “dancing in the Spirit**

before the Lord,” is a very vital and necessary part of their experiencing the presence of the Lord. It is a boundary marker of the Pentecostal Worship Experience.

### 2.3.2.3 Pentecostal Corporate Worship Experience

An essential part of the Pentecostal Worship Experience is the manner in which Pentecostals worship as a body of believers. Karecki (1997:130) says that “corporate worship shapes the church’s identity while empowering them to transmit that identity as they shape the world around them.” Pastor Wilschutte says that “with the Afrikaans, [we say] ‘ons is bymekaar, ons gaan die Here prys.’ It was not so much emphasis on praise and worship.” The traditional Pentecostal came to church for two reasons, to be with other believers and to praise the Lord together. They were not concerned with the formal liturgies of the other churches but with the opportunity to gather together to express their feelings as a body of believers who loved and served the Lord. Johannesen (1994:183) describes the closeness of the Pentecostal believers by saying, “A leading metaphor for the people of the church as a whole, and for the nature of their relationships with one another, is the metaphor of the family. The church is frequently called ‘one family.’ We should expect that here, if anywhere, we would find the key to a religious bond.” While Johannesen uses this idea for the whole church, it is an apt description of the Pentecostal church.

Oosthuizen (1975:196) found the same thing occurring in Durban among Indian Pentecostals. He said, “...the church is a true home, a family in which love for one another genuinely reigns. Its formality, as well as the total outward expression of the church in all its work, makes of the church a community of like-minded people, of ‘brothers’ and ‘sisters’ . . . . .” Worship has become a distinguishing boundary for Pentecostal people. Many of the pastors indicate that there is a dimension of serving God through praise and worship that sets the Pentecostal believer apart from other believers. Pentecostal worship is unique in

that it embraces everyone in the church and allows them to participate to the fullness of their own feelings concerning God. D'Epina (1969:54-55) says of the worship in Chile:

One should not judge hastily the excesses of emotion which accompany worship in Pentecostalist churches. Before making any other interpretation or any value judgment, theological or otherwise, one must recognize that they permit people to participate in a direct and personal way in religious manifestations and in the congregation. They are forms of participation, they are the languages of those who have no language, the means of expressing their experience of encountering something greater than themselves; they are the thankful demonstration of the individual's liberation accomplished through the activities of the Pentecostalist congregation.

Everyone is expected to join in. The believer becomes a participant in the worshipping arena without which it would be like Pastor Flandorp expresses it, "Otherwise, it was just like a normal church and sit around and sing. There were no expressions of the Spirit. It was inside [the believer] instead of the expression of the Pentecostal experience."

In corporate worship the individual loses some of his or her individuality and become part of a broader community of believers. It is in this community of worshippers that a person finds that he/she is not alone but a member of a group of people with similar problems, emotions and experiences which come together as they worship together. Corporate worship reinforces the individual's belief by the recognition of group belief, that is, there are a number of people who have the same beliefs and who come together to express those beliefs. For instance, in the case of many of the women who attend the Coloured Pentecostal churches, they do so alone without other family members. In this isolation within the natural family home, one finds within the corporate worship experience the opportunity to be a part of a larger family – the family of God, the family of believers. This sense of community, of belonging, of being part of a family, acts



as an encouragement for the individual believer. They are then able to come together and worship as part of a body of believers rather than having to worship only as an individual. Corporate participant worship is a vital boundary marker for the Pentecostal people. It is truly a Pentecostal Worship Experience.

### **2.3.3 Experiencing the Supernatural as Boundary**

Speaking about the past, Pastor Jacobs says, "You could be sure of Pentecostals because at that time, God used the people because the people had more experience. God could use them in many ways. The blind see. The dead raised. All these things happened. If you prayed in that time, the walls were wet with sweat." Pastor Flandorp says that "there was much more power of the Spirit in those days, especially as far as sickness is concerned and demons and things like that." Both of these pastors refer to events which took place in the past but are saying that Pentecostal people were known by the supernatural experiences which occurred in their services.

Pastor Clarence states, "When people come into our meetings, they see the liberty, they see the Spirit of God moving in our midst..." Member 36 expresses this desire by saying that "I have a yearning inside of me to see miracles, a yearning to experience supernatural things." Pastor Jackson says, "We want to see, people want to see God to perform miracles in their material thing, in their households...." There is the sense of the supernatural in Pentecostal services, the expectation of a moving of the Spirit of God in their midst. Eighty (80) percent of the members identify the moving of the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as tongues, prophecy, and interpretation of tongues, as indications of being Pentecostal. This sense of the supernatural is not limited just to the services. Pastor Booyesen gives the following example.

To be at night time in these areas, if you are a Pentecostal you can walk all over. But if you are not a Pentecostal, I mean, you can get in trouble here. I did find out that many times when I walk here in my areas, when people call you brother, they will not

get you. 'No this is a brother, hello brother.' They look at you and, 'No, no, this is a brother.'. You are always on the safe side in South Africa [being Pentecostal].

While there are changes in the Pentecostal churches, there is still a sense of the supernatural in their midst, an expectation of something that will happen which sets them apart from other churches.

In considering the use of the term Pentecostal, only three churches within Retreat use the name Pentecostal in their title. All the others do not use the term "Pentecostal" yet consider themselves to be Pentecostal. The list of churches in Retreat, (see Appendix A), contains names of churches which are not normally associated with the Pentecostal/charismatic movement, but are considered in this study because the people who attend these churches consider themselves to be Pentecostal.

#### 2.4 The Dress Code Boundary

Venter (1996:11) says that "...*patterns of attitudes, dress, behaviour, role expectations* reflect the identity of the group as a whole (or corporate identity) [*italics in original*]." One very prominent boundary marker for the traditional Coloured Pentecostals is the boundary marker of dress. The manner in which Pentecostal people have dressed, in particular for church services, has set them apart from other church groups. Pastor Biegnaar points out that "we have always held on to older times when women have to have on their hats and dress properly and men dress properly and up to now they still stick to that – with their suits, jackets and ties. We have always believed that we ought to be presentable when doing God's work." Pastor P Muller agrees when he says, "Luckily, by us, it is still the old tradition, dress formally. People are still on the old system of dress, correctly, which I also like them to be as the pastor of the church. We haven't gotten any problems on dress so far."

## **Pastor Clarence says**

**When it comes to dress code, we believe that women especially, should be dressed modestly. We do not allow any of our people to be in service, for instance, wearing the long pants. We would have no objection for visitors, unsaved people, coming into the meetings perhaps with long pants. But we would not allow our own people to come into the house of God, especially when they sing in the choir, or address the congregation -- we would not allow them to wear the long pants. We believe they should be dressed modestly.**

**Pastor D..... points out that "...in our church we have one dress, one colour - a white hat, a white blouse and black skirt. We haven't got what we can say as change, because some other churches take any dress, any colour. The youngsters try to bring in new fashion, new colours in."**

**While most churches do not have the strict dress code as in Pastor D's..... church, almost every Pentecostal church has some requirement as to what can and can not be worn to church. The requirements, whatever they may be, are for women, in particular. The women must have their heads covered when they enter the church and especially during prayer time. There is not as strict a requirement for men's clothing although there are certain requirements such as the one given by Pastor A Hendricks.**

**Our church has improved in dress, not in the terms of modernization of being modern in the terms of flimsy clothes or modern wear. They have improved from being people that lived in corrugated iron little shacks where they didn't have the second jacket or dress to wear. They have improved in the way of life. And they are dressing properly, dressing godly, wearing dresses that cover their knees, wearing hats – the ladies, wearing ties - the men. We don't allow them to come in actually without a tie. If they don't have a tie, we lend them a tie. We feel that the house of the Lord is a holy place and it needs to be respected. I believe that if you are invited to the king of any country, you put your best dress on even if it is a bow-tie to show respect. Why**

shouldn't a child of God also dress his best to go to the house of God. It is a matter of respect. This is what I believe.

The matter of dress is an important one. I visited in one Pentecostal church within the study area where, from the pulpit, the pastor welcomed the visitors and then told the ladies to wear a hat or head covering the next time they came to church. Pastor Rhoda says, "When it came to clothing, we were hammered to dress correctly. We are still covering the heads." The dress code sets Pentecostal people apart from other church groups. Many times when one drives down the streets, one sees people on the way to church and can pick out the Pentecostals by the way they are dressed. To be fully incorporated into the traditional Pentecostal identity, one must cross the dress code boundary.

## **2.5 Leadership Boundaries**

There is within the Pentecostal churches what I call leadership boundaries. That is, there are certain church structures which must be adhered to as to the positions a person can hold. All twenty pastors I interviewed were men. I have not found any church within the study area which has a woman as pastor. It is significant that men hold the predominant positions in every church, without exception. In the answers to the interview schedule by the pastors, they indicated that seventy-two (72.1) percent of their members were women. At the same time, they indicated that seventy (70) percent of their church board/council members were men. Venter (1995:332) is right when he says that "South African congregations also have to deal with the dominance of structures by males....." As a general rule, leadership positions are determined by the men who serve on the boards or councils and only in the area of women's activities are the women allowed to be in positions of leadership.

In the member interviews, thirty-three (33) percent of the members

allowed women to hold the office of pastor and thirty-one (31) percent allowed women to be an assistant pastor. Member 3 will allow women to hold any office but qualifies it by saying the women were "not to dominate." Member 5 says that the church "is run by the Reverend who is and has the highest authority within the church structure." (This particular church does not have a church board or council.) Pastor Booyesen says, "In our church, we believe that a woman must be quiet in church according to the scriptures. That is the meaning when I come to other Pentecostal that there is a difference. They use a woman to preach or to pastor a church, and so on."

Aeschliman (1983:173) points out the extremes by saying

the position of women in the Coloured Churches as a whole, that is, including the denominational groups as well as the Independent groups, varies considerably from the one extreme in which women play no part whatsoever other than being present at the meetings to the other farthest extreme in which women can hold any office and carry out any function, and can even be ordained.

The same can be said of the Indian Pentecostals in Durban. Oosthuizen (1975:327) says, "No special women preachers among Pentecostals were in operation in the Durban area. Not once did a woman take a service during the five and a half years regular attendance of Indian Pentecostal churches by the author." In the study area of Retreat, I found no woman who had obtained any position greater than that of Elder or Deacon. I have visited many Pentecostal churches and discovered most, if not all, the men sitting in front or along the side of the church in special seats indicating that they held some position in the church. In no church that I visited in Retreat were the women afforded such distinction or honour. The only services I have attended in the Retreat area where a woman was in charge of the service were on Mother's Day or a special youth service.

Pastor J Hendricks points out one situation which he sees has devel-

oped within the church as a result of the leadership structure of the church. He says, "There is a position struggle. Everyone wants to be on top or wants a title, especially among the men. There is a great power struggle." It is as if there is a fear on the part of pastors that unless they accommodate the desires of the men for positions, they will lose them. It is understandable that with only twenty-eight (28) percent of the congregation being men, that the pastor would want to hold on to as many men as he has but it is not understandable that the pastors overlook women who may be just as qualified as men to hold positions in the church. For the present time in Pentecostal churches, there is a very distinct boundary related to leadership positions which delineates which positions can be held by men and women.

Two issues arise as a result of the interviews. The first issue concerns women serving as pastors or elders. Thirty-eight (38) percent of members and pastors will allow women to serve in the office of pastor. However, only twenty-four percent (24) of pastors and members will allow women to serve in the office of elder while thirty-one (31) percent will allow women to serve in the office of deacon. What this shows is that although there is very little evidence of women actually serving in the position of pastor, a woman would be more acceptable in that position than she would be accepted in the position of elder or deacon. One can ask, "Why will more members and pastors allow a woman to serve as pastor than serve as deacon or elder?" There is no indication from the interview schedules as to why this phenomenon exists.

The second issue that arises as a result of the interviews is the discrepancy of views between members and pastors over this issue. In breaking down the percentages into separate categories I found that while thirty-three (33) percent of the members will allow women to become pastors, only fifteen (15) percent of the members will allow women to hold the office of elder and only twenty-one (21) percent will allow women to be a deacon. Sixty (60) percent of the pastors, on the other hand, will allow women to hold the position of pastor. The same percentage will allow women to hold the office

of elder and seventy (70) percent of the pastors will allow women to be a deacon. In breaking the members' answers down further, thirty-five (35) percent of the men compared to thirty-two (32) percent of the women, will allow women to be pastors. However, only ten (10) percent of the men compared to nineteen (19) percent of the women, will allow women to hold the office of elder. There is a clear difference between what the pastors will allow and what their members will allow or want. Although the results of the interviews indicate that *most members would accept women* to hold most leadership positions in the church, the reality is that in traditional CPC churches, women are not allowed to fill positions of leadership other than in their "own affairs".

Let us now turn to the second aspect of Schreiter's understanding of identity - - Worldview.

## 2.6 Introduction to the Traditional CPC Worldview

There wasn't anything about the visitors that afternoon that was unusual as they had been to our house on numerous occasions. The visit went along normally until after tea had been served. I had a feeling that this wasn't just a social call as other visits had been in the past. The reason for the visit finally began to be discussed. One of the students had spoken to his mother about something that had been said in one of the classes I had taught at the Training Centre which, on the surface of it, seemed to go against the way that things had always been done. This mother had approached my visitors with a complaint about what was being taught.

Since it had to do with local traditions, the question was asked whether or not I should be the one teaching a class on local customs and traditions. In other words, what was an American doing teaching a class that dealt with South African culture, customs and traditions? There was no such class! The discussion had taken place in one of the Bible classes and the student

had then gone home to his mother with some new ideas which, to say the least, were not accepted by the mother. What was being expressed that afternoon, in reality, were conflicting worldviews. It was assumed that a particular American worldview was in conflict with a particular South African worldview. There was a conflict going on between traditional<sup>10</sup> and modern<sup>11</sup> worldviews surrounding that particular subject. Conflicts between worldviews are not new and will continue to occur whenever people of differing cultures meet.

### 2.6.1 An Understanding of Worldview

Schreiter (1985:63) maintains that “group boundaries” along with “worldviews” are the two primary aspects of identity. Although Schreiter includes these two aspects of identity, he does not, in my opinion, give a full enough description of what is meant by the term “worldview.” Schreiter deals extensively with the influences of social change upon boundaries and worldviews, which cause changes in the identity of a particular culture by changing those boundaries and worldviews. Schreiter (1985:105-106) defines worldview in the following terms:

Paired with group boundary is world-view, the grid whereby a society decided what needs to be explained and how to explain it. Those resources of explanation embody the values, the beliefs, and classificatory categories of a culture. Like the group boundary, the world-view may be more or less tightly woven, depending upon the needs of the environment. Group boundary and world-view together form a matrix within which

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<sup>10</sup>See footnote one.

<sup>11</sup> In this instance, I use the term “modern” only in the sense of something which is different from the normally held views of the culture which, in this case, was seen as a threat to some particular tradition of that culture. I do not use the term “modern” in the sense of modernity. I do not attempt to value one above the other but desire to make a distinction in this case of worldview understanding.



both the society as a whole and the individuals within it find that selfhood called identity. Tradition is the repository of the lore about group boundary and about world-view, usually transmitted to the young of a society in preparation for full participation in the culture as adults.

Schreier believes that this grid, or, matrix, determines who is "in" and who is "out" in any particular situation. This influences both the boundary markers and the worldview of a person or people. As change affects the boundary markers, it will also affect the worldview which will result in change in the society as a whole or the group in question if it is, in this case, a sub-culture of a larger culture.

To better understand Schreier's use of the concept worldview, one must also include his use of metaphor, root metaphor and semiotic domains for these are the key dimensions of his semiotic approach to culture. Schreier (1985:69) gives the following definitions:

(1) Metaphors are keys to how signs can be linked together and how sign systems are created. A metaphor results when two discrete signs are identified with each other..... (2) Metaphors are central to the functioning of culture texts, especially those culture texts that express in a special way the structures of identity. (3) A semiotic domain could be considered an assemblage of culture texts relating to one set of activities in culture (economic, political, familiar), which are organized together by a single set of messages and metaphoric signs. (4) A root metaphor gives direction to the signs to be included and the codes to be developed within the domain.

Thus, worldview is determined by the "matrix" or "grid" of the culture texts, metaphors and domains which together give the individual or culture a means to decipher what goes on around one and to draw logical conclusions (to the individual or culture) based on one's understanding of the situation. Schrei-

ter's matrix then would be similar to Kraft's (1979:53) view that "the worldview of a culture or subculture [is] the central control-box of that culture." I want to broaden Schreiter's concept of worldview by incorporating the views of two other people, Michael Kearney (1984) and Charles Kraft (1979)

Kearney (1984:41) says that

the world view of a people is their way of looking at reality. It consists of basic assumptions and images that provide a more or less coherent, though not necessarily accurate, way of thinking about the world. A world view comprises images of Self and of all that is recognized as not-Self, plus ideas about relationships between them.....

Kraft (:53) further says that the worldview "lies at the very heart of culture, touching, interacting with, and strongly influencing every other aspect of the culture." There are clear indications of this "self – not self" tension among traditional CPC. I discuss this in more detail later.

The worldview of the CPC is strongly influenced by their concepts and understandings of what it is to be Pentecostal. If Kearney (1984:35) is right that "people make decisions on the basis of their images and assumptions about their life situations," then the effect, which comes from the implications of being "Pentecostal" upon the CPC worldviews cannot be ignored. To better understand worldview, I include the five functions of worldview as presented by Kraft (1979:54-56):

1. (It) explains how and why things got to be as they are and how and why they continue or change.
2. (It) serves as *evaluational* – a judging and validating – function.
3. (It) provides *psychological reinforcement* for that group.
4. (It) serves as an *integrating* function.
5. A group's worldview does not completely determine the perception of all its members at all times. (*italics in original*)

Kraft sees the function of worldview as being the centre point around which the culture turns. It gives direction to the culture as it explains, judges, and reinforces the beliefs of a culture. Worldview allows either for the acceptance or rejection of ideas or situations coming from outside, or, for that matter, from the inside, if the idea is new or dissimilar to traditionally held views. It is understood that no one consciously thinks about one's worldview when faced with differing situations or circumstances. No one stops and says, "Now what is my worldview on this matter?" But a person's worldview does determine the response of the person to a situation or circumstance.

I consider three dimensions of the CPC worldview: (1) Pneumatic Dimension, (2) Deliverance Dimension and (3) the Economic Dimension. I believe the Pneumatic Dimension to be at the heart of the CPC worldview. The Pneumatic Dimension, in particular, serves all of Kraft's functions: explanation, evaluational, psychological and integrating.

## 2.6.2 Pneumatic Dimension of the CPC Worldview

Schreiter (1985:69) speaks about

*metaphors* which are keys to how signs can be linked together and how sign systems are created. (They) result when two discrete signs are identified with each other.....one of the reasons for the power of the metaphor is the metonymic process, whereby part of the sign stands for the whole.....(italics in original).

An example of the metonymic process is the word, cross. In Christian terms, the word cross stands for Jesus Christ as well as the crucifixion. In other words, "cross" has undergone a metonymic change where a part of the sign now represents the whole. The term Pentecost also can be described as undergoing a metonymic process. In the Old Testament the word Pentecost was associated with the Feasts of Weeks festival which began fifty days after

the Passover. In the book of Acts, it is reported by Luke that the Holy Spirit was first poured out on the early church on the Day of Pentecost or the fiftieth day after the Jewish Passover. Today the term Pentecost has reference to the activity of the Holy Spirit, in all its aspects from signs and wonders to the fruit of the Spirit. Gause (1976:112) says, "...if the term and the movement come to take on a normative character and to correspond to each other, the term (or terms) and its definition become fairly well identified and stable. It is my contention that this has happened with the word 'Pentecostal' and its derivatives." The term "Pentecost" has been redefined to take on a much broader meaning, now encompassing all the various works and signs of the Holy Spirit. Thus it has undergone a metonymic process. To understand the Pneumatic dimension of the CPC worldview is to come to a better understanding of their identity. When one person uses the term "Pentecostal", another person will think in terms of the Holy Spirit whether or not the understanding of the Spirit is the same for the two individuals.

I discuss the Pneumatic Dimension under seven sections: (1) Holy Spirit Understanding, (2) Holy Spirit Power, (3) Holy Spirit Power in Church Services, (4) Actualization of Holy Spirit Power, (5) Power of the Blood of Jesus, (6) Holy Spirit Control and (7) the Dualistic Aspect of the Pneumatic Dimension.

#### **2.6.2.1 Holy Spirit Understanding**

Kraft's fifth function of worldview, "not all agree at any one time", is seen clearly in that there is a wide range of understandings of what it means to be Pentecostal which includes differences on such things as who the Holy Spirit is and what the Holy Spirit is supposed to do in one's life. Anderson (1990:59) says, "The doctrine of the baptism of the Holy Spirit is the single most distinctive teaching of the Pentecostals." Although there is varied response to question 17 of the interview schedule - what things make a person

**Pentecostal - a majority of the people have very similar views. Pentecostal people see the world through their understanding of the Spirit. MacDonald (1976:65) expresses it this way,**

**when one speaks of *'the Pentecostal experience,'* it is not usually necessary to designate that he means the experience of being filled by the Lord with the Spirit to the point that the Spirit can articulate through him in another language-unlearned [by the recipient]—the praise and glory of God. (*italics in original*)"**

**The "Spirit" permeates their lives in all aspects of daily living. This will be evident in the following sections, also. Pastor Clarence says that being Pentecostal means "the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the initial evidence of speaking in other tongues. It also should be accompanied by the fruits of the Spirit." These two things - tongues and fruits - are considered by most Pentecostals as being the primary evidences of the Holy Spirit in a person's life. Pastor D. Muller says that it also includes "a sense of community among the people" and a "sense of love being shared among the people." Member 4 expands this understanding by saying "Pentecostals are also seen as a group who believe in the manifestations of the Spirit, e.g., speaking in tongues, interpretation of tongues, etc." Member 5 adds that "visions, dreams, and revelations" make one Pentecostal.**

**Another aspect of being Pentecostal is expressed by Member 7 who says that "Pentecostals walk in the Spirit, walk in righteousness and truth." This particular idea was expressed by both pastors and members that how one "walked," that is, how one lived on a daily basis as Pentecostals, set them apart as different from other Christians because they were Pentecostal. This idea has been discussed in 2.3.1.2. Another understanding of being Pentecostal is expressed by Member 28 who says that "the things that make a person Pentecostal [are] the Holy Spirit fills the person up and manifests [Himself] through tongues, gifts of healing, etc., and miraculous signs and**

wonders.” In Section 2.4.2.2, I discuss the idea of the miraculous under “Holy Spirit Power.”

Not everyone defines Pentecostal in the terms used above. For example, Pastor Jacobs says, “It is not the baptism that makes you Pentecostal. Because you can get the baptism but still not live the life and bear the fruits. You must bring forth the fruit and live the life that the Word of God says.” Pastor Jacobs views would seem to be in close agreement to the views expressed by Member 7 above. Pastor J Hendricks says that a Pentecostal is “obedient to the Word of God and does whatever God requires of him and commands him and accepts the doctrine of the Trinity.” Pastor Matthews says it is one “who has the experience of the Holy Spirit, the infilling of the Holy Spirit. Not naturally speaking in tongues, but has been filled with the Holy Spirit.” Member 37 believes it is “what one does about one’s beliefs.” Member 42 says it is “serving God in Spirit and truth and love Him with all your heart.” Member 45 says it is “the way we conduct our services.” Member 50 says it is “not being selfish, but giving out, telling others about what God has done in your life.” Member 60 says, “A Pentecostal Christian is a freed Christian. If God has set you free, you’re free indeed.” Member 63 says it is “clothing; how they dress/are dressed.”

It is clear that there are differing views as to what it is that makes a person Pentecostal. It is difficult from only the answers obtained in the interviews to know the reasons for the differing views from people who all claim to be Pentecostal. It is needful to go beyond the interview to involvement in the lives of the people - especially their worship - to get behind the scene, as it were, to have a better idea of the reasons for this wide range of understanding. This I have done both as a minister and as a participant observer. I discovered that one major reason for the wide range of views of what it means to be Pentecostal is a lack of in-depth teaching on the part of those who minister the Word of God. The lack of in-depth teaching can be seen by the fact that only one person interviewed (see previous page) referred

to doctrine when asked about Pentecostal identity. Anderson (1990:55-56) expresses two possible reasons for this by saying

....most Pentecostals, especially the classical groups, are not creedal and theological movements. Experiences with God provide a basis for their faith.....Pentecostals emphasize the personal knowledge of God and expect an existential encounter with a God whose presence can be felt and experienced. They desire experiences that are 'better felt than telt (sic), better walked that talked'.

Gause (1976:115) seems to agree by saying,

Pentecostals tend to place their religious commitments and experiences in an unanalyzed vacuum unaffected by other intellectual developments. Traditional Pentecostals want a slicked-up evangelistic and hortatory professionalism but not an analytical systematic theology. The Charismatics want an experience that does not interfere with doctrinal and traditional commitments already made.

In Pentecostal churches, it is not just the pastor who preaches but also many members of the congregation, whether or not they have had any kind of training to preach. I discovered that the sermons have more to do with "getting saved" or with encouraging the people to "hold on" than with any deeper understanding of the Bible. An example of this is found in a sermon from a young man who spoke at one of the churches. He encouraged the congregation that "it's not bad to feel frustrated. If you feel despair and when you come to that place, but just don't park there! Don't just sit there in despair....call out to God.....I don't know how long you are waiting but keep holding on. The promise God has made will surely come." His sermon was an exhortation for the people to keep on believing the Lord to answer their needs in His time. He just told us to not give up and to believe what God has said would surely come true. It is an example of sermons which are preached

every week in Pentecostal churches. I have heard many which would fall into this same type of sermon. What this means is that there is not always clear teachings on what a particular church believes so that the members might not have theological understanding of what being Pentecostal means but rather an understanding of what God says He will do for them to meet the needs which they are facing at that moment in their lives.

People attend Pentecostal churches for various reasons, many of which are not for any emphasis on doctrine or for deeper understanding of the Word of God. As several members explained it, "Pentecostal people are those who clap their hands, dance and have a certain style of worship." To these people, being Pentecostal has more to do with experiencing the presence of God than with understanding the theological significance of Pentecostalism. In some respects this could also be considered as a release mechanism to the pent-up emotions from the week's struggles, conflicts and situations. Aeschli-man (1983:68) points out

..... the Pentecostals come for the most part from lower socio-economic groups. For such a people, the assurance that they can be directly linked to an all-powerful God who will hear and answer the prayers of his people in ways that go far beyond all that can be accomplished by mere humans has an almost irresistible attraction.

As Anderson (1990:55-56) said, "it is better felt", that is, people want to feel better so that they can walk daily with their Lord.

As I explained to the pastors during my interviews, I do not intend to criticise them in any way and I do not intend for my observations to be critical of the pastors. I can not side-step the fact, however, that the interviews do point out this wide discrepancy in the knowledge of the members as to what it means to be Pentecostal. However, the majority of the members and pastors believe that being Pentecostal has to do with some form of relationship with the Holy Spirit either in an experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit and



showing the manifestations of the Spirit or in the Spirit being in one's life in their daily walk. Let us now look at the second part of the Pneumatic Dimension, Holy Spirit Power.

#### **2.6.2.2 Holy Spirit Power**

Oosthuizen (1975:24) says of the Indian Pentecostals in Durban that "Pentecostalism was born in the heart of the lower income groups, the marginal people and this is true of Pentecostalism among Africans, Coloureds and Whites also." In a world, which for all practical purposes seems to be working against you and trying to prevent you from achieving the "better" things in life, there is a tendency to desire some form of power which is greater than you are, yet something that will give you a sense of security, a feeling of assurance that all things will work out right in the end. Pentecostal people in Retreat for the most part come from the lower income bracket. The interviews shows that the majority (64,4%) of members fall within the R0 - 2 000,00 per month income bracket. With this low income per month, any "power" which these people could claim would not be coming from the employment sector of the economy. For Pentecostal people, they turn to their religion for this power they desire. Aeschliman (1983:66) found this to be true in his study of the Cape Flats.

Being emotionally oriented, the members of these groups are interested in the experience of the power of God, and their testimonies of being able to tap that power in healing, economic sufficiency, etc., indicate that they want a God that is at hand and is able and willing to intervene on their behalf in a world that is essentially unfriendly toward them and usually beyond their control. They are linked to God directly by faith, but that faith requires constant reassurance through evidence of divine power being available to them.

**They experience this in their services and carry it over into their daily lives.**

### **2.6.2.3 Power in Church Services**

**There are various ways in which the Holy Spirit Power is manifested within the church services. Member 26 indicates one manner by saying, "Believers were afraid to come with unconfessed sin in their lives to church, for the Holy Spirit of God would soon through prophesy reveal this. There was a mighty move of the Spirit." Member 33 says that "...we are moving from power to power. There is a definite move to make services as people centred as possible. People are serving God through the power of the Spirit." Member 36 expresses this desire by saying,**

**When I think of how the older people testify of how God moved in their midst in the person of the Holy Spirit and how prophecies went out and miracles occurred, one cannot but wonder what happened, in the church that took the place of the Holy Spirit. When I look at it from another point of view, I think we're slowly but surely moving back to allowing this kind of manifestation of the Spirit in our midst. I have a yearning inside of me to see miracles, a yearning to experience supernatural things.**

**A "yearning for supernatural things" is an apt expression which describes the desire for the power which Pentecostal people believe comes from the Holy Spirit. It is a power which is manifested through individuals without any consideration given by the Spirit as to one's economic situation, status in the community, position in church or work. It is a power that is freely available to anyone who desires it and who seeks to have it.**

**Pastor Clarence says that "when people come into our meetings, they see the liberty, they see the Spirit of God moving in our midst....and they return to the meetings...." In other words, they recognise some form of the power of the Holy Spirit and have a desire to continue that experience in their**

lives. The Holy Spirit gives expression to this power through the gifts of the Spirit which are manifested through the individual member. This demonstration of Holy Spirit Power may come in the form of speaking in tongues, interpretation of tongues, prophecy, dancing "in the Spirit", being slain in the Spirit<sup>12</sup> or through some other supernatural event such as healing of the physical body. Services are not limited to Sunday morning or evening as Pentecostals meet not only in church buildings or civic centres but also in the homes of the members. The Holy Spirit Power may be evident in any or all of these meetings.

Kearney (1994:200) says "... In so far as people feel they lack control over their destinies, they tend to rely on magical and *spiritual* solutions to their problems. In other words, those who lack real power, whether it be technological, economic, or political, are most inclined to seek magical power (*italics added*)."

Although Kearney is referring to the Mexican peasant worldview, there are some parallels to the CPC worldview in that the CPC, too, seek *spiritual* solutions to their problems through the working of the Holy Spirit. I do not mean in any way to take away from the understanding of the power of the Holy Spirit which does work in the lives of the Pentecostal people. I have observed in attending various Pentecostal churches that Pentecostal people do, at times, act as if the Holy Spirit's power is at their control rather than that they are under the Spirit's control. It does not, however, take away from the fact that the CPC wants the Holy Spirit Power in their services.

#### 2.6.2.4 Actualisation of Holy Spirit Power

As the following example of Pastor Jackson shows, there is also the feeling among some Pentecostals that once a person has been used by the

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<sup>12</sup> Sometimes when a person prays for someone else, that person being prayed for, falls to the floor as a result of the Holy Spirit touching that person's life. The person who has fallen is said to be "slain in the Spirit", that is, the Holy Spirit is supposed to be working within the individual during that time.

**Holy Spirit in some special way through one of the gifts of the Spirit, that person has that “gift” and will be used by God through the Holy Spirit in that particular area of ministry. Pastor Jackson says,**

**Take the gift of healing, I believe that God can use my given gift to perform a miracle in the church. ... It doesn't mean that after service when I walk out of the church, here's a healer walking around in the streets. These are the things that happen in the church. If that's the way the Lord has used them in the church, no matter his performance outside. No matter whether he's not exercising his rights as a Christian, dare you tell him or correct him, remember he is the healer in our church, he's the prophet in our church. It doesn't work that way. I don't believe that.**

**Pastor Jackson was not saying that he doesn't believe in healing or prophecy but that just because one is used in the services by the power of the Holy Spirit to heal someone or to give a prophecy, that doesn't make him/her a healer or a prophet. However, there is a great tendency to equate the “gift” with the person in such a way that the person is expected to be able to heal at any time or any place. The “prophet” is expected to give prophetic utterance at almost every service, as well. This is considered by many pastors, like Pastor Jackson, to be an incorrect interpretation of the teaching of the Bible concerning the Holy Spirit and the workings of the gifts of the Spirit.**

**There seems to be at least three sides to this issue. First, there are Pentecostal churches which do teach that there are people who have been gifted by God according to Ephesians 4 to be “apostles, prophets, pastors and teachers.” These are understood to be gifted people whom God has placed within the body of Christ to build up the body for the glorying of God. Peter Wagner (1981), *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow*, and B.E. Underwood (1994), *Spiritual Gifts: Ministry and Manifestations*, are just two examples of authors who have written on this subject from this perspective. Both books are used within CPC churches in teaching on spiritual gifts.**

Second, there are some individuals who seem to be self-proclaimed prophets or prophetesses. This self-assertion comes about as a result of what the person concerned feels is a divine revelation from God. Often this revelation from God comes through a dream or vision that he/she has been chosen by God to fulfill the role of prophet/prophetess. This person then takes on the title of prophet and begins to give out the revelation of God as it has been given to him/her. I discovered in talking with many people about this type of situation that very few people ever questioned whether or not the person was truly called of God but simply accepted the word of the individual. When I inquired as to why no one asked any questions, I was given answers to the effect that if God has spoken to him/her then no one had the right to question what God was doing through that individual.

The third side of this situation is a result of members of a congregation determining that another member of the congregation is a prophet by virtue of that person having given some word of prophecy during a service. The congregation will then begin to look to that individual for a "prophetic" word from God whether or not that person has been truly called of God to be a prophet/prophetess. The designation is given by the congregation and accepted by the individual concerned. These three sides show both the individualistic and collective approach to the actualization of Holy Spirit Power. That is, the congregation, as a collective body, accepts and expects the individual to act in the role of and assume the duties of a prophet with the accompanying signs that they as a church want to see from a prophet. These signs may vary between churches. It shows the individualistic view when one person takes upon him/herself the role of prophet without any other person confirming it. This individual will move between churches in order to be able to prophesy and thus expand his/her field of influence.

On the other hand, situations like this are examples of the desire by ordinary people to experience power which they cannot have in any other way. It is also true that someone who is considered to be a "prophet" or a "healer"

is held in higher esteem than other members. For the particular individuals involved it gives a psychological boost to their self-esteem as they are often not in positions of authority outside the church. It places them on a special level which not everyone can attain. In a recent service an announcement was read that a certain church within the research area was going to have a campaign with Prophet \_\_\_\_ as the speaker. This is one of the few times I have heard an actual announcement that a "prophet<sup>13</sup>" was to be the speaker. It usually has been Evangelist \_\_\_\_\_. While many of the churches do not actually teach that the offices of prophet and healer exist, by allowing people who claim this office to participate in the services, those churches are sanctioning the offices and by doing so are saying to their members that they can accept this type of ministry from these individuals.

In the case of people who have assumed these roles who are not "true prophets" or "true healers", it puts upon them a heavy burden to perform miracles or give prophetic utterances when they do not actually have the ability to do so. The end result has often been disastrous. For example, one couple to whom I spoke said that, as they were considering marriage, a local prophetess "prophesied" over them that they were not to get married to each other. She even went so far as to speak to some members of the families concerning the proposed marriage. The couple told me that they were devastated after hearing her "prophesy". They didn't know what to do about the situation. They spoke with their families and prayed about the situation and the prophesy themselves. They said only after a considerable time of waiting, questioning, and praying did they decide that the prophesy was wrong and not for them. They got married and have two children and are both serving the Lord faithfully in their church. They said, "What would have

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13 A prophet would be expected to have special revelations from God for the church or for individuals within the church. He/she would also be expected to perform some kind of miraculous sign sometime during the duration of the services. Whereas an evangelist is expected to preach to those who do not know Christ as Saviour and bring them into the church as born-again Christians.

happened to us had we followed the advice of this prophetess?”

At the same time, I have talked with several CPC people who believe in the word of the prophet and who will follow what the prophet says no matter what it is. I was told of one young man who quit his job because a prophet had prophesied over him that he was to go into full time ministry. Without question this young man turned in his resignation believing that God had spoken to him through this prophet. What these examples show is that there are varying responses to the people who through the actualization of Holy Spirit power demonstrate weekly what they believe to be the power of God moving in their lives.

#### **2.6.2.5 Holy Spirit Power Through the Blood of Jesus**

There is another area which needs to be considered – the protection by the Holy Spirit through the blood of Jesus. In a sermon on the Book of Revelation, Pastor Erasmus says that “...the Holy Spirit now opposes the devil..” By that he means “opposing the devil” is one of the duties of the Holy Spirit to enable the believer to live for God. Pastor LaRue says in a sermon on “The Camp of Safety” that there are “two supernatural powers.. humanity becoming caught in the middle (of them)..” Here Pastor LaRue has reference to the power of God and the power of the devil as his sermon is about the devil stealing, killing and destroying the children of God who do not remain in the camp of safety. Further on in the sermon he admonishes the people to “stay under the blood of Jesus, stay under the blood of Jesus and the devil can do you no harm.” The “Camp of Safety” is found then under “the blood of Jesus.” The phrase “under the blood of Jesus” is interpreted by CPC people from the events in the history of the nation of Israel when they were in bondage in Egypt. It is from Exodus 12 where the Israelites were instructed to slay a lamb and place the blood over the doorposts of their homes so that their oldest sons would be protected from the Death Angel which was going to

pass over Egypt at midnight and slay all the firstborn sons of all families in Egypt. Any house which did not have the blood on the doorposts would be subject to the Death Angel. In other words, the blood of the lamb represented protection from the harm which was about to occur.

The "blood of Jesus" takes on new meaning. Not only does it provide the cleansing for the sins of humanity, now it also provides for them a stronghold in the time of their trouble or distress when the Christian feels oneself being hampered by the forces of Satan. From the interviews and sermons, CPC people believe that Jesus does three important things for and in the lives of the Christian. First, the blood of Jesus washes away the sins which a person has committed in the experience called being born again. Member 7 expresses this concept by saying, "Pentecostals are washed through by the blood of Jesus." Member 21 agrees saying a person is a Christian when, "a person is born-again, washed in the blood of Jesus." Member 26 says a person becomes a Christian when "he/she is washed in the blood [of Jesus], having repented of their sins and is now living a life pleasing to God." Second, the blood of Jesus provides the means for healing of all manner of sicknesses or illnesses, including physical, mental, emotional or psychological. Member 5 describes it by saying, "In the midst of trial and tribulation, the healing hand of Jesus is always there to guide, lead, forgive and to love." And third, the blood of Jesus provides protection for the believer against the attacks of Satan and can be used in the control and casting out of demons who come from Satan. I have already quoted Pastor LaRue and Pastor Flandorp in regard to this protection.

This concept of the "blood of Jesus" has taken on additional meaning for many CPC people in the light of the New Testament teaching concerning Jesus as the Lamb of God. Law<sup>14</sup> (1987:36-37) says the following:

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14 Terry Law is president and founder of Terry Law Ministries in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He has become one of America's foremost speakers on praise and worship focusing on spiritual warfare. Through his world headquarters in Tulsa, he coordinates the multi-faceted outreaches of the ministry and ministers worldwide in the areas of Praise and Worship and



When we use the term “the Blood,” we mean everything that the cross and the gospel represent. What incredible power is found in that group of thoughts. It is the power of God unto salvation. The verb ‘to be saved’ comes from the Greek word “sozo.” Its use in the New Testament is interesting to note. For example, sozo is used with regard to the healing of the woman with the issue of blood. It is also used in reference to the deliverance of the Gadarean demoniac and in the raising of Jairus’s daughter. In James 5 it is used when the prayer of faith for the sick is mentioned. The power of God unto salvation is the power of God unto healing, deliverance, the raising of the dead, the meeting of every one of our spiritual, physical and material needs. The Blood represents all of this.

In another book, Law (1985:102-103) gives further explanation.

*Our testimony is like the hyssop that daily applies the Blood to our lives. Our testimony must take what the Word says about the Blood on a daily basis and apply it to the doorpost of our lives spiritually. We must declare before the Devil, before God, and before ourselves what the Blood does for us. In this way, the ongoing work of the Blood becomes a faith reality to us and we can live in the power of that Blood. At this point, the Blood becomes a spiritual weapon. It becomes a great power against the invasion of the Devil. It stops his most powerful tool of oppression.*  
(italics in original)

I have quoted extensively from Law in order to show the background of this typically Pentecostal teaching concerning the blood of Jesus. In staying “under the blood of Jesus”, Christians are placing themselves under the power of the Spirit of God for protection against anything and everything that the Devil would do to them. Pastor Flandorp expresses one aspect of this when he says his favourite verse is “Psalms 91...It is appropriate to us as

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missions with a special emphasis on healing.

**Pentecostal people. No evil shall come near your dwelling places.”**

**References to the “blood of Jesus” are not a recent phenomenon. There have been accounts of Christians making use of the term “the blood of Jesus,” in various contexts. D’Epinay (1969:9-10) for example records the following events in Chile:**

**The mystique of the blood of the Lamb is an important element not confined to Pentecostalism but found also in Methodism, in German mysticism of the Middle Ages, etc. Pentecostal congregations adopted a number of choruses of the type which underlines the role of the blood of Christ in purification..... During the ecclesiastical action which the Methodist hierarchy later brought against Hoover, one of the facts put forward in relation to the second charge (‘seriously imprudent conduct’) [this was in a church trial] was to have allowed “J.S. to perform, in the presence of the pastor, who did not reprove him, what they called ‘being washed by the blood of Christ’, which consists of a ‘washing’ in which a person mimes taking blood in his cupped hands from an imaginary source and moving his hands over the bodies of other person.” Since Hoover in his book does not refute this, it can be accepted as an accurate description. It is even probable that the performance of this rite did produce certain lethargic and ecstatic symptoms in the participants, as the journalist claimed. But to say ‘a potion called the blood of the lamb’ was really used was an invention, as the blood was imaginary.**

**D’Epinay shows one way in which some Christians interpreted the meaning of the blood of Jesus. It is evident that to the Christians involved in this practice there was some special significance to what was done during the ritual. To others it was rejected as not being a part of Christians rites and rituals at all.**

**Hollenweger (1988:142-143) give the following account involving a group in South Africa called the Latter Rain Assemblies:**

**Thrice daily one or two inmates go through all the buildings**

and rooms, and over the premises to plead the blood of Jesus against all spiritual evil in the air, praying that everything be cleansed and that peace may reign. .... The Latter Rain Assemblies distinguish between 'unpurified Christianity', that is, conventional Christians in name only; a narrower circle of Christians who have allowed themselves to be washed by the water of baptism; and the 'priests', who daily bring the blood of Jesus over themselves, their churches, their houses and their employment. Even car tyres are protected from punctures by the blood of Jesus. And 'we quietly encircle' unpleasant neighbours 'with the blood of Jesus and bind and banish the spirit of malice and argumentativeness.'

The example of the people in Chile would have to be considered as an unusual use and application of the blood of Jesus. They were taking the Scriptures literally that without the blood of Jesus there can be no cleansing. It was a ritual that had meaning to the people involved even if there is not foundation for doing it within the Word of God. It probably had a very strong psychological effect upon the participants and possibly even some religious experience as well. There may also be in some instances a carry-over from pre-Christian times if in those times the people also had rituals which included the shedding of blood. If so, then it is only natural that there would be a close affinity to the use of the blood of Jesus in any Christian rite. However, for the Coloured Pentecostals of Retreat, there is no evidence from the interviews that there is any such carry-over as most of them have grown up in a predominantly Christian society even though other religions have also been present such as Islam and Hinduism. For the CPC, the "blood of Jesus" represents a sense of protection against what they perceive as the forces which are working against them. In discussions with CPC Christians, the importance of praying the blood of Jesus over family members, houses and even workplaces has been mentioned as a means of keeping themselves and their families from situations which otherwise might be harmful to them. I have heard testimonies in several churches concerning how people were kept from harm after

having asked for the protection of the “blood of Jesus.” To CPC Christians, the “blood of Jesus” is a barrier between themselves and the things which they perceive to be against them.

#### 2.6.2.6 The Dualistic Aspect of the Pneumatic Dimension

While the discussion centres around the Pneumatic Dimension of the CPC worldview, there is inherent within this worldview an indication of dualistic tendencies. Wessels (1997:363) says,

I call the charismatic<sup>15</sup> worldview *dualistic* because of its basic belief in a rather rigid dichotomy between the present reality in which we live and the spiritual reality. The most obvious reality is the one we perceive around us, but that is only the apparent reality, which is controlled by forces from an unseen, spiritual reality. In this constructed reality, the ultimate force for good is God and the ultimate evil force is called Satan. The charismatic worldview locates the causes of good and evil almost exclusively in the spiritual reality (*italics in original*).

In this case, the dualism is seen in the conflict between God and the devil, or, in particular reference to the Pneumatic Dimension, the blood of Jesus versus the power of the devil. The Holy Spirit, as the source of power for Pentecostals, is the One who battles the forces of the enemy. Pentecostal people do believe as Pastor LaRue said that there are two supernatural forces in the world---God and Satan. Humanity is caught between these two forces as they both attempt to get humanity to worship each one of them. For Pentecostal Christians, the only way to defeat the attempts of Satan is through the “blood of Jesus” by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit that applies this “blood protection” over the believer and allows the forces of heaven to

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<sup>15</sup> I have already stated that for the purpose of this study, I do not differentiate between Charismatics and Pentecostals.

intervene and fight for the believer against the forces of the enemy, Satan. Anderson (1990:62) says, "Pentecostals understand that the kingdom of God includes power over demons. They recognize that the Cross and Resurrection secured the victory over Satan, but they tend to emphasize that the baptism of the Holy Spirit gives a person power to cast out demons in the same way Jesus did."

The Holy Spirit, being the third person in the Trinity and given to the Church for power to enable Christians to become strong in their faith, is considered to be the One whose presence and power provides this protection by and through the blood of Jesus. In this context, the "blood of Jesus" has a dual meaning: Jesus' death on the cross brought forgiveness of sins but it also provided protection for the believers. In his sermon on "The Camp of Safety", Pastor LaRue stated, "If you, my friend, have been walking with the same wife or the same husband and not being saved by the precious blood of the Lamb, don't just walk and serve him afar off, but come nearer ..... There is a way of escape and it is via the cross of Jesus Christ." In his sermon, the Pentecostal Holiness minister said, "Is it not Jesus who saved you? Is it not Jesus who took you out of the muddy pool of sin? After Jesus came into Zacchaeus' house, Zacchaeus asked for forgiveness of what he had done." The protection of the blood of Jesus for CPC people is provided in the same manner that the people of Israel placed the blood of the Passover lamb on the doorposts of their homes for protection. CPC people believe that by "pleading the blood" or placing the "blood of Jesus" over a person, place or object, the same protection against the forces of the enemy will be provided for them today: In believing this, the "blood of Jesus" becomes a barrier against the work of Satan in his attempt to stop the Christian from living as Christ would have one to live. Harper<sup>16</sup> (1974:91) seems to agree by saying

The value of the name of Jesus is that it combines the efficacy

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<sup>16</sup> Michael Harper is a British author.

of His death with His resurrection life. It means “Saviour” – and refers to One who is alive for ever, and raised “far above all”. It is the living Christ who protects His people — standing by them and working with them. But it is Christ who shed His blood and died on the Cross. Without the shedding of Blood there would have been no remission of sins or power over Satan. In this sense, the blood of Christ is an indispensable part of our salvation, and, *therefore*, of our protection. (Italics in original)

It is true that some people may become fanatical about this teaching, as the Latter Rain Assemblies are considered to have done. For the CPC people who believe in the power of the “blood of Jesus,” it plays an important role in their daily lives as well as their lives during church service times. Leaving any fringe or extreme beliefs aside, CPC people firmly believe in the power that is in the blood of Jesus which is available to every Christian not just to them. The final aspect of the Pneumatic Dimension of the CPC worldview is that of Holy Spirit Control.

#### 2.6.2.7 Holy Spirit Control

D’Epinay (1969:195) says, “When they (Pentecostals in Chile) speak of the Holy Spirit, they always allude to the experience of a power, a concrete fact, an intrusion into human life of the divine. The power of God is the proof of God.” The Holy Spirit is given to provide the believer with a new sense of purpose and destiny in the sense that there is now Someone living within the believer that will give guidance and control for one’s life. The CPC expresses this idea in various ways. First, a person is led by the Holy Spirit: Member 55 says “a Pentecostal is also a born-again Christian with the advantage that he is led by the Spirit. They also walk in the Spirit.” Member 68 expresses this idea by saying being Pentecostal is “when the Holy Ghost is in your life and you move by the Spirit.” Second, a person submits to the leadership of the

**Holy Spirit: Member 4 says, "A Pentecostal is a born-again Christian who is also baptised with the Spirit of God. This baptism brings about that the person is set apart from the world, allows the Spirit to lead him and is therefore an instrument for God to use." Member 17 agrees when she says, "...a person is a Pentecostal when he has received the gift offered freely by God, i.e., the Holy Spirit. The indwelling Spirit makes me different because the same Spirit leads, directs and teaches you."**

**It is the power of the Holy Spirit that lives within them that controls their lives, not in a dictatorial way, but by the individual humbly submitting to the leadership of the Holy Spirit. Through submission to the Holy Spirit, one can gain insight into what one must do concerning not just the spiritual part of one's life but every part of one's life. Member 19 says, "A Pentecostal is someone who has been baptised with the Spirit of God. This person has a personal relationship with the Spirit and is daily in contact with this Person, depending on Him to guide your every step." It is the Spirit of God that is in control of the lives of the believers. A Full Gospel pastor in a sermon expressed this idea by reminding his listeners of the "sovereignty of God."**

**Sovereignty means that there is no one higher than God. Sovereignty means He is on the throne and He is the One who has control over everything that happens in this life...He is the beginning, He knows what the end is going to be and all the things that happens in between is in the control of God. .  
. We are stating that God is Sovereign and that everything that happens in life will and can only happen in God's sovereign and divine plan.**

**The sovereignty of God expressed by the Full Gospel pastor is seen in the life of the Pentecostal by one's obedience to what the Holy Spirit is saying. The Holy Spirit can only show the will of God to people as they become obedient unto Him. Pastor Biegnaar says, "People are more dedicated by accepting the Holy Spirit and more obedient to the Holy Spirit when it comes to worshipping." Pastor Flandorp says that a person should hear the Spirit say "This is**

the way, walk in it.” The Pneumatic Dimension of the CPC worldview is incomplete without the understanding that it is the Holy Spirit that is supposed to lead the believer in one’s daily life. They vitally need the Holy Spirit Power to move in their lives but without the daily guidance of the Holy Spirit to help control their actions and desires, the Coloured Pentecostals’ religion would be incomplete. There is a sense of security in the idea that God is interested enough in His people to have the Holy Spirit dwell within and lead and guide them in their daily lives.

These aspects of the Pneumatic Dimension of the CPC worldview are interrelated and dependent upon each other. The extent to which the Holy Spirit’s power and control is manifested in one’s life is almost totally dependent upon that believer’s understanding of the Holy Spirit. If someone, who claims to be Pentecostal, has a limited understanding of what being Pentecostal is, then that person will also have developed a limited experience of the power and control of the Holy Spirit to the limit of his/her understanding. It cannot go beyond what one accepts or understands is the Holy Spirit or what the Holy Spirit can and will do in one’s life. For those who indicated that being Pentecostal was more what one does, i.e., hand clapping, dancing, etc., then one’s experience of the power of the Holy Spirit will result from the extent to which that person claps his/her hands or to the extent that person dances in the services. That person would be more likely to feel that there was no power or presence of the Holy Spirit without those particular demonstrations being present in the services. On the other hand, to those who accepted the fullness of the Spirit, i.e., tongues, prophecy, and the other gifts of the Spirit, that person would more than likely expect those aspects of the Holy Spirit to be manifested in the services and in one’s life. Without the Pneumatic Dimension of the CPC worldview, the second dimension I discuss would have no relevance whatsoever. The Deliverance Dimension of the CPC worldview depends to a large measure upon the Pneumatic Dimension for its existence.



### **2.6.3 The Deliverance Dimension of the CPC Worldview**

**Coloured Pentecostals believe that God will take care of them no matter in what situation they might find themselves. That is, God will take them OUT OF the difficult situation and turn it to their good and to His glory. The Deliverance Dimension of the CPC worldview expresses this idea – Pentecostal believers will be extracted, taken out of, any bad situation which comes their way. Deliverance is a word that is heard often in the sermons of the pastors and in the testimonies of the people - - “God can deliver.” - - “God has delivered me out of. . .” The concept of deliverance is presented as one of the things that God does for the people who serve Him and follow Him. There is a strong emphasis in the sermons that there is no situation that is too difficult for God to handle. The sermon by the Full Gospel pastor (see Appendix C) is a good example of this worldview. I will be quoting extensively from his sermon to show this concept. His third point of the message was ‘God has a deliverance for us about which we will never be disappointed.’**

**This pastor illustrates this from the experience of the nation of Israel in Babylonian captivity. He supplements this with the story of Israel in bondage in Egypt. God delivered them out of the situation in which they found themselves. He says of Israel that “God had a plan and no one was going to stand in the way, not Pharaoh, not the Red Sea, not anything. . .” He speaks what some people would consider to be a word of prophecy, saying,**

**You are my witnesses in these times irrespective of what will happen, irrespective of the situation, you are my witnesses that I love you. I love you with a love that will never cease. You are my witnesses that I have a plan that no one will obstruct, a plan for your lives. You will be my witnesses of my salvation for everyone to see.**

**Later he says, “I do not know who the Lord is talking to this morning but there**

might possibly be somebody who came through a trying situation where you were wondering where God is. Where you cried out for your salvation. Where is the solution? God wants us to know this morning, not to fear. . . .”

As God’s people we do not fear the future. This is one of the most exciting things of the Christian life that we can be assured that we need not fear the future because the God whom we serve already knows what the future is going to be like and I am bold this morning to say that He shows Himself time and again, He’s proved Himself time and time again. . . .

I had to attend a meeting . . . that I feared would be fireworks. . . the problem looked so big but we will be surprised how God solves problems. I attended the meeting and you know the person that was the obstacle was not there. (God) is promising us that when that situation where it is like a dense fire in front of us, He is promising us that when we face these fiery trials, He is going to be with us so that the fire will not burn us and the fire and the flames will not scorch us. The Lord God wants us to know, the Church, this morning, that He is going to be with us, that He has the deliverance for us about which we are going to stand amazed. We will today, tomorrow and all the days ahead come up against situations where we will look for a way out. . . You are my witnesses to a salvation that I will bring about.

A young minister in the Pentecostal Holiness Church gives this illustration.

This past week I had a problem, somebody threatened me. This man is so filled with evil, he was determined to do what he said. I wanted to go to the police but I changed my mind, I rather came to the sisters. I went to (my) pastor and his wife and to the sisters. We then laid the matter before the Lord and the Lord solved the matter. I want to say in this same statement that the Lord proved Himself in this matter. . . . When God saw I was putting Him first in the matter, He solved it.

The reference by this minister to the “sisters” was to a group of women in his church who came together for intercessory prayer. By going to this group with his problem he indicated his belief that through their prayers God would deliver him out of the desperate situation he felt he was in. In a conversation with an intercessory prayer leader from the study area, in the churches which have intercessory prayer groups, they are composed mostly of the women of the church. Few men attend these meetings on a regular basis. Another example of deliverance was given by a young Assembly of God man in his sermon by saying, “ We right here must tell the people that that Red Sea in your life, God can open it up. That River Jordan that seems so impossible to cross, God can make it possible for you to cross.”

These examples are sufficient to illustrate this portion of the Deliverance Dimension. I attended a recent campaign service in one of the area’s Pentecostal churches which brought home to me the importance of this dimension of their worldview in the lives of the people. The evangelist, on two occasions, used examples from his own life where God delivered him out of extremely difficult and dangerous situations involving gang activity to which he was an innocent bystander. Each reference brought a vivid response from the congregation as these are the circumstances in which they live daily. On both occasions, the congregation became very excited as they listened to his accounts of the delivering power of God OUT OF situations. His encouragement to the people was that God will do the same thing for them just as God did for him. Gang activity in the study area of Retreat is a very present reality. On several occasions, students have arrived at the Centre after being stopped by members of gangs who have robbed them of their valuables and on one occasion of the student’s books. The people could therefore identify with the evangelist as they were well aware of the truth of the statements he was making. In private conversations, respondents have told me of battles between gangs which resulted in shootings outside their home or near to them. Thus, the evangelist’s examples of deliverance from gang activity were highly

relevant to those present at the meeting.

These examples, both by the pastors and the evangelist, represent true contextualization of the Gospel message. That is, these men made the Gospel message relevant to the lives of the people who were listening to them to such an extent that the people identified with them completely as they, too, face similar situations in their own lives. Sermon after sermon, testimony after testimony lead the people to an understanding that no matter the problem that they are facing, no matter the situation in which they find themselves, there is Someone who is able to bring them out of it. It is this constant reassurance that there is hope for deliverance, no matter the situation, that becomes a lifeline between the reality of a situation and the end result of it. That reassurance causes them to say, "Since God has helped others in similar situations like what I find myself in, then God will also help me." Without this spark of hope, the Pentecostal people could quite easily slip into an attitude of helplessness and even to fatalism. The Deliverance Dimension of the CPC worldview provides the basis for hope; a hope that turns to expectation, that becomes reality in many of their lives as God does intervene and deliver them.

#### **2.6.4 The Economic Dimension of the CPC Worldview**

The Economic Dimension of the traditional Coloured Pentecostal is closely related to the previous dimension of deliverance. That is, the economics of God's people are in His hands. This attitude is found primarily among the older Pentecostal people. In conversation with several Pentecostal people, one of them mentioned that "the younger people just don't know how to trust God anymore." That is, the younger people have the possibility of earning more than the older people did and as a result do not necessarily feel the urgency to ask God to provide the things that they can get for themselves. Member 4, a 28 year-old man, says, "They (the older ones) trusted God for just

about everything from a job to paying the electricity bill.” Member 29, a 50 year-old woman, expresses similar views by saying, “There are certain things about Pentecostals that are lost, e.g., small congregations, total dependence on God to provide things for us (today we work for what we want). . . .”

Although this indicates that there is change going on in the lives of the Pentecostal people, there is still a consciousness of the ability of God to provide the assurance of economic sufficiency. The changes to worldviews and boundaries will be discussed in Chapter Three under Responses to Traditional Boundaries and Worldviews.

In the sermon by Pastor LaRue, in speaking of what Jesus wants to do for a person, he says, “He [Jesus] wants to give you life more abundantly. All that are within my voice this morning, life exceedingly, abundantly for you and me today in spite of the economic system of this world. God reigns supreme.”

In other words, God is above the economics of this world and will provide for believers abundantly. The Pentecostal Holiness pastor is more specific than this when he says, “If you are unemployed and you place God first, He will bless you. If you do not work and you place him first, He will give you work.”

This might be considered by some as a simplistic view of life and of the relationship one has with God but it is not so with these Pentecostal people. It is a “living out” of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Watt (1992:175) states that “Pentecostals generally do not have a theoretical approach to theology: they live theology. It is for this reason that there may often be a lack of formal theologising among Pentecostals and even contradictions between their praxis and their theory.” Pentecostals live their theology. Daily in their walk with God, they simply expect God to provide for them. It is in reality, an actualisation of the Gospel message that the Pentecostals hear each week -- God will meet your needs and provide for you if you love and serve Him. It is in many respects similar to what Oosthuizen (1975:325) says about the Indian Pentecostals. “The feeling of insecurity that present-day society creates results in frustration, loneliness, and aimlessness. Pentecostalism provides

its own answers to the various socio-economic handicaps and the consequences of such handicaps.” In this instance, the answers are found in a God who takes them from what they consider bad or harmful situations and changes that situation into something good. They are assured that no matter what happens economically, their God will supply their needs. They may not know how or in what manner God will meet those needs, but they have an assurance from their belief in their God that He will never fail them nor forsake them no matter what the situation is.

In speaking of the Economic Dimension, I found that there are two systems of thought prevalent within the Pentecostal churches. One side of the issue is that God’s provision for employment often provides an increase in the ability to provide for the needs of one’s family. This has been indicated above in the reference by the member to “working for what we want.” As God provides better opportunities for work or whatever way He supplies the needs one has, then there is the probability that a person will provide the things that person feels or sees is needed within his/her own family. At the heart of it is the understanding that since God has met my need for improved employment, then what I provide for my own family is in actuality provided by God. One’s situation is improved by the provision that is made possible by the improved conditions which God has provided. It is also true that some people do not credit the provision of the resources to God but to their own ability. It is in fact a melting together of both -- God’s provision with a person’s own ability -- that brings the improved conditions and the economic assurance that results from it.

The other side of the issue is that increased economic ability will result in a lessening of a person’s fervency for God. An example of this feeling is found in Pastor P Muller response to changes in the church. He says, “Because today, the people is inclined to go for what they can get out for their lifestyle where Jesus said follow me according to His lifestyle. People don’t agree with that because they don’t want to be bound by the church’s ruling, by

God's ruling so they switch to what they want to do for themselves." I asked him if increased economic benefits would cause people to go further away from serving God. He replied, "From the Pentecostal side, yes, I would say that." He is not alone in this feeling. Pastor Jackson said, "... People want to see miracles in material things...It is that I AM syndrome." Several members expressed this same sentiment that people just don't trust God as before. It is really two sides of the same issue. On the one side is the admonition to trust God to supply your every need with examples given to show that God does give economic assurance to His followers. On the other side is the realisation that improved living conditions do have an affect on one's lifestyle. Pentecostal churches are in the midst of changes which will not only affect them now but for years to come. With the inception of the new South African government in 1994, change has come at a very fast rate. In facing this rapidly changing society, Pentecostals have had to confront many issues which they have not had to before or which they have ignored.

#### **2.6.4.1 Pentecostals and Socio-economic Changes**

Luzbetak (1988:280) says that among the chief functions of religion are "to provide answers to problems beyond human experience; to legitimize the social order; to instill and support group solidarity and identity; and to provide support to the individual and the community especially in times of perplexity, crisis, and tragedy." Often change is considered to be a crisis experience and brings with it feelings of perplexity. Earlier (2.6.3) I dealt with the issue of the Deliverance Dimension of the CPC worldview which says that God will deliver them out of every situation in which they find themselves. Religion is the support cornerstone on which the Pentecostals base their response — whether acceptance or rejection --- to any change which comes into their lives. I believe it is in this area of socio-economics that one will find the real

reasons for the conflicts which are forcing changes to the boundaries, boundary markers and worldviews. Schreiter (1985:70) asks,

Is change seen primarily as a process of incorporation whereby new signs, messages, and codes are included in a system, or is it primarily a conflictual process whereby one set of signs, codes, and messages is eliminated and another takes its place? It is obvious here that perspective will play a large role.

Change, as Schreiter says, takes place when incorporation of new signs are accepted within the sign system of any culture. The incorporation of new "signs, messages, and codes" is bringing about a time of conflict with the CPC. The CPC's of Retreat are in a time of conflict within their churches due primarily to the conflict of points of view, that is, the younger people and the older people are looking at change from two differing vantage points - one older and one younger. Change is happening to both points of view, but one is resistant and the other is more accommodating.

With reference to the emergence of Pentecostalism in the United States since the beginning of the 1900's, Harrell (1990:10) says, "... Pentecostals were also alienated economically and culturally. Their little churches began and grew among the nation's most depressed and deprived citizens. Pentecostalism did not cause social alienation; it attracted those who were social outcasts." It can also be said of the Pentecostals of Retreat that they come mainly from the lower socio-economic group. Eighty-four percent (84.2%) of the pastors interviewed said their congregation members earned less than R2 000,00 per month with several of the pastors indicating that it was far less than that amount. The Pentecostals of Retreat could then be classified as a group of people who have been in the past, economically alienated from the better things in life. Oosthuizen (1975:196), in speaking about Indian Pentecostals said, they "(threw) off old vices on which they spent much time, money and energy, (and now) see new horizons and desire better education



for their children. They work harder and climb the social ladder and this does not go unnoticed and has an influence in the congregation and in the community.”

Pastor D Muller gives some insight to the problem of change within the Pentecostal churches.

If one has to take the history of this area, one would find that it would not be highly educated people who were fairly comfortable in the Pentecostal movement. What one is seeing now is the children of those people who now remain in the church who have gone through matric and even tertiary institutions, there is just more questioning that is taking place and whether that it [tongues] is still necessary as an initial evidence of the Holy Spirit. I ascribe a lot of the de-emphasis to the overactive critical mind of people. Yes, with the [more educated] there is not the extreme openness just to receive Spirit like the Scriptures says and what the initial evidence is there for.

It is a seemingly paradoxical situation. On the one hand, the older generation have worked hard to improve their economic circumstances so that their children would be able to have more and do more than they were able to do because of their lower socio-economic position in society. On the other hand, the very increase which the older generation desired, as it comes to pass, brings with it the potential for conflict within their social structure and world-view. It is the reaction to this social change that is bringing about much of the reappraisal of Pentecostalism by the younger generation.

That the changes in the socio-economic environment is causing changes within the church cannot be denied or ignored. Pastor Jackson says, “There is a greater inclination more to the secular side of the church than the spiritual. I don’t know whether it is because of poverty....(It) could be, could be. . . the socio-economic effects of our community.” Pastor P Muller believes that an increase in economic benefits “causes people to go further away from God.” One of the changes which has resulted from increased

**economic ability is the ability to purchase things which were not available or which were not attainable due to not having the finances to pay for them.**

**Pastor Booysen mentions one of these items and its effect on the Pentecostal churches when he says,**

**What a man thinks, what a man sees with his eyes, (he) brings it to his heart. If that brings darkness to your heart, how dark will your heart be? So it means in that way, I see that most of the time, people are watching TV. If that is not a Christianity film, it brings a difference to their mind. They are losing sight and they don't pray.**

**In other words, in Pastor Booysen's view, one result of increased economics, (the TV), is not necessarily bringing about increased spirituality but rather a decrease in it.**

**This view is also held by some members of Pentecostal churches.**

**Member 5 said, "A change that I see as negative is that people have become more materialistic and they (crave) for more of what they can see and feel.**

**This new lifestyle has certainly affected the flow and worship of the Spirit."**

**Member 17 said,**

**We are living in a time which is characterised by computers; new devices, etc. We play with modern instruments; we use overhead projectors; we have a special worship session; we depend upon a one-week evangelistic crusade per year to fill up the church; we advertise; we beg for money; we have more fund raising efforts than door-to-door visitations. I'm not being critical of our efforts to make a success of what we do, but I think we have lost the essence of who we are and what we are meant to be.**

**Member 18 put it this way:**

**We do not serve God the way we used to serve him, you**

know, with absolutely everything we had, *even if it was only meagre*. We would walk to church and open-air for miles and miles, but today we want *to drive or be carted* wherever we want to be. There is no longer - within the church service itself - that freedom for the Spirit to move. Everything has to be short, the testimonies, the Word of God, even the songs are short. It is as if we've or rather we are restricting even the move of the Spirit and we are blaming it on time, but I think it is our own *rushed lifestyles* we have adopted, we should blame. (italics added)

Member 18 is indicating by her answer that socio-economic changes have brought about changes which she perceives as negative for her church. For instance, she sees a lessening of commitment by the believers. That is, where people used to be willing to walk to church over long distances, now, if they cannot go by car they will not go. The increase in economic ability which provides the means to own an automobile has affected the willingness to make the kind of commitment to church as was made during the time when people owned fewer automobiles. She has linked commitment to a church and its activities directly with increase in economic activities. She also senses a decrease in "freedom of the Spirit" which she feels is caused by the lifestyle which people have chosen. This new lifestyle puts pressure on the services to not be too long and thus prevents the Spirit from moving as the Spirit used to do. People's sense of time has changed from a more loose orientation to a fairly strict regimentation. Member 18 sees this as having a negative effect upon the Pentecostal style of worship.

Member 18 is not the only one who feels this way. Member 21, in reference to change, said, "I do not know whether it is due to the changes, but it seems as if people have become relaxed and at ease. People used to have services almost every evening of the week. Now people have such a busy life that they can't even come to a prayer meeting." Member 54 expressed it this way when he said, "People have become more lovers of themselves; they go after material things; they want to dress better, drive better, live better. People

have become stuck in their ways -- they don't want the Holy Spirit of God to change them for the better." Member 66 was emphatic when she said, "Better and better church buildings, better and better sound equipment, better dressing Christians, more polished speech and mannerisms has caused a death blow to our serving God in Spirit and Truth." Member 69 had similar views when she said, "Modernising causes death to church/body. There is a falling away from Jesus Christ." Member 72 said that when "possessions increased" there was also a "decreased fire and personal input."

Smith (1990:138) quotes Rev Hughes, the leader of one of the major Pentecostal denominations in the United States when Hughes said, "Most of us Pentecostals came from the blue-collar working class, and the thing that made the movement grow was that it brought the gospel to the poor. We must not forget that, regardless of how the gospel has lifted us materially. We must not let materialism dominate us." Oosthuizen pointed out (1975:305) that "as social conditions improve, .. expectations about Christ's imminent return tend to go into the background." Pentecostals are having to come to terms with the changes in the socio-economic conditions of its members. From the answers given above, it is evident that many CPC members are having difficulty with the changes that are coming into their churches through increased economic benefits to church members. To these members, the economic changes have not brought about a deepening experience with God but conversely, a slackening of what they see as those things which are necessary in order to be truly Pentecostal. I discuss this issue further in section 3.4 - Increased Individualism.

When one considers that the majority of leaders within the Pentecostal churches of Retreat are primarily older men, who have not had the opportunities of increased education and working conditions, then one can begin to better understand their reactions to the changing socio-economic conditions. When our Training Centre reopened in 1985, most of our starting class did not have matriculation certificates. I discovered that it had little to do with their

intellectual ability but rather the economic conditions of their families which forced them to quit school and begin working. The same is true for most of the older generation who are still in leadership positions in the churches.

The size of the families often has a lot of influence on socio-economic conditions. In my interviews I found that the average size of the Pentecostal family was five (5) members while the average size of the family of a pastor was four (4). With the increase in economic activity among the younger generation, there will come a time when the younger generation will take over the running of the churches from the older generation. In Chapter Three I discuss some of the conflicts which are already happening in this area. Oosthuizen (1975:269) gives the following assessment of the situation within the Indian Pentecostal community in Durban. Oosthuizen said,

The younger Pentecostal pastor has come closer to the society of his day than the older Pentecostal pastor; the problems of society come to him in various ways; he cannot avoid them. The breakdown in the equilibrium of society will not be immaterial to the Pentecostal pastor of the future. . . he will be called upon increasingly to give direction in the acculturation process and other secular issues which affect the lives of the members of his congregation."

This is not yet happening within the CPC as most of the leadership within the churches still rests with the older generation but it will come into being as the younger generation takes more and more responsibility for leading the Pentecostal churches.

Recently I spoke with a young Pentecostal couple who were very concerned about their own church and its relationship to its members who fell within the 25-35 year old bracket. They expressed their reservations about the ability of many Pentecostal churches to reach this age group due to the fact that the ones who fall within this age bracket are becoming professional people with increased economic ability. They mentioned that they had,

themselves, struggled with the issue of involvement with their church, both socially and spiritually, and how they had been questioning what their future relationship would be. These two people are well educated and are working in the business world. The young man owns his own business. The young woman has taught school and now works with her husband in his business. It is an example of the conflicts which are happening every day within the Pentecostal churches of Retreat -- the conflict between older standards of living and beliefs and increased exposure to the advances of modernity and how faith reacts with modern times. These young people have a desire to serve their church but feel hindered and limited by the church's response to professionalism and economic advancement. The manner in which the CPC churches answer this sincere questioning of their young adults will go a long way to determine whether the younger generation will stay within the CPC churches.

## **2.7 Summary**

Traditional Coloured Pentecostals' boundary markers and worldview are dependant to a great extent upon their understanding of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer. Their interpretation of events in society which affect their lives is filtered through their experience of serving God. The matrix through which everything passes is the relationship the Pentecostal person has with God through the power of the Holy Spirit. The changes which are evident in today's society must in some way be explained in terms of the old ways and are seen, in many instances, as a threat to their existence. In this chapter, I considered several CPC boundaries and boundary markers. In doing so, I concentrated on the position of traditional CPC people, that is, the older generation of Pentecostal people found within the CPC. I discussed the boundaries of experience, dress codes and leadership. These three boundaries express the central features of the CPC.

At the same time, I considered various dimensions of the CPC worldview: pneumatic, deliverance and economic dimensions. Of the dimensions considered, I believe the Pneumatic Dimension to be the key to understanding the CPC worldview and thus in understanding their identity. When societal changes begin to affect the boundary markers and worldview of a cultural group, the struggle between old and new ideas can lead to division and conflict. In this chapter, I discussed some of the areas of conflict from the traditional CPC viewpoint and the struggle that they are going through as a result of those changes. Changes to the boundary markers or to the worldview of a group will cause corresponding changes to their identity. In Chapter Three, I discuss the responses to this traditional Pentecostal identity. The responses come from two sources: (1) the older generation who either formed the traditions or who accepted them when they were handed down to them by the previous generation, and (2) the younger generation who are, in many cases, openly objecting to many of the forms of tradition which are being passed on to them. The acceptance, rejection or intermingling of the differences between these two groups will bring about changes to the CPC identity.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESPONSES TO TRADITIONAL COLOURED PENTECOSTAL CULTURE

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

My wife and I had been invited to dinner with some church people following the Sunday morning service. There were several other church people there of various ages. After the meal, several of the men got into an interesting discussion. It was early in 1994, so, naturally, the discussion turned to the political situation in South Africa at that time. There were a number of views expressed that covered a wide range of political feelings, to the point that the discussion began to change from a polite discussion to a heated argument. The basic idea which caused the argument centred around whether or not Christians should get involved in political situations and the extent to which that involvement should be. One participant even went so far as to suggest that Christians need not vote in the 1994 elections which were only weeks away. Instead of voting, Christians were supposed to "trust God to have His will" in the selection of who would govern the country in the future. The discussion that day was, in many ways, symbolic of the attitudes of many Christians, especially Pentecostals. How involved should Christians be, not only in politics, but in trying to change society as a whole or the structures on which the society rests?

The underlying factor of the discussion had to do with change. Since the release of Nelson Mandela in 1991 by F.W. De Klerk, the State President at that time, a series of events has taken place which has placed the country on a course of change. That change not only involved the political situation of the country but had also affected the individual lives of its citizens. There were three differing responses during the discussion which demonstrated the attitudes of many people in South Africa. First, there was the person who was



eager for change; who looked forward to a change in the government which he viewed as a positive necessary change; he was eager for it to happen and could not understand why the other participants did not feel the way he felt. Second, there was the attitude of maintaining the status-quo; it is better to remain like one is than to face too much change; unknown changes bring unknown problems and fear; he was hesitant to even consider the need for change. Third, there was the attitude of non-participation; Christians must trust God to do what He feels best; don't get involved personally in the matters which will bring about change; the will of God must be done. Change, no matter how necessary or needed, is not always welcomed, accepted nor wanted. This chapter deals with the subject of change: investigating the responses of the CPC to the changes which have been taking place within the country and the church. One cannot isolate change to keep it only in one domain of one's life.

Schreiter (1985) maintains that social change is a key ingredient in formulating a local theology. Local theology is, in reality, what this study is all about. One of the primary realities that every person must face is social change. Schreiter (1985: 70) says the following about social change and identity:

Being able to address social change in a semiotic description of culture is very important for local theology. Social change is a social fact in many of the world's cultures today, and in some instances the change is so rapid and thoroughgoing that not to address it is not to describe the culture. The impact of urbanization on rural peoples, the growth of technology and communications, the shifts in economic resources are all having an impact on virtually everyone.

With the inception of the new South African government in 1994, change has come at a very fast rate. In facing this rapidly changing society, Pentecostals

have had to confront many issues which they have not had to before or which they have ignored. In this chapter I discuss the responses to the traditional Coloured Pentecostal culture which will indicate many of the changes which the CPC is facing and some of their responses to those changes. I discuss these responses under the headings of (1) Changing value systems, (2) Changing evangelism emphasis, and (3) Secularization of Pentecostalism.

### **3.2 Changing Value Systems**

The responses to changes in boundary markers and worldview of the traditional CPC come from both the older and younger generation members. As change enters the CPC, the boundary markers and worldview go through a time of transition which greatly affects the structures of the culture often resulting in conflict between the older and younger generations. Schreiter (1985:65) says "to restructure boundaries is to restructure identity." Restructuring of boundaries is taking place within the Pentecostal churches. Schreiter (:70) maintains that "if change threatens one's security, it will no doubt be seen as an evil or an aberration from the norm. If change will improve one's situation, it is seen as a positive value or even a necessity." Schreiter (:70) further asks, "Is change seen primarily as a process of incorporation whereby new signs, messages, and codes are included in a system, or is it primarily a conflictual process whereby one set of signs, codes, and messages is eliminated and another takes its place?" The reshaping of boundaries for the Pentecostals involve both kinds of situations which Schreiter has described. For some, it means the loss of security of either position, authority or belief. For others, it means conflict as new ideas come into the churches. It is also evident that much of the conflict and insecurity centres around the issue of older versus younger church members and pastors. On the other hand, there are those who welcome the changes which are occurring within the Pentecostal churches. To them, there is no conflict or

struggle; the changes are for the betterment of their lives and their relationship with God.

### **3.2.1 Changes in the Traditional Pentecostal Experience**

In section 2.3.2, I discussed the worship experience of the CPC. In that section I discussed various signs of being Pentecostal - - clapping hands, being filled with the Holy Spirit, dancing, etc. - - which indicate that Pentecostal people are emotional people. Often, they do not feel as if they have been to church unless they have experienced something that has touched their emotions. One respondent told me that if there was “no Spirit, there was no church.” In explaining this comment, the respondent indicated that there had to be some form of demonstration of emotions, either dancing, praising, or clapping of hands, which showed to him that the “Spirit” was in the service. When changes come in that causes the emotional level to drop, as it were, then they begin to question the “spiritualness” of the church. As quoted previously, Member 18 says that changes have caused “restriction ... of the move of the Spirit....[no] freedom of the Spirit” as it used to be. Pastor Biegnaar expresses related views by saying, “People don’t clap their hands. People are more quiet. Sometimes you ask them if they are alive in the church. It’s not that you make them alive but just that you go with the flow. I feel the church has become quiet.”

Member 8 thinks that “there are hardly any tongues and visions.” Member 9 says, “Years ago Pentecostals were people dressed up, head covered, rolling in the dust, fasting and praying, but today, you don’t see those things anymore.” Pastor Jackson expresses some possible reasons for this change saying

a lot of the churches, especially in our area, from the top structure, right down, especially in the leaders, more of them has become politically minded. There is a great intention more

to the secular side of the church than the spiritual side. I don't know whether it is because of poverty, could be, could be the socio-economic effects of our community. But the church to me, since the 80's is not, she hasn't come so involved in the spiritual things of life.

While Pastor Jackson's comments show a dualistic tendency, secular versus spiritual, his primary concern was that the changes which had come into the churches in his area had led to a lessening of the "spiritual things of life."

Pastor Jackson makes a powerful assessment of the situation when he says, "People...are not free. I would not say they are fearful. *But they are absolutely not so free.* They will not just stand up and come forward willingly and testify about the goodness of God. That time has gone. It seems to be *another phase that has closed its books.* (Italics and underline mine.)" The phase, to which Pastor Jackson refers, is the freedom which Pentecostal people have to sing, testify, or in some other way demonstrate their experience of being children of God. The willingness to do those things he believes has closed and now people have to be asked or told to do them. However, not everyone would agree with him. Pastor Small, for instance, says, "It is like they are more free." Freedom, then, can be a matter of perspective -- how one looks at what being free means. As Schreier has indicated it may stem from whether or not the change is considered to be a threat or whether one can incorporate the changes into one's lifestyle. Does it mean freedom to do what one wants, or, does it mean freedom to worship as a corporate body in unity of the Spirit? For some traditional Coloured Pentecostals freedom meant the opportunity to dance, clap hands, shout and testify at every service. For some, freedom to worship no longer requires the outward expressions but rather is an inner expression of adoration to the Lord.

Other changes are also affecting the traditional CPC's experiences. As Member 17 has previously stated, being "modern" has led to losing "the essence of who we are and what we are meant to be."

I attended churches which used overhead projectors and churches

which did not use them and observed that in the churches which did not use the overhead projectors there was more expression of the emotions from the people than from the people in the churches which used them. People tended to watch the overhead screen and concentrate on the words being shown rather than freely worshipping. It was as if the people felt they had to watch the overhead screen for fear of missing what was being shown on it rather than concentrating on the One about whom they were singing. The songs which were being sung were both old ones and new ones. This is a sign of a transition from an oral to a literate society. This is indicated by the fact that it is assumed that everyone who is present will be able to read what is projected on the screen. When I first began attending CPC churches in 1984, there was someone that my wife and I named the "caller" for lack of a better term. This person always sang out a line of the song before the congregation would sing it. I am hearing less and less of this type of singing as I visit these same churches today. Another indication of this change from oral to a literate culture is in the extent of usage of hymn books. A few years ago, very few members of a congregation would have a hymn book but almost everyone would be able to sing the hymn because they all knew the song. Today, there are many more hymn books available in the services and new hymns are being sung..

This transition from an oral culture to a more literate culture represents one of the changes which is occurring within the traditional CPC. I have heard on many occasions comments from people in the CPC churches concerning the "new songs and hymns" that were being sung. If members of the older generation are not as literate as the younger generation, there will be resistance to changing from oral to a more literate culture. Although there were no direct questions on the interview schedule concerning this transition from oral to literate culture, there is enough evidence available that this area of transition needs to be investigated more deeply. The full extent of the reshaping of the traditional CP experiences have not been felt as yet. It will

not be fully felt until more of the Pentecostal churches use the same or similar styles of worship, use overhead projectors, use worship teams, or any of the other “modern” things that are coming into the church.

### **3.2.2 Changes in the Dress Code Boundary**

No other boundary marker has caused as much controversy as this one. At the Training Centre, the question of head coverings and dress is asked more often by incoming students than any other question. It is a source of discontent. One student said, “The young people are objecting to the old ways like wearing hats, coats and ties.” Another student said, “The standards of the old people do not apply to today.” Member 4 says

The physical changes have brought about friction and even a split/division in the church. The changes in dress code with the church, e.g., head covering; wearing of excessive jewelry and pants; moving away from wearing formal suits for men, which was initiated by the younger generation, was not well accepted by the older generation. This caused a lot of quarrels and uneasiness in the church which in turn was not an atmosphere in which the Spirit of God could be welcomed and could move.

Pastor Almano says, “But the mind set is different, if you can understand what I mean. The focus is no more on the dress issue. If you came in here in the 70’s without a hat on, they would observe you closely but if now you came in without a hat, no one would look at you at all.” Pastor Small says,

It seems to me that now Pentecostals are not so worried about their head or their clothing. They are afraid of losing their congregations to (other) churches. The women in our culture used to never wear pants. But now they will even come to church in pants. In Pentecostal churches we used to preach against that. ‘You are bringing the world into the church.’ Now their daughters are grown up and they (the pastors) are not

preaching against it any more.

Hollenweger (1988:35-36) says similar things happened in the Assembly of God Church in the United States.

As a Holiness church, the Assembly of God began by making rigorist demands upon its members. Make-up, the theatre, the cinema, and even secondary schools (high schools) and universities lay outside the social horizons of its founders and religious taboo was therefore place on them. This changed in time. The men earned more money, and consequently, the women wanted to be better dressed and the children wanted to take their education further. In this respect the leaders of the Assembly of God are constantly on the retreat, because they will not risk losing their influence on future generations.

Pastor Matthews expresses it by saying

what they are actually saying now is that dress is not what matters but what it is actually, is in a person's heart. I believe that the change has only come by the work of the Holy Spirit. It is not the outer things. I also don't say that the way you dress doesn't matter. It does matter but I would say that it is not the most important fact in judging a Christian.

Pastor Small's answer expresses one concern that the older pastors seem to have, namely losing members to other churches. Since the start of this study, at least three new churches have been started within the study area<sup>17</sup>. It seems to be that when there is a disagreement within church leadership of a local church that often the leader who is not currently serving as pastor breaks away and begins his own church. This is not a recent phenomenon as it has

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<sup>17</sup> I have been told the names of other churches within the study area which I did not know were there. I do not know if these churches that have recently come to my attention are churches that have just started or whether they have existed for quite some time.

been happening for a long time. It is one symptom of the society as a whole; if one is not happy with the service one gets at a local store, then change to another one. At the Training Centre, we have noticed that some students change churches often as they seek to find a place where they can serve God in the way they desire to serve Him. D'Epinay (1969:85) says the same thing happens in Chile because

the definition of Pentecostalist society – a community in which members associate voluntarily – gives the contours of the leaders' power; if a pastor is in conflict with the leader of the denomination, if a member disagrees with the pastor, each of them has the possibility of leaving the denomination or congregation respectively.

Member 27 says the following about the way people dress.

There is a definite distinction between this generation and the old. The changes I've seen since being saved are mostly in lifestyles. People dress more freely nowadays; young people listen to what they call rave music - this was definitely not in [was not done] a couple of years ago; ladies in the churches can come to church without the head being covered and men can have long hair - these things are not being frowned at any more.

This conflict between the younger and older generation is causing a shifting of the Dress Code Boundary. Budd (in Aeschliman 1985:73) says that the "increasing accommodation of the church to society had made it more successful, but had led to conflict between its members over basic beliefs." The basic beliefs here centre around the fact that older people have always run the churches and have told the younger people what to do, what to wear, where they could go, etc. What is happening is the same thing that Schreiter (1985:72) describes:



**When slaves no longer act as slaves, when the mute begin to speak, when lower classes no longer “know their place,” boundaries have to change within a culture. Consciousness of boundaries is tied up with consciousness of identity. They interact, causing the one to bring about change in the other.**

**The younger people don’t “know their place” anymore. That is, the younger people have begun to voice their opinions about the wearing of hats and other restrictive rules that the older generation have always maintained to be biblical. For instance, the younger people are questioning the reasoning behind the wearing of hats by the women. I discuss the implications of this new questioning of the older people’s biblical understanding of wearing hats in Chapter Five (5.5). This new form of questioning by the younger people causes the older people to think that the younger “no longer know their place.” Pastor Lindsay expresses it by saying, “The young people now want to control the church. They want the elderly to now sit in the back because they want to do their things.” Member 30 comments that**

**some changes are good, others not so good. For example: We do need new songs and we must see to the needs of the people but that doesn’t mean we must throw away our old songs and hymns, for it is as if the young generation has taken over and is throwing out the old people with everything they regard as old.**

**The conflict seems to be that the older people do not want to accept the changes on which the younger people are insisting. The younger people do not want to continue with the ways of the older people. One informant said, “The older people and the younger people each go their own way. Neither group wants to come together and work together.” That does not mean that some people are not trying to work out a solution to these changing boundaries. In the area of music, Pastor D Mueller says, “We also have a special**

service for the elderly just to accommodate their needs and for that for which they are used to and accustomed to [so that they do not] lose that to which they felt was their own." If accommodation and compromise can be worked out for the area of music, can there not also be compromise and accommodation to the Dress Code issue as well?

As I attend the Pentecostal churches in Retreat, I am noticing more and more change coming into the churches in the way the people dress. How far the Dress Code Boundary will be reshaped will be determined not by the older generation but by the younger generation. The older generation is slowly dying, being replaced by the younger ones. They are the ones who will ultimately reshape the Dress Code Boundary.

### **3.2.3 Changes in the Leadership Boundary**

The changes which are occurring in South Africa are bringing attention to the overall structure of the Pentecostal churches and are causing those structures to be reformed or changed in some way. The new freedom which the country is experiencing is bringing with it desires within the church for new ways and new methods. A restructuring is taking place within the Pentecostal churches which is being both welcomed by some and opposed by others. Schreiter (1985:71) explains that this happens when "... inner conflict (occurs), one group no longer accepts the designations given it by other members of the culture and rejects the sign systems that heretofore have dominated the culture." I discussed in section 2.5, that women were not allowed to hold very many offices in the church at present. This refusal to allow women to hold offices outside of the "women's work" is happening despite the fact that the pastors overwhelmingly are in agreement to women serving as pastors, elders or deacons. I did not find one church which was led by a woman. This will probably change in the near future. Pastor Erasmus says

**I maintain that women can be just as powerfully used of God as men. In the beginning it was a bit of a struggle but everybody has gotten used to it now. There is a better atmosphere now. It has really completely changed the atmosphere because it has been proven that women can do things for God in the church as well as outside.**

**In time, I feel sure that more women will be allowed to serve the Pentecostal churches as pastors and leaders other than as women's leaders. When that does happen, the Leadership Boundary will be drastically changed.**

**One area of the Leadership Boundary that is already facing changes is the area of pastoral authority. In the past, pastors were held in the highest esteem to the point of total obedience. This is no longer the case. Pastor Jacobs says, "I would rather tell them the right thing and sit with two or three people that I know is obedient to me and to God because what is the use if they are obedient to God but not obedient to me?" Pastor J Hendricks says, "...the world of democracy is there that you as a pastor don't have dominion over the right of choices of decisions a member makes. That makes it like, it takes away and cripples your position." Pastor P Mueller agrees by saying, "When you say something to a believer today, it is the end of them coming to church." Pastor Small comments that "it is like the church is as the store, in and out, in and out. There is no discipline in the church. You cannot tell the people what to do." This is another indication of a market place mentality that is entering the religious domain of the CPC, which allows for freedom of movement between churches because of the availability of Pentecostal churches in most areas. There seems to be very little which would distinguish one Pentecostal church from another which would prevent people from moving from church to church.**

**Schreiter (1985:70) is right when he says, "if change threatens one's security, it will no doubt be seen as an evil or an aberration from the norm. If change will improve one's situation, it is seen as a positive value or even a**

necessity.” This is demonstrated by the response of Member 2 when he says that “many changes have come to the church. But there has been no change in the prayer group.” He is leader of his church’s prayer group. In other words, he isn’t necessarily in favour of the changes but the changes have not affected him since he has held firmly to not allowing any change to that part of the church to which he has been given the control. As long as he remains in control of his prayer group, he can handle the changes in the rest of the church program.

Change to the Leadership Boundary is certainly seen, by some pastors, as a threat to their authority and an eroding of their position. To them, the threat is a very real issue. It involves the position which they hold over the members of their church. Some will take the course which Pastor Jacobs has which is known as “quality over quantity,” or the remnant syndrome<sup>18</sup> - “we are some of the only ones who are still teaching the truth.” He is saying if he can’t have quantity, he will go for quality, but this may also be an indication of a refusal to change.

Another possible reason for the shift away from total authority by the pastor is given by Hiebert and Meneses (1995:336). They state that “to move up in the society, people must be freed not only from their histories but also from *social structures that keep them in their old places* (italics added).” Pentecostal people are presented with many opportunities to improve their living standards but to do so they are often faced with views and situations that come into conflict with the teachings which they have received from their pastors and church leaders. One solution to the dilemma is to change the structures to which one belongs, in this case religious structures. The authority of the pastor is at the head of the religious structure and therefore if change is seen to be needed by the members and the only way to get that change is by restructuring the set-up of the church, then they will have a desire to do so. It is this restructuring that the pastors seem to be fearing.

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<sup>18</sup>See Chapter Five for pastoral typology

The boundary markers of Coloured Pentecostal identity are facing changes which it has not had to face in the past. One pastor in his sermon stated, "I want to say to you that the times that we are living in are not the same times that the church enjoyed not too long ago, things have changed." This pastor has recognised that changes are taking place and that the members need to be aware of those changes. Some of the boundaries will be changed to such an extent that they may not be recognisable as they are seen today. Others may undergo only minor changes. Some of the boundaries may be strong enough to resist many changes and stay relatively the same.

### **3.2.4 Changes in the Worship Experiences**

In section 2.3.2, I discussed the worship experiences of traditional Pentecostals. Those experiences of worship - - - speaking in tongues, clapping hands, dancing in the Spirit - - - are also facing changes as the younger generations responds in their own manner of worshipping God. One of the major changes which I have seen is a change from individual worship<sup>19</sup> to corporate worship or worship as a body of believers. Pastor Majiet expresses this idea of corporate worship when he says

more often you come to churches where they are taking more time, especially in the Pentecostal churches, which has been missing for a long time, especially the worship and praise, it is now getting back into its rightful place. It should have been there all the time. It shouldn't have been neglected.

Pastor Flandorp says, "We have come more to worship songs now...." Pastor Rhoda explains that there is now more of a "worship awareness...definitely a praise and worship awareness. That was something, praise and worship,

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<sup>19</sup>By individual worship I mean that individuals, not the whole church, would dance, speak in tongues, shout or clap hands.

especially in Pentecostal churches, they were more inclined to running around....there is a new sense of going into this new dimension of worship of making time for worship in the church.” Pastor Wilschutte says that “we did have praise and worship without pronouncing it praise and worship. It is like a special ministry now.” It is described best by Pastor D. Mueller who says “...worship is no longer just the dancing and singing, but worship now incorporates the sermon as well. There is a broader understanding in terms of what worship really is.”

In the area of music Pastor Jackson says the following:

Especially in our songs, there are so many new composers floating around in our area, the sub-structure grass-roots level. What I sense here, especially in our area is that the person, he was a disco person all the years, and when he repents, I am not saying that he is not a Christian, but there is not that transformation, it is more of a confirmation taken place.....I believe there is a difference, not a change, an absolute difference, a total difference. Because that man was brainwashed in his other belief. He was a composer for that band or whatever. They are using the same (things) to compose songs in the local churches.

Pastor J Hendricks says, “In the singing, you get the new type like rap singing, which is more like worldly type singing. That is also affecting the church for the last five or ten years. They had disagreed to what we have - the old time religion songs. It is not so effective as it was before.” Pastor D\_\_\_ says, “There is always changes because you must always talk. The youngsters always want to be like the world. That is what I am talking about.” Pastor P Mueller puts it this way,

They are singing choruses more to the style of the fast beat and things like that. You are in this world but not of this world so you must keep close track of what God wants you to do even if there is a change of many things, you must do it according to what God wants you to do. And that is why I said

that people are drifting from the initial idea and things they used to do.”

Choruses are songs which are either from portions of scripture or are written for the purpose of worship without the formality of the hymn. Hymns, in the Pentecostal churches, are usually sung as an introduction to the regular part of the worship service while choruses are sung before the formal start of the service and welcome of the people and as a means to lead into worship. There are both old choruses and new ones being introduced into the churches. It is the newer ones which may have the rap beat to which one of the pastors was referring. I have attended youth services where the rap-type songs have been sung which were thoroughly enjoyed by the younger generation. They certainly did not feel that there was any problem with that type of singing as a part of their worship of God. It was evident, however, as I looked around at the older people that they were not understanding that type of singing nor were they necessarily approving of it. One respondent told me that “the young people come to church Sunday morning but go to Luxarama (a local theatre used by many Christian groups) on Sunday night because they like the music which is not in the church.”

Another change that has come into the style of worship is the introduction of worship teams. When I first began to visit and minister in the Pentecostal churches of Retreat in 1985, the leader of the service was usually a man who would announce the name of the song or chorus to be sung. If the man was not able to start the song on the right key, someone from the congregation would do so. It did not seem to matter whether the leader was a “good” singer or not, it was his turn to lead the service. Pastor Small explains the situation by saying

Now there are praise choruses, with new words and all that. They come in with their electric guitars and the worship people stand in front. It didn't used to be like that. We have the praise leader now where it used to be this one lead the

choruses, that one lead the service, and so on.

Now, as I visit the same churches, they have what is called a “worship team.” The worship team consists of younger men and women who come together during the course of the week for practice and prayer in order to “lead the worship” on Sundays or during the week if there is a revival campaign. I have noticed that most of the members of the worship teams are between 20 and 35 years of age. I have seldom seen anyone older than 40 on a worship team. The purpose of the worship team is to lead in pre-determined songs and choruses which will bring the congregation to the point of being ready to listen to the sermon which follows the singing and testimonies.

This particular response to traditional Pentecostal worship seems to have been accepted by most if not all of the members of the churches. I have not heard anyone say anything against the use of the worship team. The worship teams have helped the Pentecostal churches provide what appears to be a more orderly worship service in that there is not the confusion which has resulted when the leader has asked for favourite choruses from the congregation which meant that the ones in front normally decided which chorus was going to be sung or the one who shouted the loudest would have the chorus chosen. It is a positive benefit in that the direction of the service can be better controlled by the pastor as he can give input during the week in the area of his sermon. However, I have also noticed that on occasions the congregation does not fully participate in the worship since they have not had any input into the selection of the songs and choruses and have to be encouraged by the worship leader to join in or to lift their hands and worship. Another hindrance I have noticed is that sometimes the worship team has not been properly trained and just stands there without leading the worship as it is intended to do. Overall, the worship team has been accepted by the older generation without the disagreements which have arisen over other issues.

Another response which has become prominent in Pentecostal church-



es in Retreat is the “dance team” known as the spiritual dance group. Since I began this study, the number of dance teams in the churches has grown significantly. When I began the research for this study, there were only one or two groups which were known as dance teams. Now, the dance teams are presenting their form of worship on a regular basis. In fact, in one church I visited, they had a dance team made up of their junior youth. The dance team is made up of a group of younger people, mostly women, who do synchronized movement to music or to a song. Its purpose is to present a different way of worshipping through organized dance. While dancing in general is not acceptable in most Pentecostal churches, the dance team has become an acceptable alternative. Those who dance in response to choruses in the service are usually led by the older people while the dance team is made up almost exclusively of the younger people. The younger generation in their own way is responding to traditional Pentecostal worship experiences in ways which allow them to express themselves and become more involved in the activities of the congregation in worship of God.

### **3.3 The Secularisation of Pentecostalism**

**Bate (1994:100,106,321) defines inculturation as**

**a process (in) the emergence of the local church in a place. . . The terms context or culture would seem to represent different expressions of the same wish that a local church should be responding to the world where it finds itself: being in but not of the world..... part of the process of inculturation is also the ability of the local Church to transform its culture in accordance with its faith and the gospel in order to create a Christian culture.**

**Schineller (1996:112) says that “inculturation involves the cross; it demands conversion, a dying to the old and a moving to the new. There is an emptying,**

a letting go, so that something new and unknown, untested, can be born. This is difficult and meets resistance.” Inculturation in these terms is the Church living within a culture with the intended purpose of changing that culture to become a new or better culture based upon Christian principles and biblical standards. The Church is to be as Jesus said, “A light to the world.” The Church is to live in such a way that transformation of the existing culture takes place because the Church is existent within that culture. As Schineller states, “ a conversion” takes place within the culture because of the influence of the Church on the boundaries and the sign systems of the culture to transform them into a better and newer culture. It is not a one-way street, however. In any process of inculturation, not only is the culture affected by the church but the church is also affected by the culture. In what might be called “true inculturation” there is an exchange of signs and symbols with a restructuring of the boundaries and worldviews of both the culture and the church taking place.

Schreiter (1985:150) says

.. if the gospel is truly introduced into a culture, it will have to effect change. A genuine preaching of the gospel will always change the culture, and that change involves more than calling individuals back to the behavioural norms of their culture. It is a change of horizon, which has to have social implications and symbolic implications as well. From a semiotic perspective, one cannot introduce a new message into a culture without creating change in the sign system.

In studying the Coloured Pentecostals of Retreat, there is a process taking place within the minds of the pastors and members of what I am terming the Secularisation<sup>20</sup> of Pentecostalism. That is, rather than the Church dominantly influencing the world and causing changes within it, the world is coming

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20 I define secularisation as the process whereby the non-religious ideas, signs, and symbols influences the religious to the extent that they replace the religious ideas, signs and symbols.

within the Church and changing it. In the hearts and minds of those interviewed it is a present reality which is causing much stress and affecting the lifestyles of the members of the churches. Hiebert and Meneses (1995:347) says that “the church is always in danger of borrowing from the social models around it to organize itself. In so doing, it risks losing its distinct character as the body of Christ.” I discuss this issue under two headings: (1) Increasing Secular Influence and (2) Weakening Church Values.

These two things are causing the boundary markers, which we have previously considered, to be unstable and subject to increased pressure. Schreiter (1985:65) discusses the (I)internal and (E)external boundaries of “Us” and “Not-Us”.

Besides the issue of levels of organization in I and E, there is a second consideration of importance for establishing identity, namely, the nature of the boundaries and boundary markers between I and E. In some ways the nature of the boundaries is the most interesting part of the problem of the identity. Following the insights of topology in mathematics, the nature of the boundaries determines what is *internal to their bounding function*. The boundaries are the areas of ambiguity between two states, the ‘no-man’s-land’ where the codes of neither I nor E obtain. They are perilous areas in human existence. To restructure boundaries is to restructure identity (italics added).

The idea of secularisation is that the “external”, what the Pentecostals call “the world,” is penetrating the boundaries of the “internal,” that is, the Pentecostal churches, to influence the markers of Pentecostal identity to such an extent that the Pentecostal church is losing its distinctiveness. The following two sections will show how the Pentecostals of Retreat see this happening.

### 3.3.1 Increasing Secular Influences

The dualistic worldview of the CPC is most evident when the discussion centres around the concept of “the world.” Niebuhr (1951:48) could have been describing this CPC dualism when he said of First John, “Save in two instances the word ‘world’ evidently means for the writer of this letter the whole society outside the church, in which, however, the believers live.” The CPC understanding of the concept of “the world” could be described as simplistic, that is, everything is divided into church and world. The answers given in the interviews which follow show this dualistic worldview. In the area under discussion, the response to the traditional CPC is that “the world” is coming within the church and changing the church to be “like the world.” Much of the writing of I Corinthians by Paul had to do with the Church allowing herself to act like the world in which she lived. “The World”, that portion of existence outside the confines of what one understands as the “Church”, is, in Pentecostal understanding, under the control of Satan whose only desire is to destroy the Church. It is their contention that the Pentecostal people are allowing the things which come from the world to infiltrate and compromise and destroy the true spirit of worship and reverence for God. In Bosch’s (1980:221) words, “Others (Christians), again, have stopped ‘journeying’ between Church and world. The dividing wall between the two has been demolished. The world has flowed into the Church.”

In several discussions with Pentecostals I have questioned them about the use of the term “world” in order to find out what they mean by that term. They do not make the theological distinctions between the various meanings of the word “world” as Bosch (1980,1991), and others, do. They do not think in terms of cosmos (John) or age (Paul) but in terms of Christian (Church) and not Christian (world). I have already mentioned that it is a dualistic view of reality but one which dominates the Pentecostal thinking. Either something is in the realm of Christian or it isn’t. If it isn’t, then it is of the world. At the

same time, when various people gave definitions for their use of the word “world”, there was little agreement in what was said. It also became clear that few of those I questioned had even thought about the definition or usage of the word “world.” The “world” was, and still is, in opposition to the Church and Christianity. To most of them, it was a simple fact and because of that they had the task to work toward the conversion of the “world” to Christianity. These Pentecostals would belong to the group that Bosch (1980:202) describes by saying:

There is a tendency among evangelicals to regard Christ as Lord only of the Church and not of the cosmos as well. Since the birth of the Church there have been Christians who have been inclined to despise the world. They have interpreted the gospel in terms of a religion of redemption along the lines of the Greek mystery religions. Concern has been for salvation *from* the world rather than for the world’s renewal.(italics in original)

This results in the views expressed here that the world is coming within the Church and causing the Church to become secularised, that is, becoming influenced more by the world’s views than by Christian views as defined by the Pentecostals.

Member 66 is very definite in her views.

Songs have changed over the recent years, drastically so. Pure, undiluted songs of reverence, even “gospel” choruses are dying out. New songs produced daily with new lyrics and rhythms. Very close to worldly rhythms or what before was recognized as belonging to the world only. Now (they are) accepted by the church, although not in all.

The following are some comments from others:

- ▶ Member 8 - The church is more like the world.
- ▶ Member 14 - Dress [has] changed to worldly. The beat of the

- world has taken over.
- ▶ **Member 21 - [Pentecostals] have become like the world instead of the world like them.**
  - ▶ **Member 29 - It is as if the world has moved into the church.**
  - ▶ **Member 35 - The church has lost that which made her different from the other churches or denominations. People are compromising more and more with the world - living up to the enemy's standards.**
  - ▶ **Member 47 - The youth [are] more worldly today.**
  - ▶ **Member 57 - The youth have become more worldly, not everybody is Pentecostal.**
  - ▶ **Member 61 - [There is] no difference to worldly music and gospel. The unsaved 'Rave' (form of dancing) and believers do, too, 'Rave'. Difficult to discern difference as well as the name of Jesus in lyrics, etc. The style of music and like have greatly changed.**
  - ▶ **Member 69 - [Youth] are more worldly in attitudes. [There is] more modern worldly fashions in church. Worldly culture [has] moved into the church.**

While several of these examples refer to the youth, there is a wide range of ages in the members who made these statements. It is that these members see what they consider to be influences from outside the church beginning to come inside the church and cause changes to the belief structure of the church and the attitudes of the members. As with the members, both young and older ministers are expressing the idea that the worldly things are influencing the church. There is also the idea that much of this is coming through the younger members of the churches. I have previously mentioned the conflict between the younger members and the older ones, but this phenomenon stretches across the age divide to include men and women of all ages. On the part of these Pentecostal people, they sincerely believe there is a definite increase in the influence that the things of the world are having on the church.

### **3.3.2 Weakening Church Values**

How much can the world influence the Church's moral value system? Is the power of the world sufficient to overcome the power of the Church? When one considers that the Pentecostal churches believe that they have the power over the forces of the enemy [2.6.2.2; 2.6.2.5], represented by their term, "the world", one has to look at those things from within the Church itself that would allow the influence of the world to be greater than the power of the Holy Spirit. I have discussed the Pneumatic Dimension of the CPC worldview [2.6.2] which represented the Pentecostal understanding of the power which is manifested within the Church and its members through the workings and gifts of the Holy Spirit. However, there is indeed a perception among the Pentecostals of Retreat that the Church is losing out to the world by allowing its value system to become weak.

Member 52 expresses this idea by saying,

You don't find the gifts in the church anymore. This has a lot to do with people's value system. People do not allow the Holy Spirit to lead them – this gives rise to a lifestyle that doesn't please God. The Holy Spirit can't operate through a people that is filthy and sinful – that's why the gifts can't operate in the churches. Drastic changes occurred . . . in people's attitudes, way of living and basic Christian lifestyle. People are much more tolerant to allow inconsistencies in the church. The moral values of Christians have lowered also.

Member 62 says,

It appears that we've settled into a comfort zone. Christianity has become comfortable. It's the first time I see that Christians have become comfortable in their Christianity. Jesus has become a joke to Christians. The Word appears to go in and out by the ears of Christians. Christians' conception of their Christianity goes as far as the visual reality only and not deeper.

**This seems to be a rather harsh judgement on all Christians but nevertheless, it is how this member feels.**

**Member 4 puts it this way:**

**. . . there is no longer that really mighty move of the Spirit. When I say mighty I mean speaking in tongues, healing of the sick, etc. On the other hand, I cannot only blame these changes for this effect, but I think we have to look at how committed people really are to the cause. Being a born-again Christian in the 90's seems to mean less than what it was in the 70's and early 80's.**

**Member 7 puts it this way by saying, "There has been a move away from the old type of religion to a new modern dimension of Christianity.....also there has been a decrease in speaking in tongues and seeing of visions." Member 8 says that Pentecostals have lost their identity "where the moving of the Spirit is concerned; there are hardly any tongues and visions." Member 17 declares her view on this issue by saying, "What happened to the days people would speak in tongues and others would interpret? Our lifestyles have forced the Holy Spirit out of our midst." Member 21 is definite in her opinion when she says, "Pentecostals have definitely lost the very distinctive characteristics like fervent prayer sessions, definite presence of the Holy Spirit. Other than that they have become like the other churches around them." Member 24 expresses it like this: "I think the Church in general is not allowing the Spirit to move anymore. We find very little prophecies going out. The gifts of the Spirit are almost non-existent."**

**The pastors express similar sentiments. For example, Pastor Majiet says,**

**Pentecostals have lost their identity. It is caused by the modern age. They feel that if they can compare themselves with groups around them that somehow things will get better**



for themselves as a church. They lower the standards as far as the gospel is concerned. I know of churches in our area that worked in the ministry very well but later years they just drifted away and you just don't see them anymore. You don't hear of them because of this slackness. And one of the things that I feel like the Church must keep going when the circumstances are bad or worse and not to compromise.

Pastor C Jacobs says that "now the people are lax. The Pentecostals don't have the power of God like they used to have. People don't want to stand for the work of the Lord anymore. People don't want to go deep like they used to. People don't follow the Word of the Lord like they used to do." Pastor Flandorp says, "There is such a compromising going on that we never allowed before. People come as they want to and go as they want to. They are not as established in their worship. They go from one church to another without thinking anything about it."

Pastor Lindsay explains it this way by saying, "You can see that there is a very dampness. It is like a fire where you have thrown a wet rag over. There is no motivation." Pastor Erasmus says, "I have noticed that some time during this period (1980-1995) that people are very lax. They are pleased to be Pentecostals or Christians." Pastor Small puts it this way.

It is like we are more, we are accepting more, like I mean, when pastors of different churches come together, we are trying to make them like us or we are becoming more like them. They are running out of services, too, where the Spirit used to move. It is more programs, programs. I used to go into a service years ago, and I didn't know what to expect. I know now that if I walk in there at 11 o'clock, they will be singing the last chorus, they will be going over to the Word. We used to preach against it. But we are the same now.

What is expressed by both the members and pastors is their concern that things are not the way they were in past years with respect to two things.

First, they feel there has been a definite lessening of Pentecostal values. This is seen in the terms like “compromise,” “laxness,” “slackness,” “lower standards,” “moral value less.” The one extreme expression mentioned was the term “joke.” The second indication of weakening values is found in the concern for the lessening of the moving of the Holy Spirit with the accompanying gifts of the Spirit. Of the members who felt that there has been a loss of Pentecostal identity, the majority of them mentioned that some form of Pentecostal experience, i.e., tongues, interpretation of tongues, healing, prophecy, etc., was no longer being actively seen in the churches. Since “being Pentecostal” has already been defined as having to do with the Holy Spirit and the workings and gifts of the Spirit, then this lessening of the manifestations of the Spirit is a sign of the church’s values becoming less than they were in previous years.

Sociologists, like Max Weber, call this the “routinization of charisma.” It is described by W.E.H. Lecky (in Gerth & Mills 1977:53) this way:

An enthusiasm is kindled, a group of adherents is formed, and many are emancipated from the moral condition of their age. Yet the full effects of such a movement are but transient. The first enthusiasm dies away, surrounding circumstances resume their ascendancy, the pure faith is materialised, encrusted with conceptions that are alien to its nature, dislocated, and distorted, till its first features have almost disappeared. The moral teaching, being unsuited to the time, becomes inoperative until its appropriate civilisation has dawned; or at most it faintly and imperfectly filters through an accumulation of dogma, and thus accelerates in some measure the arrival of the condition it requires.

In describing Weber’s philosophy, Gerth & Mills (1979:54) say

Weber sees the genuine charismatic situation quickly gives way to incipient institutions, which emerge from the cooling off of extraordinary states of devotion and fervour. As the

original doctrines are democratized, they are intellectually adjusted to the needs of that stratum which becomes the primary carrier of the leader's message. If these ideas are not adaptable in this way, then, regardless of their intrinsic merit, either their message will fail to influence the conduct of everyday life or those whom they do influence will remain enclosed in a special way of life and alien to the larger social body.

I think that this is the situation that is found within the Pentecostal churches, up to a point. The majority of pastors in the Pentecostal churches of Retreat are older men. The older they are and the longer they have pastored their churches, the more the tendency to have conflict with the younger members of their churches. It does seem to be that the message that is being given out is not the message that the younger people want to hear. It is in some respects true that there is little adaptation of the Gospel message to the times in which we are living or to the events and circumstances which the younger people are facing. It is not so much that the message is "unsuited for the times" as the lack of adaptation of the message to the times by the older pastors, as seen from the younger people's perspective, and to the issues which the younger generation is facing in this day and age which are different from the situations faced by the older generation. For the most part, the older people, and especially the pastors, do not understand this. In the interviews with the older pastors, I sensed a very inflexible position in many of the answers to the questions concerning change. Some of these pastors seemed unwilling to come to terms with the new societal pressures which have come as a result of the new democracy in South Africa. In doing so, they placed themselves in opposition to the younger pastors and members who see change as inevitable and who are willing to work with changes to better the church and society.

Oosthuizen (1975:269), in speaking of the situation in Indian Pentecostal Churches in the Durban area, says the following:

**The younger Pentecostal pastor has come closer to the society of his day than the older Pentecostal pastor - the problems of society come to him in various ways; he cannot avoid them. The break down in the equilibrium of society will not be immaterial to the Pentecostal pastor of the future - he will be called upon increasingly to give direction in the acculturation process and other secular issues which affect the lives of the members of his congregation.**

**In this secularisation process which seems to be taking place within the Pentecostal churches of Retreat, it will be a new generation of pastors who, as Oosthuizen says, will be better able and better equipped to come to grips with its implications and have the ability to withstand its effects when needed. There is also the reality that not everyone sees secularisation as a threat but as a needed process and will not withstand it but eagerly use it for the betterment of the church as one sees the opportunity.**

**It is this new generation that is now questioning the value system of their older leaders. It is this new generation that are the ones who are experiencing the cooling off of emotional experiences. Several of the respondents asked the question, "Where are the signs which our parents talk about?" "Where are the demonstrations of the Spirit about which we have heard so much?" In my own denomination, I see second and third generations of the same family worshipping together. But, at the same time, these second and third generation Pentecostals do not, on the surface of things, appear to be as fervent in their religious experiences as the first generation. It is not so much that the younger generation is doubting the experiences of the first generation Pentecostals as it is that they are wondering why the things the older generation testify about are not still happening today.**

**Oosthuizen (1975:302) in his study of the Indian Pentecostals of Durban says that**

**it is interesting to see that in the older Pentecostal churches certain rigorous attitudes adhered to earlier are relaxed mainly**

because members have moved up on the social ladder. Some go to movies and even take part in dances. Young men and women dress in modern style and girls use make-up. These are trends observed in the more established Pentecostal churches with second and third generation Christians.

Much of what is called 'cooling off' is a result of conflictual situations within the churches between the first generation and the second and/or third generation Pentecostals. A large percentage of the Pentecostal churches in Retreat still have within them the people who were instrumental in starting them. The situations which these founders experienced in getting the churches started are still guiding the decisions which are being made today. Many of them are making decisions based on facts or experiences which happened to them in the beginning of the movement or in the beginning of the church. The methods which these founding pastors used many years ago are still being used today and are being questioned by the younger generation. As expressed by the young couple previously mentioned [2.6.4.1], the second and third generation Pentecostals are no longer satisfied with what they consider to be old methods and old ways of doing things in today's fast paced society. The younger people are saying that situations have changed and the church needs to change with them. One recent graduate of the Training Centre who desires to be a chaplain in the police services cannot do so without being ordained in his church. He told me, "In the thirteen years I have attended the church, only the pastor's son and son-in-law have been ordained. No one else. Why not? How can I fulfill my ministry without the help of the church?" The younger generation do not necessarily see the changes as a lessening of values but as a need for change.

Some of the pastors realise that the church values are weakening and believe that it is happening more with the youth. Pastor Erasmus offers the following reason for "this dampness" as he describes it. In response to the question whether Pentecostals have lost their identity, Pastor Erasmus replied:

I would say not, because I haven't lost mine. I would say that the older generation hasn't lost it. The younger are so, most of our young people, are so busy. Most of them are in colleges and high schools and I think a dampness is being put on them in the colleges and high schools. They cannot lift themselves up as they want to lift themselves up. That is why some of them don't have that fervour and that fire that Pentecostals normally are expected to have because they are dampened at school. At most schools, they don't have Student Christian Fellowships and things like that. Even some of the teachers who are Pentecostals, they are hiding their lights and not coming forward and confessing what they are supposed to be. It is also that, and this puts the younger people down.

Pastor Flandorp offers another reason for this weakening by saying, "I think there is so much competition today and one wants to outdo the other and do not realise that the gifts are there to sort of surprise the people. Some are surprises but are to edify the body. People sort of confuse the two." These two pastors see the reasons for the lessening in values and the Spirit of God as external rather than internal.

For the one, it is caused by the system of education to which the young people are being subjected. The "system" is preventing them from having the opportunity to live like they are expected to live by the other Pentecostals of their church. The "system" is holding them down and keeping the fire from burning. While it is true that the education system is undergoing changes itself, no "system" can keep the spirit within a person from reaching out to one's God. It can severely limit access to opportunities during the interchange with the "system" but it can not completely stop any individual from experiencing one's God if that individual has the desire to do so. We must look elsewhere for the reasons for this weakening value system. The other pastor blames other churches for this phenomenon. He calls it competition. Pastor Flandorp seems to be indicating that pastors are trying to get people from

other churches rather than reaching out into the extended community to reach those who do not attend or who are not a part of local churches. I discuss the issue of evangelism a little later (see 3.5) in this chapter. Yet, is not every pastor in some respects in competition with every other pastor, especially with those pastors who do not believe the same way one believes? It may not be called competition but in essence that is what it is. When one perceives that one has "The Truth", then one is going to try to reach everyone and anyone who will listen with that message of truth.

I have observed while attending special events and regular church services in CPC churches that there is a dual approach to other Pentecostal pastors. On the one hand there is a bond of fellowship which exists between the pastors and church members because of similar Pentecostal beliefs even though there are differences among them. This bond of fellowship is loosely held together more because the pastors have known each other for years than for any other reason. Many of the independent churches came out of the more traditional Pentecostal denominations. They can sing, pray, praise and worship together during these times of fellowship. Yet, on the other hand, Pastor Flandorp's "competition" is ever present. That is, the pastors know which churches do not believe like they do and attempt to gain people from other non-Pentecostal churches because they perceive that they, the Pentecostals, have "truth" that the other churches need. In no other discussion except in the interview with Pastor Flandorp was the word competition mentioned. However, Pastors P Muller, J Hendricks, and Small, for example, have all indicated in some way that they are concerned about losing members to other churches. There is no indication as a result of the interviews whether this feeling of "competition" carries over to the members of these churches.

The Secularisation of Pentecostalism is occurring because there are pressures from both within and without the churches for change. Throughout its history the Church has always stood in opposition to "the world". The Church has condemned the world's influences and its activities and is now

facing what the Church feels is a renewed onslaught of the enemy to destroy its structures and its beliefs. There is a real sense among the Pentecostal people that the Church is losing her battle against these forces of the enemy, Satan. However much the Pentecostal churches want to place the blame for the lessening of its fervency on the effects of the world, it must first realise that the destruction it is so fearful of facing comes more from within its walls than from without. The feelings of both the members and the pastors concerning the weakening within the Church of its power and the demonstration of its power are the primary causes of the secularisation process. In the midst of the changes happening in South Africa, the CPC must reassess the church's mission of being the seed of eternal life within its own culture. If the CPC is going to stop what it sees as a reversal of faith, then it will need to do some reevaluation of what it sees as the CPC's role in today changing society.

### **3.4 Increased Individualism**

I have previously mentioned, in 2.3.2.3, the idea that to Pentecostals the Church is a family – brothers and sisters serving the Lord together. There is a concern for one another that goes beyond the sentiment found between blood relations such as father, mother, uncle, aunt, or brother-sister. There is, however, a new reality coming within this sense of family; the idea of individualism – I can do for myself. With the emphasis on personal salvation and personal accountability that one finds in Pentecostal and evangelistic preaching, it is not difficult to see people taking the next step; becoming concerned for oneself above the concern for others or for the group. Pastor Jackson calls this the “I am syndrome.” Pastor P Muller says that “people today are more in tune to do their own type of things. They go for what they can get out of their lifestyles.” In his sermon on “Stay in the Camp of Safety,” Pastor LaRue tells the people “Don’t gamble with what God has given you. Don’t exchange it for what the world may promise. Listen to me today. ‘Maar,



**Pastoor, ek kan vir myself besluit.' I can decide for myself. I can do what I want to. Yes, but that will be your loss." Pastor C Jacobs says, "Pentecostals have changed a lot because everybody is doing their own thing." A young Assembly of God man said in a sermon, "Beloved, when we have to cross the waters we stand still and say, 'God, no way, not now. I must finish this one aspect of my life. There is not time for me to cross the water, to go to the other side.'" These pastors are all indicating this trend towards individualism which is coming within the churches. They are not talking to, or about, those outside the church but about the people who they find attending the Pentecostal churches which they pastor and attend themselves.**

**This same individualism is seen also by the members. In speaking about how change has affected his church Member 54 replied, "People have become more lovers of themselves; they go after material things; they want to dress better, drive better, live better. People have become stuck in their ways – they don't want the Holy Spirit of God to change them for the better." Member 29 says that instead of "total dependence on God to provide things for us," today, "we work for what we want." Member 26 says because of "compromise" people "do what they want to do." Member 5 feels certain changes are "negative." He says these changes result in**

**people becoming more materialistic and they crave for more of what they can see and feel. Pentecostals depend more on their own strength, i.e., how they can do and accomplish and on the arm of flesh, than on the Divine Spirit of God to direct and guide them and who provides for them. This new lifestyle has certainly affected the flow and worship of the Spirit.**

**This attitude of individualism which is perceived by many Pentecostals to be coming within the church can be seen from two points of view. The first one is based on the traditional Coloured Pentecostal beliefs that say God will provide for His people. This has been previously expressed in Sections 2.6.4 on economic assurance and deliverance. I do not want to go over that same**

ground again but it is necessary to some extent to see this first view point. The traditional Pentecostal view is seen in the use of the phrases “relying totally on God,” “God will provide,” and “God will give you more abundantly.” To the traditional Pentecostal there seems to be a line over which many others have crossed which says, “I no longer trust God to provide for me so I must provide for myself by doing the things I want to accomplish my goals.” For the traditional Pentecostal this is moving away from God. Many of them have difficulty in reconciling upward mobility with the plan and purpose of God.

In section 2.6.4.1, I discussed the issue of the CPC’s socio-economic status being low because of their average income. As previously quoted, Oosthuizen (1975:196) says that “climb[ing] the social ladder” gives people greater “influence in the congregation and community.” It is a seemingly paradoxical situation. On the one hand, the older generations have worked hard to improve their economic circumstances so that their children would be able to have more and do more than they were able to do because of their lower socio-economic position in society. On the other hand, the very increase which the older generation desired, as it comes to pass, brings with it the potential for conflict within their social structure and worldview. It is the reaction to this social change that is bringing about much of the reappraisal of Pentecostalism by the younger generation.

The second view point is that God has given me the ability to accomplish certain things and therefore I am going to do them. In discussions I have had, I have been given answers like, “Why do I need to trust God for what I can do for myself. I will trust God for what I cannot do.” This attitude can, and has been, interpreted as lack of dependence on God, thus the idea of individualism has arisen. At the same time, there may very well be those who have trusted in themselves to the point that they are no longer trusting God for anything. Consistent individualism would not be acceptable to the traditional Pentecostal. They see, again, in terms of a dualistic worldview – – good and evil – – serving and trusting God is good; doing one’s own thing is evil because it is

not trusting God.

### **3.5 Pentecostal Evangelism**

Evangelism, the Church's witness to the world, has always played a major role in the Church's activities. It is at the heart of church growth – the ability to reach outside the bounds of church structures and bring into the church those who have not been a part of the church before or to bring back those who previously attended. As contained in the comments which follow, Pentecostal evangelism includes preaching, teaching, open-air services<sup>21</sup>, door-to-door visitation, campaigns and ministry on the trains. As with any group, there are differing opinions concerning the outreach of the church whether it is doing what it is supposed to do or not doing it. The Pentecostals of Retreat are no different; there is a group who say evangelism is happening and there is a group who say evangelism is not happening.

Member 51 defines being Pentecostal as including “service unto the Lord, going and proclaiming.” Member 71 says Pentecostals have “the boldness in which we proclaim the ‘whole gospel to the whole world’.” Member 75 says “the main thing they (Pentecostals) do is witness.” She says one way this witnessing is done is the following:

We no longer just see ourselves as just His instruments, by saying or speaking mostly to others and excluding the building of friendships or relationships. There's a tendency to take a 'closer' approach, instead of only preaching. Now, loving, respecting, sharing, visiting and inviting the unsaved along. Sharing their lives with them; befriending them; to be with them; but doing it now in real love. It's deeper than just rambling off scriptures as fast as a rocket to those you approach, a more level approach.

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<sup>21</sup> Open-air services are those services held outside the confines of the building used for the church services. They are usually held in the open near residential areas, blocks of flats or on street corners. Music, testimonies and a sermon are all given during the service.

**Pastor Erasmus explains how the evangelism program at his church is helping the church as well as reaching out.**

**I started studying and seeking the Lord's face and then about a year and a half ago, we, as a church, started personal evangelism, door to door after I had a week's training with them. Then we went out for a week and we had 38 – 19 groups of two each – starting in some point in Retreat. Up to now, we have visited 300 homes where we had, not so much conversions, but that they took the gospel to the homes. (It) brought a change to our church which is satisfying to me as a pastor. Now I know that not all, but a lot of our people has changed. They came to love souls. You get the best testimony from those who are busy outside who can speak of experience and I love that. We have a good couple of those people here, especially those ones which are busy in our train ministry<sup>22</sup>, because we also have a train ministry. About six or seven of our brothers are busy on the train ministry and they are also involved in open air ministries. It is going well on that side. Our testimonies are going good because people testify who are normally testifying outside.**

**Pastor P Muller says that Pentecostals have more boldness to evangelise than non-Pentecostals.**

**In Christ you are set free, truly free. Therefore you are not ashamed to tell the world that Jesus loves you which the non-Pentecostal people won't have the openness to say that I am not ashamed of saying to the world that Jesus Christ saves me, and loves me. I have experienced this on the train. You know, I am preaching on the train and I listen to many of them but none of them will get up and say, 'I am a child of God and this morning I want to share my testimony with you.' Pentecostals, you have the boldness because you are set free by**

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**22 Train ministry involves people presenting the gospel message through singing, testifying and preaching while traveling on the trains. Many people do this while going back and forth to work. At other times, churches plan special times for ministry on the train.**

the blood of Christ and being set free by the blood of Christ you have the urge to say I know that Christ has done something in my life and I want to share it with you and this is where the difference comes in.

Member 49 says, "We have seen many more souls come to know Jesus Christ." Member 33 says, "There has been numerical growth as well as spiritual." Member 24 says that the "infilling of the Spirit results that Christians are even more bold to proclaim the gospel." Member 28 says, "When I think of changes within the church, it mostly has to do with church structure. The pastor doesn't do all the work anymore; there's more emphasis on evangelism and spiritual growth. Spiritual growth and growth in number of converts are visible." In contrasting new converts to Pentecostalism with older Pentecostals, Oosthuizen (1975:229) says, "Those who experience a complete change of orientation experience the Pentecostal church as something new, become evangelistic minded and keep up the missionary fervour in the church while those who are traditionally Pentecostals tend to 'cool off' or keep the tradition going." This is true for the Pentecostals of Retreat as well as those in Durban. It is not possible through the answers given in the interviews to know precisely if this is the reason that there is growth within some of the Pentecostal churches while not in others. The Pentecostal evangelistic efforts of reaching out to the community have in the minds of these pastors and members been successful and are the things that the church should be doing. However, not everyone sees evangelism in this positive an attitude.

Several of those interviewed were of the opinion that there was a slackening of efforts both in reaching out to the lost and in the normal services of the churches. Pastor Jackson says, "The church to me, since the 80's is not, she hasn't come so involved in the spiritual things of life. The open airs have decreased, thinking about the campaigns, they have too." The Pentecostal Holiness minister said in his sermon,

**Why should there be so many empty seats in the house of the Lord? Why is prayer meetings so empty, why are the people so lax to come up to the house of the Lord especially on a Sunday evening? Are our priorities right? Does Jesus really come first in our lives, or are we different persons – one at work and someone else at church?**

**The young Assembly of God man expressed similiar thoughts when he said**

**There are many that are stuck in front of the Red Sea. There are many that are stuck in front of the River Jordan and it is our duty to go out there and tell them that our Jesus can make a way. Our Jesus can open up the Red Sea. Our Jesus can dry out the River Jordan in your life and He can put a living fountain in your life. You don't see souls being saved any more. You don't see the sick being helped any more. Why? We are more to do with the worldly things and the church needs to be washed.**

**Pastor J Hendricks gives the following reason for the lack of evangelism when he says, “. . . our behaviour, our life, our attitude, the way we live for each other; the love has gone cold, very cold. The world is looking to the church. As we live the example, the world can see us. If we have compassion and harmony, but it is totally turned around.” Member 17 says, “We have more fund raising efforts than door-to-door visitation.” Member 35 says, “Old time Pentecostals almost had a service every night of the week. Now they only have the ‘necessary’ services or meetings.” Member 46 says Pentecostal churches no longer have the “evenings of 10 services.” Member 47 says, “The churches are emptier than before; one can count those who attend. Cottage meetings are poorly attended.” In his sermon, Pastor Daniels echos this thought by saying, “the cottage meetings are just for the few.” Member 29 says, “Today some people are even too lazy to come to the weekly prayer meetings.” Member 66 says, “Even campaigns’ messages focus more on**

believers' lives than on the unsaved. I think we should reach out more as a body." Member 73 says preachers "no longer preach on conversion." Member 69 says there is "less zeal for open-air services."

Concerning church attendance Pastor Booysen says

I have the same service like other churches. On Sunday I have only one service in the morning. Sunday evening, I give them off so that they can sit with their families and some people come visit with them and they can spend more time with them. If I give the service both morning and the night, then what happens is the people won't come in the morning, most of them. I mean here and there a percent of them won't come. Those who come in the morning won't come in the evening. I found out these things when I was with another congregation. So I said, well, if I have my own service, I won't do that. I will let the people have the night off.

Is there a correlation between evangelism and regular church attendance? There appears to be. If it is as these examples show that people are "lazy", "slow to coming," "don't attend cottage meetings," and "come only to one service on Sunday," does that not show that the attitude towards the gospel of Christ has changed? If the attitude towards the gospel and the individual's need to hear the gospel has lessened, then it stands to reason that people will not reach out in evangelism to others. If you are not overly concerned about your own relationship with Christ, will you be concerned with the relationship of others to Christ? Evangelism, as part of the mission of the church, comes in many forms and in differing intensity. In the view of these particular pastors and members, Pentecostal churches in Retreat appear to be less evangelistic than they were in past years. Schreiter's view is that changes in the society brings changes within the church. I mentioned earlier (3.3) concerning the secularisation of Pentecostalism that true inculturation causes change in both the society and the church. As secularisation becomes more pronounced within the Pentecostal churches, if it does, evangelisation may

continue to become less and less an important item on the agenda of Pentecostal churches. I will return to this issue in Chapter Five.

### 3.6 Worldview in Transition

It can be seen that change is happening within the Pentecostal churches. This change can be seen as either good or bad, depending on whether or not you are in favour of change or want to maintain the traditional value systems and beliefs of the past. Change is seldom easy. The Pentecostal worldview is in a period of transition whose end has yet to arrive. There are two groups found within these Pentecostal churches. The first group sees the changes as taking away from what has been known, taught and experienced as the “old-time” Pentecostal way of life. The view secularisation of Pentecostalism would be held by most of this group. As Pastor Jackson has expressed previously, “That time has gone,” meaning that willingness to testify in the same way that people previously did, is no longer evident in church. Pastor Biegnaar expresses another view by saying, “People don’t act like Pentecostals.” That is, they don’t do the things they used to do that identified one as a Pentecostal, i.e., clapping hands, dancing in the Spirit, speaking in tongues, etc. These pastors are expressing the idea that change is happening in which they are not necessarily in favour but that they, in most cases, go along with, because that is the way the people want it. Transition is occurring in their worldview without them really realising that it is doing so. Member 50, who is not in favour of change, says, “Those who pursued changes, left the congregation for others who do things as they desire.” Member 51 is explicit when saying, “We strive against these changes [what is considered modernism.]” In attending the various CPC churches on numerous occasions, I have noticed that what Member 50 says may be true. I discovered after my second or third visit that people I had met on previous visits were no longer in service. I have inquired on several occasions as to the whereabouts of these people



and was informed that they no longer came to church. The reasons given for these people not being there varied from “going to another church” to “no longer serving the Lord.” Since I attend different churches each week, I cannot say that this is happening on a large scale or not. If it is happening enough for me, the occasional visitor, to notice, then it may be happening enough to warrant further investigation.

While change is coming, there are those who are not accepting it or who are fighting against it. Droogers (1994:34) gives one reason for some of this resistance to change by saying, “To Pentecostals unlimited choice between alternatives are symptoms of moral chaos. Most would prefer a more narrow and committed way of life, a life in which the choices are centered on the struggle for an authentic Pentecostal religious experience.”

The second group are those who see the transitions as good things and welcome them and work to make use of them. As Pastor Rhoda has previously mentioned, there is a “new dimension of worship....in the church.” Pastor D Muller also said that there is “a broader understanding of worship” than before. These two pastors indicate that Pentecostal worship is going through this period of transition from an emphasis on what might be called emotionalism, to what these men are calling a “broader understanding” of worship which includes the emotions but also a deeper preaching of the Word of God. I have mentioned throughout this chapter examples of changes which are currently taking place within the Pentecostal churches. These changes have not yet completed their process to become established traditions but will probably do so and then will face additional changes as the next generation rises into leadership.

There is another area that is in transition, namely, the language of the services. The Retreat area is primarily an Afrikaans speaking area. The first schools were Afrikaans medium schools. In many churches there is the beginning of a transition from Afrikaans to English. This is due to several reasons which were given in the answers to the interviews. Among the

reasons given were the influx of Africans into the community, the problem of dual language systems between home, church and work, and the possibility of English being the language of business. There is also the area of African languages as Pastor Wilschutte says, "We must look at the language issue." Many of the churches I have attended are beginning to sing choruses in African languages. While this is not a major part of the services, it is an attempt to begin to realise the need to accommodate people of various languages. I discovered also that in many of the services conducted by the youth in Classical Pentecostal churches, there is far more Afrikaans spoken than in services conducted by independent charismatic youth. The reasons for this were not evident from the interviews. There are two suggestions as to possible reasons for this transition in languages. The first suggestion is that it is a class issue. English is becoming the language of the "elite" Coloureds in the Western Cape. As such, it is causing a widening of the gap between the various classes of Coloureds. The second suggestion is that the new generation of Pentecostals do not feel as bound to the Afrikaans language as some of the older generation. As a result there is some distinctions in language use between the newer Charismatic churches and the older Pentecostal churches. The language issue within the CPC should be investigated further. All of these things are indications that the worldview of the Pentecostal people are facing times of transition as never before in its history.

### **3.7 Summary**

**The responses to the traditional CPC depend to a great extent upon whether the response comes from an older member or pastor, or from a new generation Pentecostal. There appears to be several areas of conflict and disagreement within the CPC which cannot be ignored or just swept under the “church” or “cultural” carpet. They must be faced squarely and responsibly by all the people involved in the CPC churches. In Chapter Five, I present some possible alternatives to the situations mentioned in Chapter Two and Chapter Three. In the following chapter, I look at the issue of Coloured identity and the relationship it has with CPC identity.**

## CHAPTER FOUR

### IDENTITY IN CRISIS

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

**Heritage. The past which forms part of the present. The past which influences the future. One's heritage. Heritage encompasses the concepts which are passed from one generation to another which tell the story of the existence of a group of people or of an individual family. Although I was the last of eight children, I became an orphan at an early age. I have always wanted to know about my family. From where did we come? Who are my ancestors? What did they do? The only hint that I have is found in a book which my mother kept while I was a baby which says that one set of grandparents came to the United States from Ireland. Thus my heritage has roots in Ireland. I am one quarter Irish yet know so very little about my heritage. None of my family has been able to tell me any stories – there is nothing passed down from previous generations to my generation. My heritage is a blocked issue. Although I have been able to visit Ireland, my past is hidden from me as there is no one to show me where to go or what to look for.**

**I believe in many ways that what I call a “crisis in Coloured identity” stems from the fact that there is so much conflict in the heritage of the Coloured people. As one informant said, “I don't know where I came from.” It is important to many people to be able to point back into history in order to establish continuity between the present, the past and the future. The present can often be understood better if one has knowledge of the past. The changing circumstances of the future can often be faced easier if one had a solid foundation of the past upon which to build. But what is the past for the Coloured people? This chapter looks at some of the ideas which have been voiced concerning this very issue. It also looks at some of the possibilities for**

the future. In Chapter Five, I will consider the missiological implications of some of these suggestions.

## **4.2 Pentecostal Sub-culture**

In the preceding chapters, I have been dealing with the CPC - - Coloured Pentecostal Culture. I have used terms of designation which in most instances are used for descriptions of full cultures while the CPC is only a sub-culture of the overriding culture called by the former government "Coloured." As previously mentioned, I do not use this term in any derogatory manner but as the description that is commonly given to this culture group when some form of specific identification is used. Luzbetak (1988:171) maintains that "strictly speaking, the term culture should be restricted to social groups speaking the same or related language and having more or less similar economic, social, and ideological systems." These terms do apply to the Coloured culture. Although there are changes in the use of Afrikaans by the Coloured culture, the majority of them are still able to speak and understand Afrikaans. They are very similar in economic and social conditions. They have been united in the past geographically as well as due to the policies of the former government. In these respects, Coloureds could be considered homogeneous culture. I will return to this issue later in this section.

As previously mentioned (1.3.5) Luzbetak aptly described the reasoning behind the designation of the Coloured Pentecostals as a sub-culture, that is, a society has "subgroups" which are formed by "values, mores, kinship norms, folklore, ritual, traditions and group consciousness....." The CPC forms a sub-culture based primarily upon their religious beliefs, that is, the fact that they are Pentecostal. Oosthuizen (1975:327,329) points out that "Pentecostalism develops a sub-culture and its teachings are rationalised in a special scheme of values but this culture is not merely the result of social, economic, political or intellectual deprivation but has a deep religious

dimension in which the lasting values are carried forward." Hollenweger (1988:490) agrees with this assessment by saying, ". . . apart from certain exceptions, Pentecostal teaching can be understood as the rationalized scheme of values of a particular sub-culture." In identifying the Pentecostal sub-culture of the Indian society of Durban, Oosthuizen (1975:329) comments, "Pentecostals have formed a sub-culture based on the Westernised Indian culture permeated by the fundamentalist values of Scripture and the cultural aspects which do not conflict with such a conscience." The Coloured Pentecostals have formed their sub-culture along similar lines as the Indian Pentecostals, based on their (the Coloureds) understanding of Scripture. However, Pastor Almano points out the similarities between Pentecostals and Coloureds in general when he says

Pentecostals and so-called Coloured, the culture between the two, there is a lot of similarities between the two. For example, they like noise and to have a nice time. That is why I think that Pentecostals have taken off so much within the so-called Coloured community. This is so strong because there is so much within the culture that they can identify with.

In discussing the concepts surrounding the term "Coloured," I will consider the following areas: (1) Coloured Culture, (2) Identity in Crisis.

#### **4.3 Coloured Culture**

Schreiter (1985:105-106) says that "group boundary and world-view together form a matrix within which both the society as a whole and the individuals within it find that selfhood called identity." In Chapters Two and Three, I have discussed the issues of group boundaries and worldview as found within the CPC. In doing so, I have been describing the Pentecostal Coloured sub-culture from its own point of view. Because the CPC is a sub-culture of the Coloured culture, I must also consider the broader aspect of identity which deals with the issue of the name, Coloured. It is a highly

**emotive issue which has social, political, economic and religious significance. I cannot therefore ignore the issue. Again, I use the term Coloured as a word of recognition and not as a word that is meant to divide or cause conflict with anyone. I use it since it is the name by which the culture under study has been known for a number of years.**

#### **4.3.1 There is a Coloured Culture**

**I have based this study upon the understanding that there is a sub-culture that can be identified as Coloured Pentecostal and that there is also a majority Coloured culture of which it is a part. That majority culture is called the Coloured culture. Venter (1995:319) says, "I assume in forming an ethnic group people, generally speaking, either construct a relatively unique culture, or otherwise perceive theirs to be so." "Or otherwise perceive theirs to be so" is an important issue when considering Coloured culture. Do the people, known now as Coloured, perceive themselves as having a culture? And if so, how is that culture identified now and how will it be identified in the future? Venter (1995:319) goes on to say that in forming a culture that "..... language (or dialect) [forms] an important distinctive." For the most part, the Coloured community speaks a dialect of Afrikaans. I have heard it described on several occasions as "not formal Afrikaans but kombuis Afrikaans" which means that in the Retreat area it is a more localized language use rather than the formal Afrikaans of business or of instruction. Language does play a major role in the culture. I have attended many services, meetings or even family gathering with Coloureds where other people were present who did not speak or understand Afrikaans, yet the people slipped easily into their mother tongue not realizing that the others could not understand them. In most instances, it was a natural thing for them to do and was not done to intentionally marginalise the people present. Marais (1996:61) says that "...in the Western Cape .... 80 percent of Coloureds are Afrikaans speaking." Language does**

play a major role in the identity of the Coloured community. Language, however, cannot be the only distinguishing factor in identifying the Coloured culture as there are other South Africans whose primary language is also Afrikaans who would not consider themselves to be part of the Coloured culture and community. Williams (1996:23) says ".....I would argue that the Coloured community is both socially distinct and diverse."

On the other hand, there is disagreement on whether there is a culture which can be identified distinctly as Coloured. Van Der Ross (1979:35; 73) does not believe there is a *distinct* Coloured culture.

In the case of the Coloured people of South Africa certain of these and similar elements do exist to varying degrees, but it is the crux of the present argument that neither the physical nor the cultural elements are different from other Western groups in such a measure that we may speak of a Coloured identity. . . . If by *culture* we mean life-style, as shown in language, religion, legal system, education, health habits, basic system of knowledge, housing, dress, procurement and preparation of food, travel, recreation and so on, the Coloured people are Westernized in every way. To be sure, they have a culture, but not a *special* culture peculiar to themselves. (italics in original)

The Coloureds of Retreat can be considered Westernized but that does not necessarily mean that there are not other factors which distinguish them from other cultures which would give them their own distinctive culture. Most of the people interviewed in this study felt that they were distinctive in cultural terms sufficiently to be given recognition as a culture in their own right.

There is also the issue concerning the term "so-called Coloured" which was mentioned by several people during the interviews. Van Der Ross (1979:79) offers this explanation for its use.

In time, then, the term "Coloured" came to be associated with "inferior"; in time "Coloured" came to *mean* inferior. This is why the Coloured people so often refer to themselves



as “the so-called Coloured people” - - it is because they cannot readily and will not openly accept a name which has come to have such unhappy associations. (*italics in original*)

However, Van Der Ross (:4) also says “. . . I shall not use the term ‘the so-called Coloured people’. To me, this is not only clumsy, but saying ‘so-called’ means that I really have another name, but use ‘Coloured’ here because other people use it. If I have another there, I should use it, and let other people use their own name.” One respondent in a discussion said, “I refuse to be called ‘so-called’ Coloured. That is as if I do not have an existence.”

According to Goldin (1987:13; 27), the origin of the name Coloured can be dated to the beginning of this century.

A decisive shift in terminology therefore took place at the turn of the century. The identification of a distinct Coloured category was not only associated with changes within the colonial administration and ruling class, it simultaneously reflected a reorientation of allegiances and ideas within the subordinate society. . . . Until the turn of the twentieth century there was no coloured identity distinct from Africans; but at the turn of the century a profound restructuring of the racial and social division of labour took place in the Western Cape. Associated with this was the reconstitution of the Coloured identity and the development of distinct Coloured organisations.

It is not possible to cover all the arguments for and against the use of the term Coloured for the group under study. It is best at this point to say like Lewis (1987:4) has previously stated, “Coloured identity is a white-imposed categorisation..... [and] came to be adopted by sections of those people so described.”

### **4.3.2 A Coloured Pentecostal Response**

**This study is not centred on the Coloured people in general but rather on the Coloured Pentecostals of Retreat. Therefore, the responses to the issue of the name Coloured are limited to those within this Pentecostal sub-culture and in no way indicates what may be the overall view of the Coloured community. It is a limited study area and, therefore, has a limited response. I am not in any way saying that the responses in this study show national or even regional trends but only the views expressed by those interviewed for the purposes of this study. There is not just one answer given by those who were interviewed. There were differences in opinions expressed by both pastors and members. These answers can generally be divided into two categories.**

#### **4.3.2.1 Acceptance**

**For various reasons which might be put forward for the use of the name Coloured, there are many within the Pentecostal community of Retreat who accept the title. Pastor Jacobs says the following:**

**For myself, I know we came from a lot of generations ago. They have called us Coloured. They argue that we are Coloured. I can't change that. Well, I can't say we are Black. They say we are Black but I am Coloured. I won't call myself something else. When I wake up, I know I am a Coloured. My book of life says I am a Coloured. So how can I tell you something else?**

**Pastor Flandorp says, "Well, I am proud that I am Coloured. I can't be anything else. Even if I could change it, I wouldn't. Although I had a white identification once, I changed it to Coloured." Pastor J Hendricks says, "I feel very satisfied with it." Pastor P Muller says, "You know, the term Coloured is something**

that has been stuck, and I don't think if somebody calls me something else I would feel happy about it."

Member 19 says, "I am quite happy. There is no other term that would describe who I am better." Member 6 says, "I feel proud to be a Coloured. That's the way I was born." Member 7 agrees by saying, "I feel proud to be called a Coloured. I am Coloured, even if people try to move away from the term, this is my heritage. In spite of the political changes around us, the fact that I am Coloured remains." Member 8 says, "(There is) nothing wrong with the term. The people I am with are happy to be called Coloured." Member 51 says, "I have nothing against it because it's the law of the land and as such I must accept it. I can't do else." Member 61 says, "It doesn't matter to me. Since I've been born, I've been taught/heard I'm a Coloured. In fact, I'm proud to be called a Coloured."

The statistics from the interviews show that the majority of those interviewed (75 total) accepted the designation of Coloured -- 59,5%. The chart below breaks down these statistics even further. It shows that there is very little difference when age groups are considered. In the group under 40 years of age 59,6% of all interviewees accept the term Coloured. In the group over 40 years of age 58,8% accept the term. However, it is evident that the majority of pastors do not accept the term Coloured: in fact, only 35% of them do. When considering the pastors' responses by the same age groups, it shows that only 25% of those under 40 years of age accept the designation. Among the pastors in the over 40 age group 41,7% accept the designation. An interesting statistic of the pastors' responses is that of the age group over 60. This age group has the highest acceptance percentage (60%) as well as the highest total number of acceptance.

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**Table 2 Members Percentage of Acceptance -- 75 Interviewees**

<u>AGE</u>	<u>MALE YES</u> <u>PERCENT</u>	<u>FEMALE YES</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
UNDER 20	1	0	1 50
21 -- 30	8	8	16 55,1
31 -- 40	8	9	17 65,4
41 -- 50	1	3	4 44,4
51 -- 60	2	4	6 85,7
61 +	0	0	
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>44 59,5</u>

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**Table 3 Pastors Percentage of Acceptance -- 20 Interviewees**

<u>AGE</u>	<u>MALE YES</u>	<u>FEMALE YES</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>
21 -- 30	0	0	0	
31 -- 40	2	0	2	33,3%
41 -- 50	1	0	1	20,0%
51 -- 60	1	0	1	50,0%
61 +	3	0	3	60,0%
<u>TOTALS</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>35,0%</u>

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These are sufficient examples that show that many Pentecostal Coloureds accept the majority culture designation, or term, Coloured. But what of the others?

#### **4.3.2.2 Rejection of the Designation Coloured**

While there may be a majority of those interviewed who accept the term Coloured as a cultural designation, the ones who reject being called Coloured, are very specific in their denunciation of this classification. Member 67 says, "It is a racist term, one with respect to which I feel uncomfortable and disturbed." Member 57 says, "It is degrading." Member 66 gives this reason for rejecting the term: "It's a little painful to me, the term. I think I feel sorry for our people as they appear so mixed-up, a people ignorant of its identity – like a child wandering aimlessly about, groping about in semi-darkness. A lot could've contributed to this imbalance. Maybe a lot did." Member 62 says it's like "buying white paint and putting some colour in it. I dislike it greatly." Member 12 is short and to the point when he says, "It should be banned." Member 13 thinks "it never existed." Member 16 says he "never accepted it." Member 25 says, "I don't want to be called Coloured." Member 32 says, "This term is something that belongs and should stay in the old South Africa." Member 34 says simply, "I don't see myself as a Coloured." Member 36 says she "doesn't like the term as it has bad memories." Member 41 says, "I feel discriminated against my colour. I am not feeling happy (about it)."

The pastors express their dislike for the term Coloured in similar fashion. Pastor D. Muller gives this reason for rejecting it: "I think it is something that we need to lose. Because it comes from a particular government which was the oppressor. The term Coloured symbolised a particular degree of repression." Pastor Almanò gives this explanation. "I never really liked the term Coloured. It had a negative connotation because it came as a form of suppression from the old regime. It had the apartheid

stigma to it by categorising people by the colour of their skin.” Pastor Wilschutte gives this reason:

**Personally, [the name] never affected me. It never affected me because I have always been taught that I am somebody. [Being Coloured makes one a nobody?] Yes, as I have understood it through the things that happened. It was almost like when a European spoke to a Coloured person and called him “Coloured” or “bushman”, it was almost like degrading him, making him small, making him feel like a nothing.**

Pastor Small points out, “Coloured is like, it’s not white, it’s not black, it’s like a half-breed. Because what is colour? That’s why I am slightly mixed. My ID said mixed. Mixed with what? Black and white?” Pastor Matthews is expressive in his denunciation of the use of Coloured:

**I hate it! I hate it! I remember as a young boy when you got on the train to go somewhere, you see the ‘Whites Only’ signs, how uncomfortable I felt; when I had to take the bus not being sure if I could get on this bus. You saw ‘Non-Whites Only’ or ‘Whites Only’, I couldn’t understand why at the time that was going on. There would be waste, people would say we are Coloureds; I just hated that term.**

An interesting statistic emerges from this data. In both member and pastor categories the highest percentage of negative responses comes within the 41-50 year old age group. There is no indication from the answers in the interview schedule as to why this phenomenon occurs. It does indicate the need for further investigation as to the reasons. These opinions confirm my earlier statement that Coloured identity is an emotional issue which contains many complex issues, some of which are beyond the scope of this study. Tables 4 and 5 show the result of the interviews from the negative side of the responses. Tables and charts cannot show the feelings which have been expressed by those interviewed but they can give one an idea of the overall

picture of a situation through the use of statistics. In the next section, I discuss the crisis in Coloured identity.

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**Table 4 Members Percentage of Rejection – 75 Interviewees**

<u>AGE</u>	<u>MALE - NO</u>	<u>FEMALE - NO</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>
UNDER 20	0	1	1	50
21 -- 30	4	4	8	27,3
31 -- 40	3	4	7	26,9
41 -- 50	3	2	5	55,6
51 -- 60	0	1	1	14,3
61 +	0	1	1	100
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>31,1</b>

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**Table 5 Pastors Percentage of Rejection – 20 Interviewees**

<u>AGE</u>	<u>MALE - NO</u>	<u>FEMALE - NO</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>
21 -- 30	2	0	2	100
31 -- 40	4	0	4	66,7
41 -- 50	4	0	4	80,0
51 -- 60	1	0	1	50,0
61 +	2	0	2	40,0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>65,0</b>

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#### **4.4 Identity In Crisis**

**Harper (1974:17) in discussing the original meaning of the word discernment, says the following:**

**In the Greek this word (diakrisis) is the word from which we get the English word 'crisis'. It implies the making of a decision, distinguishing between right and wrong, and therefore, inevitably arriving at a judgment. We naturally shrink from this. We would rather lump everything together and stick one label on it.**

**Harper's words may give one some idea of the problems which are bringing the Coloured identity issue to a crisis point. It was the intent of the former government to "lump everything together and stick one label on it" which resulted in the group areas and the chaos which it brought. In speaking of the Coloured community in particular, James (1996:43) says that "there is no single, anthropologically homogeneous, coloured community. There are many communities, bound together by decades of exclusion and a rootlessness created by group areas." Because of this, Calliguire (1996:10) points out that "whereas apartheid imposed a definition of coloured in the past, today the question of coloured identity is undergoing a process of rigorous self-examination."**

**The process of self-examination brings with it the necessity of making choices -- choices which are not easy but which have to be made if the Coloured community is going to establish itself as a distinct community of people. Pastor Almano says this is the problem they face. "It is because of an identity crisis. They don't know where they fit in. And really they have to make a choice." Choices are difficult because so often it involves deep rooted feelings and situations which are extremely personal. Marais (1996:60) says that**



**identity is a deeply personal matter, one on which each individual, family and community must themselves decide. Individuals must find their own answers as to who they are, where they stand and what their allegiances are in relation to language, religion and culture.**

**Choices are being made by all South Africans as Sonn (1996:63) points out.**

**Most South Africans are now engaged in defining and re-defining themselves. This is a healthy process that provides an important, if fleeting, opportunity to create a unified vision that is based on the wondrous heterogeneity that characterises our society.**

**What are some of the choices which are available to the Coloured community?**

**The Coloured Pentecostals of Retreat give us two of those choices.**

#### **4.4.1 The Term Coloured Will Disappear**

**Pastor Lindsay thinks that the name Coloured, along with all other similar designations, will just disappear. He says**

**I think in due time it will disappear all together. This name 'Coloured people', we are 'Coloured', we are 'Africans,' we are 'Bantu'; in due time, that will fall away. The nation is striving to be one. In due time, you won't say this is a European man sitting here. You will say this is my fellow brother or fellow South African.**

**Pastor Small echoes this feeling by saying, "It (the name) will just die away."**

**Member 70 says, "It is a trend that will die out in the future." Pastor Clarence seems to think the use of the term Coloured is already on the decline when he says, "That is a term which you hardly hear these days. As far as my experience is concerned, that term is not heard very frequently. They address**

you now as sir in the supermarkets. No longer considered as Coloured, or Black or whatever. They accept you as just a human now.”

Question 25 of the interview schedule asked, “Other than South African citizen, what term would you give yourself?” Table 6 shows the varied responses to that question. The intent of Question 25 was to try to find out if there was any term other than Coloured by which the people would call themselves. By using the phrase “South African citizen” in the sentence, I meant that I considered all people born in South Africa would have the designation of South African citizen as well as those who immigrated to South Africa. I was attempting to find out whether a new term was already in existence which might replace the term Coloured or which was already replacing it. Table 6 does not really show any new term in current usage.

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**Table 6 Responses to Question 25 – 95 total interviewees**

<u>RESPONSE</u>	<u>MALE</u>	<u>FEMALE</u>	<u>PASTOR</u>	<u>PERCEN</u>
		<u>T</u>		
Coloured	4	3	1	8.5
Human Being	3	1	1	5.3
SA Citizen	8	7	7	23.4
Child of God	10	16	3	30.9
African	0	1	0	1.1
Afrikaner	0	1	0	1.1
Mix	1	0	0	1.1
Pentecostal	0	0	1	1.1
No Answer	6	13	7	27.7

\*\*\*\*\*

The responses show a couple of things. First, since it was asked of Christians, the responses tended to be more in line with spiritual matters. That is probably why the highest percentage is found by the responses that had to do with a person being born again, a Christian or child of God. I grouped all these types of responses into one category. Another reply, Pentecostal, could, at the same time, be included in this group since it gives a religious type answer. It does not necessarily mean that Pentecostals see themselves as being more spiritual than other Christians. There is no way that can be concluded from the answers to Question 25. It can be seen in the answers to other questions, however. If that is the case, and I believe it to be so, then the responses by Pentecostals to Question 25 do not primarily indicate their rejection of the name Coloured nor their acceptance of a new name but, conscious choice to identify themselves as Christians rather than by some other name.

Second, the high percentage of 'no answer' to Question 25 is not a true indication of the answers given by the interviewees. For example, some of the people – especially the pastors – gave an indication in their answer to Question 24<sup>23</sup> how they would answer Question 25. Therefore, some of the interviewees did not ask Question 25, simply indicating either 'not applicable' or 'no answer.' If the category 'no answer' is interpreted to mean that the person did not have another name other than South African citizen, then the highest category would become "South African citizen" with 51.1% of the responses. However, even if this is the case, it does not suggest that those replying in this manner no longer desire to be called Coloured. It does suggest that there is a desire on the part of Pentecostal Coloureds to be known first as South African citizens as well as any other designation which they might have. The answers do indicate, though, that there is a possibility that the name Coloured may in fact disappear sometime in the future. I deal with the missiological implications of this idea in Chapter Five.

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<sup>23</sup> QUESTION 24 In the new South Africa, how do you feel about the term Coloured?

#### **4.4.2 Cultural Assimilation**

**A second idea which has emerged from the interviews is that of cultural assimilation. This idea is that one culture will merge with or into another culture which has similar strengths or similar meanings. From Schreiter's (1985) point of view, the stronger culture would absorb the weaker culture and cause the weaker culture to incorporate the sign system of the stronger. The missiological ramifications of this process taking place in the Coloured community, especially with respect to the Coloured Pentecostals, will be discussed fully in Chapter Five (5.2). The identity crisis of the Coloured community centres around the idea that they are insecure in their own cultural understanding of what it is to be Coloured. I have already mentioned that Van Der Ross (1979) does not think that the Coloured community even has a separate, distinct culture apart from a Westernized culture similar to the Western European culture. Calliguire (1996:11) says of this tension that**

**the need within the coloured communities to affirm an identity and to have the security of place that this in turn confers, is a strong common theme. The absence of such certainty of identity coupled with the lack of a secure place in the post-apartheid non-racial dispensation is seen by many ..... to be at the root of the tension within the coloured communities.**

**Pastor J Hendricks seems to be agreeing with this idea when he says, "the Coloured people feel like they are being squeezed. They feel like they are in between. They have no share and have nothing to say. They are the cast-outs. They feel very little and very small....." As a result some are reaching out to be a part of another culture which is able to provide stability to the insecurity which they sense within their own community.**

**Pastor Biegnaar says that the Coloureds "will assimilate with the blacks. It will become just one culture regardless of the differences." Pastor A Hendricks indicates that some have already done so when he says,**

**You will find the Coloured people, so-called, are generally divided. You get the different types. You get the elite types, the middle types which you as a white man will identify him or her with you as a white man. You will find there are Coloureds which calls himself with the Blacks because he more or less is like the Blacks. I am a Coloured but what is my culture? What do I practice as culture? I think like you, I go to the same church as you; I eat better than you do sometimes. I go to restaurants, what is my culture? What do I practice? Is it the way I worship different than Whites? You will also find Whites doing the same things; they sing the same choruses; they dance in the Spirit; they clap their hands. What is my culture? I live here; you live there. I identify myself as you do. There is no specific Coloured culture. I cannot define what Coloured culture is.**

**Pastor A Hendricks indicates that there has already been a lot of assimilating going on over the years to the point that many of the same things are found in the Coloured culture which are the same in the Western European culture, or in some cases, an African culture. He has difficulty in even being able to point out what distinctives a Coloured culture would have which would be different from, as he put it, "the White culture."**

**Pastor Adams puts it this way:**

**I think in the new South Africa, I would think that, although we probably won't see it, eventually we are going to get a much bigger fusion of identities. In other words, we still have that much inherited apartheid structure, the whites are all on that side of the line, the Coloureds are all on this side of the line. But eventually once the old men have moved out of the way, you will find more blending across the cultures – Islam, Blacks, Xhosas, the Zulus and all that.**

**A fusion of cultures; assimilation of cultures; the joining together of more than one culture with each other. A coming together of the sign systems, the boundary markers, the worldviews of the various cultures of South Africa. Is it**

possible for all cultures in South Africa to come together and become one? South Africa has been called the “Rainbow Nation”, a nation of many cultures yet making up one nation. If the colours of a rainbow are assimilated together in a similar manner as indicated by some of these respondents, what colour would it be? Would it still be called a rainbow? There are serious implications to the idea of the assimilation of cultures. I deal with it further in Chapter Five (5.6) when I discuss the missiological implications of this crisis in identity.

However, not everyone believes there is an identity crisis. Pastor Erasmus gives this view in response to a follow-up question about the assimilation of the Coloured culture into some other culture.

Yes, I think so because I don't think that we, the 'so-called Coloured' are very proud of being Coloured. If that term falls away (Coloured) I don't think we will lose anything or we will think about culture in that respect. Because I think that we aren't that proud about identity as the other culture groups are like the Whites, the Xhosas, the Zulus, and the Indians. We are not that proud about being Coloured or being this, that or the other. I think our culture is very, very near that of the White man because we grew up together. We stayed in the same places, maybe we didn't live together in the same house, but our parents worked for them. And all those things went along with them. So what they are doing, their culture is also our culture. Afrikaans is our language. Afrikaans is their language. We eat the same food. All those things doesn't differ from us. So we don't have an identity crisis.

Pastor Erasmus points out the similarities between Whites and Coloureds in the same manner as Pastor A Hendricks. To them, the Coloured community is very near the White/European community and therefore can be easily identified with them and thus eliminate the crisis in identity if full assimilation should occur.

#### **4.4.3 Correlation of Coloured and Pentecostal Identity**

**On the basis of the interviews I conducted, I have suggested in this chapter that a crisis of identity exists within the Coloured community. At the same time, there seems to be a crisis in the CPC's identity. Are there any factors common to the Coloured culture, in general, and, more specifically, the Coloured Pentecostal sub-culture, which may have brought the crises to the point they are, at the same time? I have been considering the crises in identities from two different views. First, as a Pentecostal, I have had an insider's perspective concerning issues of Pentecostalism. Secondly, I have had an outsider's perspective concerning Coloured cultural issues. In other words, I have had both an 'etic' and an 'emic' view into identity issues. From the answers to the interview schedules and participant observation, I have the following suggestions concerning the correlation of identities.**

**One suggested reason for these identity crises has to do with apartheid and freedom. Under the previous apartheid governments, the Coloured people were faced with a series of strict laws and regulations which governed almost every aspect of their lives. As mentioned earlier, even their name was a governmental designation. All of the restrictions placed upon them by these laws caused the suppression of their identity except what had been given them by the government. Freedom to choose their own identity did not exist. Attempts to exercise a different choice were not permitted. The same regulations applied to the Pentecostal sub-culture with the exception that they had the choice of religion.**

**With the establishment of the democratically elected government in 1994, the laws and regulations which brought restrictions began to be removed. The Coloured culture was free to make its own choices. Freedom came whether or not they were looking for it or even wanted it. The old designations began to fall away. The attempts of repression under apartheid gave way to the freedom of choice under the new government. This freedom**

of choice, then, became one reason for the identity crisis within the Coloured community, in general, to become a reality. As discussed earlier, there is no consensus as to what name the Coloured people want to be called. Freedom brought crisis. For those interviewed who continue to accept the designation as Coloured, there is no crisis. However, for those who want a new name, it becomes a crisis to the extent that others need to recognise them for who they are and the new designation which they choose. Personal identity is linked to group identity. Group identity allows the individual to be recognised as a part of "us". Without some form of group identity, the individual will remain an outsider.

Freedom also brought a greater possibility of upward mobility, economically and socially. The ability to move from one area to another, the increased income brought in by better job opportunities, and the incorporation into new social groups all brought pressure upon the old identity. These pressures are even greater within a highly urbanised society such as Cape Town. In this type of urban society which has, in Schreiter's (1985:72) words, "continued rapid social change" as a "norm rather than the exception", the ability of cultural identity to deal with the change will probably determine whether a crisis exists or not. From my observations of the CPC, they were not prepared for the rapid changes which came with the freedom found in democracy. Their identity was thrown into crisis because, as Schreiter (:72) states further, "where boundaries of group identity are not well defined (e.g., one may marry whom one will, or not marry at all), and where world-view is marked by a great deal of pluralism, then constant change is seen as a way of preventing entropy rather than causing it." However, from discussions with many CPC people, concern was expressed about too many changes coming too fast. The CPC does not seem able to handle this "rapid social change" especially in the area of identity – who they are.

Is this a sense of "collective" crisis? That is, does every person within the Coloured community or within the CPC have this sense of crisis? That is



not indicated from the interview answers. There are, however, a number of individuals who see the changes that are taking place as a crisis. I have quoted from several members who see rapid economic changes as damaging to the CPC identity. What I am saying is that there seems to be a definite correlation between the Coloured cultural identity crisis and the Coloured Pentecostal identity crisis. The same events which are bringing on the one crisis are contributing to the other. Whether the pluralism of an urban society, about which Schreiter speaks, will be an element of stabilisation or an element of chaos, cannot be determined from the interviews. It is certain that to some within the CPC the pluralistic urban society has contributed to the loss of identity which the CPC is possibly facing (see section 5.6).

Schreiter (1985:72-73) says, with the rapid changes in urbanised society, that “continually new sign systems need to be generated to cope with a flood of new information and possibilities.” The inability or unwillingness to develop new sign systems will inevitably bring on a crisis situation. The CPC, in particular, have indicated through the answers given by many of its members that it is having difficulty in dealing with the changes which are attempting to enter their culture. This attitude of “unwillingness” is demonstrated more by the older generation of CPC than by the new generation of CPC. The new younger generation of CPC is showing far more willingness to incorporate new sign systems into Pentecostal tradition. These conflicting responses from the older and younger generations of CPC Christians which have been highlighted in this study are indications of a crisis within the CPC. This crisis is a crisis of identity.

There is one other suggestion which can be considered. Under apartheid, did the CPC become a “haven” for the Coloured people? Although there is no direct question in the interview schedule that is linked to this issue, it warrants further investigation. Is it a coincidence that at almost the same time, and for similar reasons, as stated above, the crisis of identity arose within the Coloured culture and the Coloured Pentecostal sub-culture? If it is

true that the CPC became a haven for the oppressed, a refuge, so to speak, from the experiences of apartheid, then with the downfall of apartheid, the opening up of society in ways not expected nor allowed before, people would no longer need the “haven” which they had sought before. The market place syndrome, which I have previously mentioned, is an indication of this idea that people can freely move between churches as well as move between residential areas and levels of society. When the reasons for needing a “haven” have been removed, then the haven will be forced to either adapt or cease to exist as a haven. Its reason for existence will have to change in order to either keep the ones it had or to gain new members to replace those who no longer need a haven. This is an area which calls for further investigation.

All of these things which I have mentioned indicate a correlation between the crisis of Coloured identity and Coloured Pentecostal identity.

#### **4.5 Summary**

In this chapter I have presented various answers given by the Pentecostal Coloureds of Retreat to questions regarding a crisis of identity. I have suggested that it is a crisis because the people themselves are not in agreement on how to identify themselves. There are those who want to keep on identifying themselves as Coloured. There are those who reject that designation outright, as derogatory and demeaning. There are those who think that the Coloured community will gradually assimilate into the Black community. There are those who think the Coloured community will gradually assimilate into the White/European community. I have also suggested that the crisis in identity exists in part due to the pluralism of the urban society in which the CPC finds itself. I return to this issue in section 5.2. As long as all of these options are open to the Coloured community without they, themselves, choosing which way they want to go, there will remain a crisis in Coloured identity. In Chapter Five, I discuss the implications of Coloured

**identity as well as the missiological responses to Chapters Two and Three - -  
Schreiter's basis of identity -- boundary markers and worldview.**

## CHAPTER FIVE

### A MISSIOLOGICAL RESPONSE TO THE CHANGING IDENTITY OF COLOURED PENTECOSTAL CULTURE

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

This study is about one section of the South African society, the Coloured Pentecostals of Retreat. It deals primarily with Coloured Pentecostal identity. It has asked the question, "What makes a person Pentecostal?" to a more or less homogeneous<sup>24</sup> group of people living in a limited geographical area of the Western Cape of South Africa. This study has not in any way tried to come to any conclusions which can be applied to the entire Coloured community found throughout the nation. Its conclusions and suggestions form only one of many beginning points for future studies and discussions. Its research has fallen within the limits imposed in Chapter One by keeping the interviews of pastors and members within the Pentecostal community of Retreat, as I have defined Retreat. At the same time, it has not been possible to ignore the majority culture of which the CPC is a part, the Coloured culture; a name given to it by previous governments and accepted to a certain extent by those living within that culture. I have not tried to sidestep this controversial issue but have tried to express the opinions of those interviewed as concisely as possible.

In this concluding chapter, I want to look at the issues raised in this study from a missiological viewpoint. That is, I ask here: what are the implications of the choices which the CPC have made and are making at this present time? What are some possible consequences for the Christian and Pentecostal communities of the changes which are taking place within the

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<sup>24</sup> I use the term homogeneous to mean that all the interviewees came from the same cultural background known at the present time as Coloureds, and in particular as Pentecostal Coloureds.

**CPC of Retreat? The changes which the CPC are experiencing are not isolated changes which will only affect them. How they respond to these changes can serve as an example to other Christians, and other Pentecostal groups. The Pentecostals of Retreat are a part of the world-wide body of Christ. As such, what one part of the body does will have an effect upon the rest of the body to some degree. It is understood that there are changes taking place all over the world within the Pentecostal and wider Christian communities. It may take some time for the changes to filter down to every part of the body of Christ but eventually what is happening in one part of the world will be known in the rest of the world and will ultimately cause changes throughout the body of Christ.**

**For this reason, the missiological implications of the changes, which the CPC is undergoing, need to be considered and addressed. I will look at these issues not necessarily in the order in which they were discussed in the previous chapters. Since this study is about Pentecostal identity, I will leave that issue for last and discuss the other issues which were raised during the course of this study. I will discuss the missiological implications of the following issues: (1) Coloured Cultural Identity Crisis, (2) Syncretism or the Formation of a Dual Religious System, (3) Pastoral Typology, (4) Redefining the Authority of Scripture, (5) the Decline of Pentecostal Identity and (6) Evangelism, Mission and Identity.**

## **5.2 Coloured Cultural Identity Crisis**

**Schreiter (1985:70) maintains that social change plays an important role in understanding cultural identity. In fact, he believes it plays a major role in bringing about change within the local Christian community. Tremendous social change has occurred since the election of 1994 in South Africa. The changes have often come at a rapid pace, so rapid that many people have had problems adjusting to them or accepting them. The Coloured culture has faced difficult choices forced upon it by the political and economic changes**

which have resulted from the election of a new order of government. Not all changes have been viewed as positive. Schreiter (1985:45) says “. . . one has to be able to deal with social change—not as an aberration but as part of the dynamic of a world such as ours. Change sometimes brings improvement, not just deviation from the mean.” If change is considered to be better than what was previously held (Schreiter 1985:71), then it is considered to be an improvement and accepted into the society, but if it is thought that it will bring loss, it will be rejected by the society concerned.

The Coloured cultural identity crisis exists primarily because the CPC is being invaded by what appears to be stronger influences and traditions. If Pastor Erasmus is correct in his evaluation of Coloured culture that they “are not proud of being Coloured” and that losing the designation of Coloured “won’t be a loss”, then the incoming cultural changes will overcome the existing Coloured culture. Schreiter (1985:71) says

the key to the incorporative approach as a way of describing how a sign system in a culture can take in new realities is whether or not the receiving culture has sufficient strength of identity and resources of survival to incorporate the new elements. When the basic sign systems of the culture can remain in control, then this process can take place.

Is the Coloured culture strong enough to take in new sign systems and remain in control of itself? I do not believe that it has sufficient strength *in its present form*. I have seen many changes within the Coloured community in the past few years. Van Der Ross is correct in his assessment of the Coloured community as being very Western/European orientated. One of the reasons why the Coloured and African communities have not been able to come together in greater proportions is that the Coloured culture has never undergone Africanization. The Coloured culture is, as Van der Ross (1979:73) has previously stated, “Westernized in every way.” For the Coloured culture to

become Africanized would lead to chaos, even the possibility of breakdown of identity altogether. Schreiter (1985:106) gives this warning:

**Identity is not given, nor is it self-evident; it is achieved and agreed upon. A total breakdown of identity, at either the individual or the societal level, means that the individual or the society ceases to be able to relate. It loses its cohesion or wholeness and disintegrates. Tradition serves as a guarantor of the resources for cohesion and continuity over stretches of time.**

**A total breakdown in cultural identity would mean that the things that make "Us" will be gone and "We" will cease to exist as "We" have existed in the past. A total breakdown in cultural identity would mean the loss of the value system upon which the culture had been based. It would mean that the traditions which had been the "cohesion" of the culture would be gone and the culture would tend to disintegrate as a cultural distinction. In the present situation, a breakdown of society is more likely to come not from the process of change to cultural distinctions but from society's inability to contend with more profound societal problems, such as gang warfare, abuse of women and children, drug addition, unemployment, etc. What I am saying is that the potential for the breakdown of Coloured culture is a possibility if it is not sufficiently strong enough to withstand the changes which are occurring in South Africa.**

**The people who feel that the Coloured culture will assimilate into some other culture, whether it is Black or White, need to realize the implications of such an assimilation. Are they ready for the possibility of a total breakdown of their heritage? Are they willing to cast off, as it were, their past no matter how unpleasant parts of it have been?**

**Thatcher (1996:61) gives the following warning:**

**Nationhood provides us with that most essential psychological anchor against the disorientating storms of**

**change – an identity that gives us a sense of continuous existence. Consequently, the man who shrugs off his nationality, like the man who discards his family background, is a potential danger to society, for he is apt to become the victim of every half-baked ideology or passion he encounters.**

**Culture is in many ways like nationhood; it provides the opportunity for a person to have an identity which says to other people, “I am somebody. I belong to something greater than I am alone.” Thatcher’s assessment of “disorientating storms of change” can certainly be applied to the Coloured community. For them, there have been storms of change which many have not been able to handle. I discuss some of these changes under Pastoral Typology (5.4). I believe the Coloured community has at least four options which they can consider to help overcome this crisis in identity.**

### **5.2.1 Assimilation**

**First, they have the option of assimilation. I have already pointed out some of the difficulties which arise from the idea of assimilating with another culture. To choose a culture that has stronger sign systems than their own will force upon the Coloureds a drastic re-thinking of their cultural understanding of being Coloured. It will mean a total loss as far as the name is concerned if the sign system of the stronger group takes over the sign system of Coloured culture. I do not think that a majority of the Coloured community would prefer this option because according to the table in Chapter Four, the majority of those interviewed wanted to keep the designation of Coloured. There were others who said they did not mind being called Coloured as long as it “wasn’t derogatory.” To assimilate with another culture will mean that the traditions which the Coloured community have will also need to undergo change.**

**Venter (1995:314) says about the cultural assimilation theory**



**(It) refers to a process in which a cultural group is expected or forced to give up its own values and behaviours and to accept those of the dominant group. Voluntarily a dominated group can assimilate to attain increased status or material benefits, or succumb to the continuous force of prevailing cultural standards.**

**In many respects some of this has already happened. Lewis (1987:250;252) points out that for many Coloureds, assimilation into the White community has already occurred. Lewis says,**

**Given the heterogeneous nature and diverse origins of those people known as Coloureds, they had no separate culture, history, language and in most cases, religion or even racial origins from those of whites. Indeed, the frequency with which Coloureds 'passed' for white meant that many 'whites' were 'Coloureds'. Not surprisingly, therefore, Coloured leaders, radical or otherwise, shared Western cultural and intellectual values. . . Even working-class Coloureds held a position of relative privilege as compared with the African migrant workers, being exempted from many restrictions....applied to Africans. Accordingly, the Coloured radicals found it hard to convince Coloureds to commit themselves to Black unity and to confrontationalist or non-collaborationist policies. Added to this was the fact that culturally the Coloureds had more in common with whites than with Africans.**

**Pastor Majiet speaks of one of the problems for the Coloureds assimilating with the African community. He says**

**(Assimilation) is possible. It is possible that they can work out something. We are now in one country. We have a lot of different groups. Like the Black people, that culture is the most difficult culture you can get - - like the young men, the marriage, the social structure and things like that - - it is vast and so much different from ours and the White man.**

Under the present conditions, if assimilation were to occur, the majority of the Coloureds would probably assimilate into the White/European community as it is the closer of the two cultures - European or African - - and they would most easily be able to fit into it. Even so, as Venter (1995:335) points out, "the price that has to be paid for a unified institution accommodating different cultures is that cultures will not survive intact, that some aspects of the cultures will be lost." I believe that is one of the reasons why assimilation is not the first choice of most Coloureds; too many aspects of their culture will be lost to them. Even though people like Van der Ross feel that there is no specific Coloured culture, I have heard too many Coloureds reply in response to something that has happened, "That's just my culture." It would be extremely difficult for many to give up those aspects which have made the Coloured community a distinct culture. I believe it would prove to be too high a "price to pay."

### **5.2.2 Redefined Name**

One of the follow-up questions I asked during the interviews concerned the idea of the designation Coloured emerging in a new form or redefined in terms of the present, instead of the past. Pastor Matthews answered that question by saying, "I would have to look at it and if it is acceptable, maybe. But." To many Coloureds the name stands for repression and oppression by the former governments. It holds a negative connotation. Rasool (1996:56) says, "Coloured consciousness and identity, rather than being self-aware, empowering and confident, are constructed fearfully, out of threat and opposition, and defined in negative relation to the other, not through a positive perception of the self." The negative connotations far out weigh the positive perceptions for many in the Coloured community. As long as it keeps the negative image, it may very well continue to be rejected.

The question has to be asked, "Can a redefining of the name Coloured take place?" And if so, "Who would do the redefining?" Marais (1996:59) says that "Coloured people have been a twilight people for too long, and too long others have said what we are supposed to be, where we come from and where we should be politically. Nobody asked *us* where we want to be." (italics in original) However, there does not appear to be anyone within the Coloured Pentecostals of Retreat who is attempting to redefine the name so that it will become more acceptable. One of the reasons for this is the fact that the majority of the Pentecostals of Retreat do not have a problem with the name Coloured. Therefore, they do not see the need for any redefining to take place. It will be left to those who have a distaste for the term to either redefine it or come up with a new name.

### 5.2.3 A New Name

A third option for the Coloured community is to find a new name which they feel suits them better. When asked about a new term to replace Coloured, Pastor Wilschutte said, "That will take a long time for that. I do think it will happen. I wouldn't want to try to say what that would be." Pastor Small said, "I don't think so." Table 6 in Chapter Four gives us the names that were suggested as alternatives to "South African citizen". When we consider that list, there are no viable new alternatives offered to the name Coloured. Let us consider the other answers given in Table 6 besides the name Coloured. First, 5,3 % of the interviewees said they wanted to be called "human being." Is that really a logical answer to Question 25? Can a group of people be called "human beings" without any other type of designations or distinctiveness? I am not denigrating their answers but I am asking if that is not an answer given out of other considerations rather than given as a title of designation. It reveals, in one respect, the deep hurt of these people that is still in existence within their hearts and lives, leftover from the apartheid years. Apartheid was

a system that isolated and degraded people to the point that many South Africans still suffer from the effects of the system. Joseph Aranes, reporting in the ARGUS of 31 July 1996, quotes Joseph Little when he says the name Coloured "was especially designed to destroy all ethnicity....." The use of the term "human being" may be an attempt to restore dignity to the Coloured community and to show that as humans they need to be treated with dignity and respect. Pastor D Muller offers this reasoning for his use of the term 'human being.'

I use it in a more collective sense as a part of the world as a person. I am part of the human race. In essence, being human, you are a part of the world and not just to have a particular reference to myself within the province here. Maybe there is some real spiritual understanding of not just being part of the church here but also a part of the church abroad, to the entire humanity that populates the earth. Since my mind opened there has just been an awareness of a particular atmosphere around you which was not favourable to you as a person of another colour. And there was, there would always be this resentment to giving this name and labelling people. It would categorize and qualify for certain things and also in all our endeavours trying to explain ourselves as being equal to try to realize that we are all human beings.

Pastor Muller's expresses the feelings of those who have suffered under apartheid. But for others, it could also be an attempt to become "lost" in a sea of humanity which would offer an anonymity from being singled out as a part of a particular 'racial' group with all the restrictions that brought.

A second name given is "child of God" given by 30.9% of the respondents. Since this particular title includes such usage as born again, re-born Christian, etc., it is understood that it would not be a name that could be applied to all Coloureds since there are many religions represented within the Coloured culture. There are a large number of Coloureds who are Muslim or Hindu. They would obviously reject any name that had connotations to

some other religion. Therefore, it may be fine for the Pentecostal Coloureds to want to be known as a child of God but it certainly cannot be considered as a new name for the majority Coloured culture. Here again, the issue is not really about a different name for the Coloured culture, but the issue is making a personal statement concerning a person's religious beliefs. "I want to be known as a child of God." When changes affect the boundaries of identity, Schreiter (1985:73) says that they can become "internalized . . . a psychological rather than a cultural or sociological problem." To the Christian, that is understandable. The Pentecostal churches in Retreat teach that the most important thing in a person's life is to be a child of God. The conversion process is seen as an internal process within the individual. These people are following their teaching but not, in reality, suggesting a new name for the majority Coloured culture.

A third suggestion is simply "South African citizen" given by 23.4% of the respondents. It is a term which applies to all people who are born in South Africa or who became citizens by emigration. It is a general name that would be given to all people in South Africa regardless of cultural distinctions. I think, that in many ways, it, too, comes from the residue of the apartheid system when the majority of people of South Africa were not treated as citizens of their own country. It does not, however, allow for any distinctiveness of culture for which many today are asking and even demanding. Does the Coloured community want to give up any uniqueness which its culture has and be known simply as South African citizen?

#### **5.2.4 A Nameless Culture**

A final question needs to be considered. Can a culture exist without a name or designation? Pastor Erasmus says, "At heart a person will remain what he normally is. I don't think any new term will change a person's background or culture. I don't think it will." Pastor Almanò says, "I think in the

**future they will always be there. They will never go away.” Member 36 says, “I really don’t see in any case why there should be a term to describe a person with, but then we are products of a society in which everything and everyone carries a label - whether positive or negative.”**

**If the culture will remain despite the changes which it is undergoing, is it possible to do so without some form of cultural designation? Must a culture have a “label”? I think they do. It would seem to me that it is far worse to have no name than to have a name that has been misused in the past. The identity crisis for the Coloured culture will not lessen or go away until they have answered the question concerning a name. The crisis in identity centres around the apartheid designation. It does not appear to be about the things which make up a culture – the signs and symbols which the people themselves see as part of their cultural heritage. A nameless culture does not seem to be the answer.**

**I suggest there are two possible scenarios which could result from having a nameless culture. First, the removal of a cultural designation also removes the boundary markers of identity which says who belongs to the culture and who does not. Schreier (1985:64) speaks of “internal” and “external” boundaries which helps to define Us and Them. Will not the removal of the name – the cultural designation – also remove these boundaries of external and internal? How will anyone know who belongs to “Us”? With the removal of the E and I boundary markers, group security also becomes less. That is, a person can no longer claim allegiance to any cultural grouping because there is no cultural name that the person can specify as one’s own. Group identity will become less a factor in identity. To some people, the doing away of group identity (a nameless culture) would not be a problem. To other people, their personal identity is bound up within the group identity. A person belongs to a group: therefore a person exists because he/she receives identity from the group. When the external and internal boundaries are either moved or removed, as in the case of a nameless**

**culture, there will come a subsequent changing of personal identity as well as the possible doing away with the group identity.**

**The second scenario is closely related to the first one. With a nameless culture would come the rise of individualism, that is, the rise of personal identity over group identity. The continued increase of urbanization in South Africa will be a factor in the rise of individualism. What happens when a person becomes more concerned about oneself than about the group to which the person belongs? Individualism is the concept that places “self” over and above every thing else and every one else. Self becomes the focal point of existence. In Christian terms, it would mean a lessening of evangelism - - a lessening of Christian witness. Individualism means that the primary concern is not for others but for yourself. Christian witness is the church involving itself in society in order to touch the lives of other people with the gospel message. Individualism would do away with evangelism – the need for gospel witness. A nameless culture promotes the rise of individualism. If the culture remains, then there should be some type of name or designation for the purposes of distinctiveness from other cultures. The distinctiveness should not be seen as a divisive measure which would cause disruption with the South African society as a whole but as a rallying point for the people of the Coloured culture.**

### **5.3 Syncretism or the Formation of a Dual Religious System**

**In the previous chapters we have discussed the conflicts within the Pentecostal churches of Retreat, especially between the older and younger generations. One answer for the way in which these conflicts are occurring is found in what Schreiter (1985) calls syncretism or dual religious systems. Schreiter (1985:144-145) gives these definitions to the terms.**

**Syncretism, ... has to do with the mixing of elements of two religious systems to the point where at least one, if not both,**

**of the systems loses basic structure and identity. In dual systems a people follows the religious practices of two distinct systems. The two systems are kept discrete; they can operate side by side. Sometimes one system is followed more faithfully than the other ... in other instances the two systems may be followed equally.**

**Are there signs within the CPC of syncretism or dual religious systems? I believe there are. If so, it has far reaching implications for the Pentecostal community of Retreat. Yet, at the same time, it might explain why there seems to be so much conflict concerning Pentecostal identity within the CPC.**

**Syncretism results when two religious systems mix together which will bring about the loss of structure and identity of one or both of them. As I discuss more fully in section 5.6, one result of syncretism and dual religious systems is the loss of Pentecostal identity. I use Schreiter's two terms together because there seems to be evidences of both ideas at work within the Pentecostal community of Retreat. I do not think that the Pentecostals themselves see or even think in terms of syncretism or dual religious systems. They do, however, think in terms of difficulties being experienced within their particular churches. It is not an isolated problem which is only affecting one or two churches. From the responses of the pastors and members, there is evidence that what is happening within the churches can be described in Schreiter's terms. Let's look at the two possibilities.**

### **5.3.1 Syncretism**

**Schreiter (1985:144) says that syncretism results from the mixing of two religious systems in such a way that basic structure and identity is lost, or, at the least, changed. When one considers the various religious systems found within the Western Cape, one finds a multiplicity of religions; Islam, Hindu, Buddhism, and Christianity, as well as atheism, materialism, and humanism.**



The last three may not in specific terms be considered “religious” systems but they do exert a tremendous amount of pressure upon any religious system. Within Christianity, one will find conservatism, evangelicalism, ecumenism, liberalism, all of which influence the structure and identity of a given religious system. Although Pentecostalism is a part of Christianity, I treat it here as a religious system since it has elements which set it apart from other parts of Christianity.

The syncretistic features of Pentecostalism in Retreat can be seen in the introduction of codes of conduct, boundary markers and worldview features which are at the present moment clashing with historical Pentecostalism found among the older generation. It is true that much of what is being introduced within Pentecostalism seems to be coming from the younger generation. It is also true that it is the older generation which is objecting to and resisting this introduction of what they feel is a part of some other religious system than their traditionally held views of Pentecostalism. These conflicts can be seen in the ideas mentioned in Chapter Two and Three. Syncretism is not occurring between Pentecostalism and the major religions such as Islam or Hinduism. It is occurring between the other systems which I have mentioned. The younger generation is more liberal than the older generation. This can be seen by their acceptance of a different value system where clothes are concerned. The older generation still feel that more conservative ways ought to be kept when one goes to church. The younger generation feel that it is not necessary to be so strict in what they wear.

One example is that given by Pastor Erasmus when one young lady showed up to teach Sunday School wearing jeans. She was not allowed to do so by the church. She had to make a choice between wearing jeans or teaching the class. The church said she could not continue to teach if she insisted on wearing jeans while doing so. The clash represents the changing value systems evidenced by many of the younger generation. They are being influenced by a changing society which says that it is alright to wear whatever

**you want to wear and still go to church or to any other activity. The church is saying that it is not. Syncretism occurs when the two systems mix to such an extent that the one cannot be separated from the other. This is the reasoning behind the older generation's refusal to change: they see the bringing in of the "things of the world" as compromising the standards which they have been taught in the past. The older generation feels that this mixing is detrimental to Pentecostalism and Christianity in general.**

### **5.3.2 Dual Religious System**

**There is evidence also of the existence of dual religious systems. Schreiter (1987:148) says there are three forms of dual religious systems: "(1) Christianity and another tradition operate side by side, (2) Christianity is practiced in its integrity, and selected elements from another system are also practiced, (3) 'double belonging'... where a particular religious tradition and citizenship in a nation are seen as inextricably bound up." One of the legacies of apartheid is the fact that during its rule, Christianity and nationhood were bound up together in one political system. With the advent of the new democratic government this has fallen away. Christianity, as such, no longer holds the high place within the political system of the new government as it did in the past. Of the three types of dual systems which Schreiter mentions, the second system is the one which is most evident within the Pentecostal churches of Retreat – Christian integrity and selected elements of another system. This is one answer to the problem of music which was mentioned by several pastors and members - - the beat of rap and rock music which has "invaded" the church.**

**If one looks closely at the young people attending the Pentecostal churches, one realizes that they are, in many respects, living in two differing worlds. The one world is Christianity which gives them the integrity of a right way of living which has influenced them since birth. A second world of hi-tech**

and modern means provides for them things which their parents and grandparents never even thought about. The younger generation is selecting certain elements from outside their parents' Christianity and outside Pentecostalism in its present form. In many discussions with young people they see no problem with the beat of the music being different from the normal music of the church. They see no problem with wearing clothes like other young people wear which is different from that required by their parents or church leaders. The young people do not see it as being less Christian or less Pentecostal to dress like, or look like, or sing like someone who does not claim to be just like them in religious persuasion. The result is conflict within the church because there exists this dual religious system within the lives of the younger generation.

Evidence of the dual religious system in the younger generation can be found in two areas. The first area is seen in the differences in services when older people and younger people are in charge. In the first instance when the older generation is in charge of the service, the younger generation follows along with the songs and music and activities which are given by the older generation. In the second instance where the younger people are in charge of their own service, they follow their own system of service which includes the music which would appeal to them. The younger generation does not see a conflict with their style of worship nor do they see it as incorrect to practice it when they are in their own service. Yet they can be in the other service and practice the "system" of the older generation as well.

The second area which shows the dual religious system is that of the difference in dress between inside and outside of church. I have visited in the homes of many CPC members and pastors and have seen the differences between what is worn to church activities and what is worn outside of church organized activities. I discovered that there is often a vast difference in dress in what is worn to church and what is worn on other occasions. It is evidence that two systems are competing against each other and the younger

generation is caught in the middle and tries to live in both worlds, their own and that of the older generation.

At the same time, the older generation is labouring under their own dual systems. The evidences for this come more from participant observation than from the interviews. I have worked with this Pentecostal community for over thirteen years and have observed tremendous changes occurring within the Pentecostal community. I think, in many ways, the people themselves have not noticed all the changes. Change does not necessarily become a problem until it affects you personally in some special way. Then change may seem to be unhealthy or unwanted. One example of this dual system can be seen in one of the pastoral typologies I discuss in section 5.4.1 called The Remnant Syndrome. As I discuss more fully later, the remnant church seeks out people “just like us.” This, in effect, is a church that goes underground with its beliefs while on the surface maintaining the vestiges of being traditionally Christian in all respects. Membership is limited to only selected people who fit all the “qualifications” of the second system of belief.

Another example of this dual system is seen by the triggering mechanisms which brings on dancing before the Lord. It is the older songs which we spoke about in section 2.3.2 that cause the older generation to begin to dance *as they used to do*. The ‘modernizing’ of the worship service is taking place while at the same time there is a desire to return to the older days when worship was different. It is also evidenced by the fact that many of the pastors and members talk about “how it used to be in the old days” when “things were different.” It is events and happening of the past which act as the second system of the dual religious system. The older generation is relying on what happened in the “olden days” to supplement what they see that no longer exists. This is found in their language usage. Pastor Jacobs says, “We used to pray until the walls sweated.” Member 18 says, “We would walk to church for miles and miles...” What “used to be” and “used to do” is the foundation of the dual system. The older generation stills worships the

**Lord but they also desire a return to the days when things were different from what they are now. They dream, not of what things could still be, but of what used to happen. I have heard countless testimonies about the open-air services that “used to be”, the miracles that “used to happen,” the power of God that “used to be in the services.”**

**The dual religious system of the older generation can be just as detrimental to the Pentecostal churches as any new system that the younger generation wants to introduce into the churches. This desire for the past, on the part of many older generation CPC members, has a negative influence on the younger generation as they attempt to introduce new and, to them, innovative methods in the church. Since most of the CPC churches are still controlled by older generation leadership, their dual system works against any new system and undermines the ability of the church to minister to a changing society. The older generation wants to maintain their style of worship and only in certain areas do they allow new things to enter into their worship. This is one reason why there seems to be so much difference between the services led by the younger generation and those led by the older generation which we mentioned in a previous paragraph.**

**One question which has not been answered by any of the older people is this: What stopped them from doing the same things now? What stopped the miracles from happening now? What stopped the power of God moving in the services now? The answers to these questions are very important to the survival of the Pentecostal churches. In section 5.6, I attempt to answer some of these questions when I discuss the loss of Pentecostal identity and suggest some possible solutions.**

**Schreiter (1985:151) mentions one of the reasons for not wanting to face the reality of syncretism and dual religious systems.**

**One of the reasons that the syncretism question and the dual-system question are so hard to deal with is that they ask some very hard questions, in turn about the nature of the identity of**

**the older churches. One cannot ask questions about evangelization, conversion, religion, and the like without calling into question the nature and quality of the identity of the existent Christian community. To resolve the questions about syncretism and about dual systems will mean, no doubt, some significant changes in the way of life for those churches who perceive the problem.**

**One of the difficulties facing the Pentecostals of Retreat is that few of them see themselves as having a problem of syncretism or dual religious systems. They perceive it in other terms which we have discussed previously - - the world, the devil, etc. In the following sections, some of the areas mentioned by Schreiter, such as evangelization, will be discussed.**

#### **5.4 Pastoral Typology**

**One of the areas which I discussed previously is the area of pastoral authority. In Section 3.2.3, I mentioned some of the problems which the pastors were facing in dealing with their congregations. These problems, which are brought on by changes occurring within the churches, are not going to go away. I found various responses to the dilemma which the pastors are facing. I see three responses which have come from the interviews with the pastors. This pastoral typology can be described in this manner: (1) The Remnant Syndrome, (2) The Conformist Attitude, and (3) The Adaptation Model.**

##### **5.4.1 The Remnant Syndrome**

**The Remnant Syndrome says that "we may not be many, but we are the faithful few." Pastor Jacobs has already shown this philosophy when he said he would rather have "two or three people" who were faithful to him and God than many who were not faithful. Member 5 shows this view when he says,**

**“Pentecostal people are supposed to be an humble remnant set aside by God.” The Remnant Syndrome emphasise what they consider to be quality over quantity. In other words, if one cannot have a large congregation because of what one believes, then one ought to have a quality congregation. Quality is defined by the pastor or leader to mean the certain characteristics of Pentecostalism which fit into that pastor’s or leader’s criteria of a faithful follower of God. In many cases, it is not faithfully following God but faithfully following the leader that is the real criterion.**

**What are the implications of the Remnant Syndrome? First, the Remnant Syndrome does not produce large churches. The very fact that the term remnant can be applied to a congregation or a church implies that the church is small in number. The word remnant has the connotation of something that is left over from a larger item whether that item is a material object or a religious philosophy or a congregation. Missiologically, it works against the church growth theories which say that churches are to grow in whatever environment they find themselves. Remnant churches seldom ever grow. They usually stay small or eventually die due to lack of members.**

**Second, the Remnant Syndrome produces a one-sided view of Christianity and, in this case, Pentecostalism. Remnant churches often are considered to be remnant churches because they have some special biblical issue which they feel is more important than all others. They are the faithful who are holding on to the “truth of the Gospel” while all others have deviated from biblical truths. Remnant churches are more likely to become cultic<sup>25</sup> in that the one or two truths to which they hold may override the full message of the Bible. In Pastor Jacobs’ case, it is obedience to his authority as pastor which is of prime importance. He seems to be equating obedience to the pastor with obedience to God. He asks how one can be obedient to God and not be**

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**25 I use the term “cultic” to mean any group which has as the reason for its existence as a church, some special doctrine or teaching that is different from traditional Christianity and places them in a superior position in relationship with God or Christ. Often a requirement for a person becoming a Christian is membership with that specific group over any other group.**

obedient to him as the pastor. I do not mean to put down Pastor Jacobs in any way, but I do question his reasoning as it will lead to his church becoming a remnant congregation.

Third, in the Remnant Syndrome, evangelization decreases. When a church fits the “requirements” for a remnant congregation, it does so at the expense of other things. The remnant church will only be looking for those who will be willing to become just like them in the area which has brought on the remnant philosophy. It is understandable that their evangelization process will be extremely limited because their interpretation of the Great Commission, for example, will be limited to those who will fit in with their philosophy. If too many were to begin coming to their church, they would no longer be a remnant church but would be closer to other churches which have differing views than they do. In seeking quality over quantity, evangelization is one of the first things that suffers. It is no longer considered to be whosoever will<sup>26</sup>, but whosoever fits into our narrow philosophy.

The result of the Remnant Syndrome is expressed by Member 20 when she says, “Our numbers are dwindling though, there are more older people than young people and children. On the one hand we have changed, but in some ways we have not. We still dance in the Spirit, clap hands, etc., but unfortunately it seems as if this is just not enough.” A remnant congregation which clings to one or two areas of the Gospel message will not be able to grow, will not evangelize and will not survive. The Remnant Syndrome in reality is a refusal to change.

#### **5.4.2 The Conformist Attitude**

A second type is that of the Conformist Attitude. The Conformist Attitude is one that says we want to be like those around us and not be

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<sup>26</sup> “Whosoever will” is a term which means that everyone is able to become a Christian without any restriction other than a desire to become a follower of Christ.



different. Pastor Small has previously described this Attitude<sup>27</sup> when he said that “we [pastors] are trying to make them [other pastors] like us or we are becoming like them.” The Conformist Attitude says that one must be like the other churches which are around you. Member 8 says, “The (Pentecostal) churches are becoming like other churches.” Member 21 agrees by saying, “They (Pentecostal churches) have become like the churches around them.” The Conformist Attitude says that one must change to become the same as the other churches in order to keep one’s members. It is an attempt to prevent your members from leaving and going to other churches. Pastor Flandorp mentions one of the problems that can lead to this Attitude. He says, “I think there is so much competition today and one wants to outdo the other . . .” I have already mentioned this issue earlier but it is also an example of what leads to the Conformist Attitude. That is, if a pastor feels that another church is doing something that is attracting one’s own members, that pastor may fall into this pattern of trying to do the same things so that one does not lose any members.

Member 66 says, “Changes occurred when new members joined from other churches among the youth. Like pants. Then it was taboo. Now, at the same churches, there is a widespread move toward wearing pants, more social functions; women getting more fashionable all the time.” This member feels that the compromising, conforming to others’ standards, comes when people move between churches. It is a great possibility that this is what happens. A member, from a church with more liberal standards than a traditional conservative Pentecostal church, moves to the traditional church and if that new member is not forced to change to the traditional ways, then changes will begin to occur within the conservative church. The members of the more conservative church are thus exposed to other standards and begin

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<sup>27</sup> I have capitalized the word Attitude in order to make it clear that I am referring to one of the Pastoral Typologies. I do the same in the next section with the word Model.

to conform to the new standards even though the new standards have been preached against for a number of years.

This is not to say that all change is wrong. What I am saying is that the Conformist Attitude is a result of churches who change, not because the change will be for the better, but change in order to either be like the other churches around them, or, change so that they do not lose members to the other churches who have been participating in the things to which the church now conforms. The Conformist Attitude, in its ultimate state, does not glorify God or edify the people. Rather, it is an attempt to apply a patch to a wound without actually dealing with the cause of the problem. It is, at its best, an honest endeavor to hold on to the people one has within the church to keep them from other churches which the pastor feels is not right for the members. The Conformist Attitude, at its worst, results in a weakened gospel message which does not bring people to Christ nor will it build the kingdom of God. As Pastor Small has indicated, people are more accepting, more open to what used to be considered unacceptable. When the unacceptable becomes acceptable, the church has begun the first steps toward the Conformist Attitude. The pastor who refuses to speak out concerning one's beliefs for fear of losing one's members is actually in no better position than the pastor who refuses to change and joins the "remnant" of God.

People have moved between churches for a long time. They will continue to change. Pastor Flandorp points out that "people are not as established anymore. They are moving from church to church." Some people move to find certain programs which they feel will meet their needs or the needs of their families better. People change churches seeking freedom to pursue their own goals in life. Pastors who conform and compromise their beliefs just to prevent their members from leaving are in reality showing that they, too, are afraid of change but have a greater fear of losing their members. The Conformist Attitude will not necessarily lead to the hope of keeping one's members. There is no guarantee that when a church changes for the wrong

reasons that the people will not still leave or that the ones who have left will now return.

### **5.4.3 Accommodation Model**

The third type is what I call the Accommodation Model. Schreiter (1985:150) says, "Not only do the gospel and the church have to come to terms with the culture; the culture has to come to terms with the gospel and the church. A less than successful coming together of these two realities can be at the root of syncretism or the dual religious system." If a "less than successful coming together" of culture, gospel and church can bring about the syncretism and dual religious systems which we spoke about earlier, then what would the successful coming together be? I suggest that it can occur in the Accommodation Model. Schreiter (:151) says that "to resolve the questions about syncretism and about dual systems will mean, no doubt, some significant changes in the way of life for those churches who perceive the problem." The Accommodation Model seeks to bring the needed changes to the church in such a way that it will either help to do away with the syncretism, if it is a negative syncretism, or to help eliminate the use of dual religious systems.

One example of the Accommodation Model has been given by Pastor D Muller when he tries to accommodate the older people within his church by having a special service especially suited to their needs. Pastor D Muller is a young minister who sees the need to bring some changes within the church but not at the expense of alienation of all the members of his church. Should Pastor D Muller simply make changes without regard for all his members, it could lead to the establishing of the dual systems about which we have spoken. Those pastors, who see the need to reach out to their youth in various ways even though they might not agree entirely with all that the youth want to do, are pastors who believe that it is not harmful to attempt to

accommodate the needs of one's members. Pastor Erasmus is an example of a pastor who tries to reach the younger generation through their music even though he admits it is not his style of music.

The pastors, who see that changes are facing one's congregation and who sees in the changes benefits for one's congregation, will be in a better position to meet the challenges of the future which changes always bring. At the same time, the Accommodation Model does not say that every change that comes along must be accepted and adopted into the lifestyle of the church. I believe that every pastor has the right and the authority by virtue of the office as pastor to resist any change which is felt to be detrimental to one's congregation. To allow every change that is presented to the church to become a part of the church without any hesitation is to allow for the emergence of dual systems and syncretisms throughout the church. The Accommodation Model does just what its name means - - accommodates the needs of the people with the gospel of Jesus Christ in order for the church to grow and the kingdom of God to be built. The coming together of the church, gospel and culture will result in changes to all three areas. The Accommodation Model takes the church, the gospel and the culture and begins the process of bringing them together in such a way that inculturation takes place and gospel, church and culture are changed to the betterment of all three.

### **5.5 Redefining Authority of Scripture**

In Chapter Two, one of the boundary markers which I discussed was the Dress Code Boundary. I discussed the fact that there are many of the younger generation who are now questioning the need for wearing certain types of clothing to church. In particular, there is a tremendous amount of concern over the wearing of hats by women. The most often asked question at our Training Centre has to do with head covering. The younger generation of

Coloured Pentecostals are now arguing that it is not necessary for women to wear hats in church. This is in direct conflict with the traditionally held beliefs of the older generation of Coloured Pentecostals. The ideas that was presented in section 2.4 centred around people being “presentable,” to use Pastor Biegnaar’s word. Pastor Clarence also said, “Women, especially, should dress modestly.” Pastor A Hendricks adds the idea of “respect for the house of the Lord.”

What do these arguments for having a Dress Code Boundary mean? I believe it stems from several different ideas. First, it comes from the concept of a God who is holy and requires holiness from those who serve him. This holiness on the part of the believer is seen in part by the manner that the believer dresses when in the presence of God. Pastor A Hendricks asked, “Why shouldn’t a child of God also dress his best to go to the house of God?” This indicates that the manner in which a person dresses shows the amount of respect that person has for God. Therefore, a more strict interpretation of scripture has been applied in the area of the way people dress. Secondly, this follows also for the interpretation of the way women ought to dress. Pastor Clarence made a clear distinction between “unsaved” and “saved” women as to what would be allowed in the church. In conversations, this distinction is made that women should not look like or dress like men; hence, women must wear dresses and not “the long pants”.

This issue of the way a person dressed is not only a boundary marker for the CPC churches, it also show an aspect of their worldview. Kraft (1979:55) said one function of worldview is that of “evaluation.” The issue of dress falls within this function of evaluation. The CPC places a high value on how one looks when one worships God. They even tend to evaluate a person’s relationship with God by the manner in which that person dresses. Therefore, men need to wear ties and women need to wear dresses and hats as a symbol of respect to God. Pastor A Hendricks equates the respect

shown for the house of God with that shown to a king of any country. The respect is shown not by what is done, but by the clothes which people wear. According to Kraft (1979:56), another function of worldview is “perception.” That is, that not every one will have the same perception concerning any particular aspect of worldview. That is clearly evident in this issue of a dress code.

What are the biblical implications of changing the traditionally held view that the Bible says that women must wear head covering? The issue centres around the Apostle Paul’s teaching in First Corinthians 11 concerning the situation in the Corinthian church. In verses four to six Paul writes

Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonors his head. But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, for that is one and the same as if her head were shaved. For if a woman is not covered, let her also be shorn. But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered. (NKJV)

The traditional Pentecostal pastor teaches that this passage means that a woman must have her head covered whenever she is in church or when she is involved in prayer. They maintain that when a girl becomes a teenager that she should begin to wear a covering on her head. I mentioned in Chapter Two that one pastor asked the visiting women to wear a head covering the next time they came to his church. It is an issue in which the traditional Pentecostal pastor does not change.

I do not want to go into deep exegesis of this scripture for there are many views on the subject. This is one issue that does not have a single united opinion among Bible teachers. Morris (1983:156) says

The application of this principle to the situation at Corinth yields the direction that women must have their heads covered when they worship. The principle is of permanent validity, but we may well feel that the application of it to the

contemporary scene need not yield the same result. In other words, in the light of totally different social customs, we may well hold that the fullest acceptance of the principle underlying this chapter does not require that in Western lands in the twentieth century women must wear hats when they pray.

**Barclay (in Morris 1985:156) states:**

**We must remember that when Paul spoke about women as he did in the letters to the Corinthians, he was writing to the most licentious city in the ancient world, and that in such a place modesty had to be observed and more than observed; and that it is quite unfair to wrest a local ruling from the circumstances in which it was given, and to make it a universal principle.**

**Beacham (1950:276) takes a different approach.**

**The point of the argument is, that since the woman knows that God has given her long hair for her glory, that is, her beauty and honor, she should also conform to the custom of wearing the veil which was an emblem of her modesty and subjection. If she refused to wear the head covering, it was as much to her shame as if she should have her hair cut short.**

**These views express the two sides of the issue. The traditionally held view is expressed by Beacham while the more liberal views are expressed by Morris and Barclay. The essence of the issue could be summed up by asking what are the reasons for the rejection of the head covering for women after so many years of the use of it. If the rejection is purely from a personal view and not from a theological difference, then the traditional Pentecostal pastors and members have a right to question the motives of the younger generation for its rejection of this long held belief.**

On the other hand, the young people to whom I have spoken, take a different approach to understanding the issue. They have told me that this scripture at best only applies to married women since Paul says that the head covering is a sign of the authority of her husband. They also told me that the times in which Paul wrote were so different that it was necessary for him to try to correct imbalances in the early church's understanding of its new found freedom but that he was not speaking to the people of today since the times and situations have changed so drastically. There are some important consequences of these differing opinions.

Is the younger generation reinterpreting the Bible to fit its own peculiar circumstances rather than maintaining the traditionally held belief and interpretation? If the answer is yes, then that brings a new dimension into biblical interpretation. That new dimension says that Bible interpretation is changed to suit the situation without there being any absolutes for all generations. If the younger Pentecostal generation seeks to redefine traditionally held biblical interpretation simply on the basis of its own desires, then there would not seem to be any limits which could be placed on one's understanding of the Bible. The Bible would not be a book that was inerrant but simply another book which could be changed to suit the individual's tastes or desires. Who would then be the ones that would decide what was true and what was false teaching in the churches? If there are no absolute truths in scripture, then there can be no absolutes upon which a person could build one's life.

On the other hand, the question of head covering is an issue which is not limited just to the Coloured Pentecostals of Retreat. As I was growing up in America, I was not aware of any teaching in the churches which I attended which stated that women needed to have their head covered in order to be in church or to pray. It was only after coming to South Africa that I became acutely aware of the situation. My Pentecostal denomination in the United States does not require head coverings for women. There are other areas of



my denomination here in South Africa besides the Western Cape which require women to have their head covered. However, it is a widespread teaching among the Coloured Pentecostals of Retreat. As I visit among the Pentecostal community in Retreat, most of the churches do require women to have their heads covered. The question then arises whether or not head covering might be more culturally founded than biblically founded. Bosch (1991:151) asks concerning some of Paul's teaching "could it be that he (Paul) regards these differences as social rather than theological." Although Bosch was not referring to the head covering issue, the same question can be asked concerning this teaching as well. If Paul considered the head covering for women as more of a social issue rather than a theological issue, it allows for differing views on the subject. This understanding of the head covering issue would allow for both the traditional Pentecostal view that a woman's head must be covered and the younger generation's view that it is not necessary for a woman to have her head covered. Social issues change while many theological issues do not.

This reasoning does not, however, solve the problem of redefining Scripture. Kraft (1979) offers another option which may offer another possible solution to this difficult issue. Kraft (1979:138) says that "since nothing in the Bible is 'merely' cultural, we need to look beyond each command to discover how the word and custom symbols were understood by the authors and those to whom they were originally written." Speaking specifically about the head-covering issue, Kraft (1979:139) says:

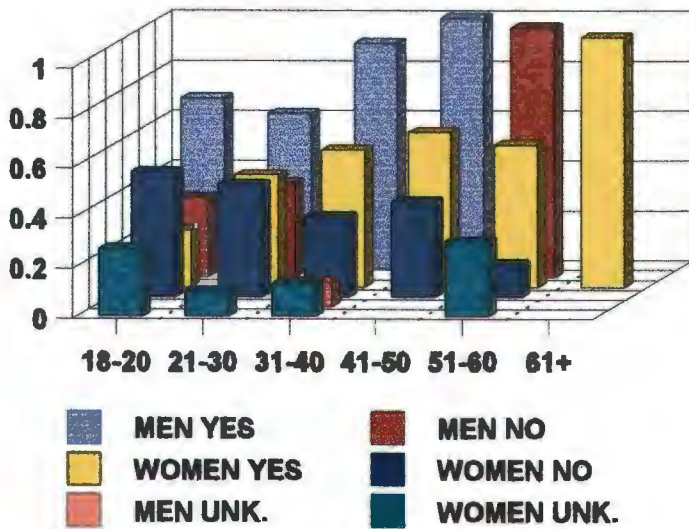
As for the head covering command, analysis of the meaning of the custom in its cultural context does not lead simply to an alternative understanding of the same command. It leads, rather, to a *meaning* that demands *expression via a different cultural form* if it is to be understood in English. The theological truth—a truth just as relevant today as in the first century—is that Christian women should not behave in such a way that people judge them to be 'out of line' (whether morally or with respect to authority) (*italics in original*).

**Is it possible then for the CPC to decide upon an “alternative understanding” that would be acceptable to both the younger and older generations? To the older generation CPC, there does not seem to be any “alternative” other than women must wear head coverings. The younger generation CPC have already chosen their alternative which is not to wear head coverings and not to emphasize the dress issue very much at all. If what Kraft suggests allows for the keeping of the authority of Scripture, then some alternative cultural understanding will need to be found which will be equivalent in “meaning” to the original intent of Paul's writing. If not, then serious consideration will need to be given to the seemingly undermining of the authority of Scripture when the command for women to have their head covered is ignored.**

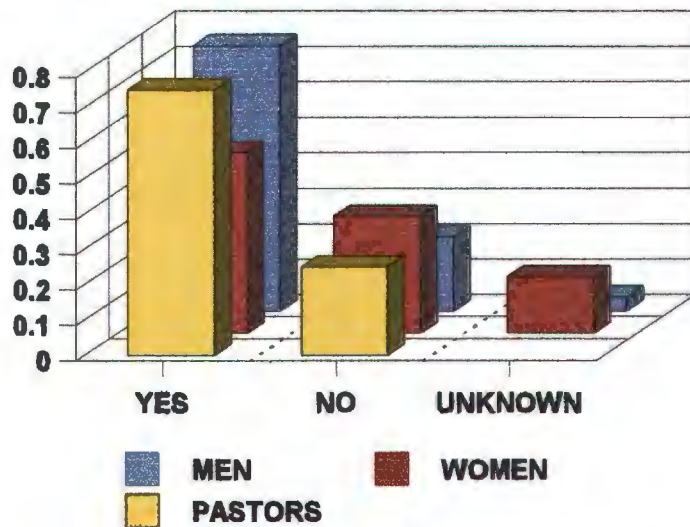
#### **5.6 The Decline of Pentecostal Identity**

**The central issue of this study concerns Coloured Pentecostal identity. I have been following Schreiter's ideas concerning identity. Schreiter maintains that social change plays an important role in changing identity. Boundary markers, world view and social change working together brings about change in the identity of a group. This study has shown that the Coloured Pentecostal identity is going through a time of change that is affecting all parts of the Pentecostal community in Retreat. The majority of those interviewed feel that the Pentecostals have lost their special identity which has set them apart for a number of years. The following tables show the result of the surveys. The results show clearly that the Pentecostal people interviewed believe that the Pentecostal church no longer has a special identity from the other churches or parts of Christianity.**

**TABLE 7 PENTECOSTAL IDENTITY LOST**



**TABLE 8 OVERALL PERCENTAGES IDENTITY LOST**



I will now consider some of the reasons for this loss of identity, some implications of its loss and some possible solutions to the situation.

### 5.6.1 Reasons for Loss of Pentecostal Identity

The reasons for this seemingly loss of Pentecostal identity are varied and often complex. There are many subjective ideas which have been given in the answers to the interviews. It is difficult to be able to fully understand the

meaning behind some of the statements such as, "They don't do like they used to do." Unless the person gives some specific answers as to what is meant by "what they used to do" and what they are doing now that is different, it will not be possible to find the reasons for this feeling of loss. However, there are enough indications for the answers to suggest a few reasons for this feeling of loss of identity.

#### **5.6.1.1 Modernization of Pentecostalism**

One of the reoccurring ideas which has been given by the interviewees is that the church is becoming "modern." Pastor Majiet says, "It is caused by the modern age. They feel that if they can compare themselves with groups around them that somehow things will get better for themselves as a church. They lower the standards as far as the gospel is concerned." As previously stated, Pastor P Muller says it is because "they switch to what they want to do for themselves. It is a benefit to them." Pastor Rhoda says it is because of "the term they use - 'enlightenment', 'we are enlightened now.' Not so bound by tradition. Experimentation brought about these changes, the loss of identity." Member 5 says that

a change that I see as negative is that people have become more materialistic and they crave for more of what they can see and feel. This new lifestyle has certainly affected the flow and worship of the Spirit. Pentecostals have become more modern and even within the church everybody can do what they want and how they want.

I have already quoted several members who equated 'modern' with the use of overhead projectors, electric musical instruments, and new ways of worship. For example, Member 17 says, "Obviously almost everything has become modern. We are living in a time which is characterized by computers; new devices, etc. We play with modern instruments; we use overhead projec-

tors.....” To many of them, modern simply means that the way in which Pentecostals expressed their worship in the past has been changed by the introduction of new ideas and plans. Member 7 says, “There has been a move away from the old type of religion to a new modern dimension of Christianity..” To these Pentecostals the introduction of these ideas has brought the church to the point of allowing it to become controlled by the ‘world’ as we discussed in section 3.3 (The Secularisation of Pentecostalism) These are things that were not done before. These things are done in the churches which are not Pentecostal and so therefore the Pentecostals are becoming like the other churches – hence “modern.” As Member 51 puts it, “Pentecostalism is weakened. It has become modern in many congregations and [in] believers.” Becoming modern means something special to Member 69 when she says, “Modernization causes death to church/body. There is a falling away from Jesus Christ.”

#### **5.6.1.2 Loss of Signs of the Holy Spirit**

Another area which the Coloured Pentecostals believe is becoming lost to the Pentecostal community is the area of the various signs of the Holy Spirit. These signs range from speaking in tongues, miracles, and prophecy to clapping hands and dancing in the Spirit. I have dealt with much of this already but one must realise that these signs have been THE distinguishing evidence of Pentecostalism in the past. Burgess (1991:37-38) says

But what *is* unique about modern Pentecostals is that they consider glossolalia (tongues) to be the litmus test of Pentecostal orthodoxy and *the* valid sign for Spirit baptism. Most of them disclaim all Christian traditions born after the first century. Instead, the Pentecostal experience is seen as a *restoration* of Spirit-outpouring in the apostolic church, evidence by tongues—and association equally rare since the first century. This study demonstrates the Pentecostals, who rejoice in the novelty of their teachings and experiences, are

fully justified in classifying their doctrine of initial evidence as distinctive. Throughout the twentieth century, they have clung tenaciously to this teaching, and it has in turn become their rallying point and source of identity. (Italics in original)

It is understandable, then, that any loss of speaking in tongues would be a sign of Pentecostals losing their source of identity. It is only one of the signs of the Holy Spirit but one of the most important ones. However, the decrease in tongues is not just a recent occurrence.

Spittler (1990:133) says of Pentecostals in the United States:

Candidates for Pentecostal ministry must have spoken in tongues, and Margaret Poloma found that 69 percent of her sampling of pastors in the Assemblies of God did so daily. But glossolalia occurs less frequently among the Pentecostal rank and file. Though three-fourths of her respondents attested a personal baptism in the Holy Spirit, 11 percent of persons went on to say they had never spoken in tongues. A *Christianity Today* Gallup Poll conducted in 1979 found that only 17 percent of persons who considered themselves Pentecostal or charismatic also said they had ever spoken in tongues. The practice is not as widespread as the movement it characterizes.

However true the poll may be in the United States, it is clear that the Coloured Pentecostals consider the loss of tongues as one of the main things that has brought about the loss of Pentecostal identity in general. Member 8 says, "It is especially where the moving of the Spirit is concerned; there are hardly any tongues and visions." Member 19 says

Considering what Pentecostals were like 10 to 15 years ago, then, yes, they have lost their special identity. When I was not even saved, I knew Pentecostals to be those people who were dressed appropriately; head covered tightly with a doekie (not a hat); singing their own peculiar choruses; clapping the

hands and dancing; you could sense the moving of the Spirit. There was much more speaking in tongues, words of wisdom that were revealed.

Member 7 says, "There has been a decrease in speaking in tongues and seeing of visions. It seems as if the speaking in tongues and manifestations of the Spirit are not evident [in the services]." Member 17 asks, "What happened to the days people would speak in tongues and others would interpret?"

There are other signs of the Holy Spirit that are missing as well. Member 36 says, "When I think of how the older people testify of how God moved in their midst in the person of the Holy Spirit and how prophecies went out and miracles occurred, one cannot but wonder what happened in the church that took the place of the Holy Spirit." Member 4 says, "Yes, they have. Gone are the days where Pentecostals used to trust God for miracles, prayed and fasted for days. A spirit of mediocrity has seeped in and we seem to be at ease, contented with who and what we are." Member 20 says, "I think the basic belief in the Spirit and manifestation gifts is still there, but the actual evidence of the presence of the Spirit is not there." Member 21 says, "Pentecostals have definitely lost the very distinctive characteristics like fervent prayer sessions and the definite presence of the Holy Spirit." Member 24 believes that the church "is not allowing the Spirit to move any more. We find very little prophecies going out. The gifts of the Spirit are almost non-existent."

Member 52 seems to agree by saying, "You don't find the gifts in the church anymore. This has to do with people's value system. People do not allow the Holy Spirit to lead them....." Knight (1974:11) says, "The greatest danger comes when people no longer stand in awe of the moving of the Spirit - - a profound reverent wonder! Spiritual death will result if we permit the loss of the manifestation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in worship!" Hollenweger (1976:36) speaks of this lessening of the gifts of the Spirit when he says,

**“Moreover, the basic emotional and fundamental impulse of the Assembly of God seems, . . . to be flagging in many places. Sometimes one has to ask oneself whether one is in a Pentecostal Assembly or not. . .”** According to these Pentecostals of Retreat, there is a definite lessening of the moving of the Spirit of God by signs and wonders that used to be in the Pentecostal churches which set them apart from other churches.

### **5.6.1.3 Pentecostals and Non-Pentecostals**

**Pastor Adams gives one reason for the loss of Pentecostal identity. He says**

**with the charismatic movement, other churches are doing things that were before seen as being Pentecostal, like clapping of hands, praise and worshipping the Lord, etc. Before in the nominal church, nothing like that happened. It was just the minister and the people went and sat quiet. Today even in the Roman Catholic Church, you have Bible readers which you never had before. I have a Roman Catholic guy working with me. He is enjoying his church now, as before people were too remote from what happened up front. You see the things that used to be purely Pentecostal is also being practised in non-Pentecostal churches now. There is a blending now.**

**Pastor Matthews describes it this way.**

**What has happened now is that many believers where once they were Pentecostals in a crowd, the clapping people, are now come out to be a people who are seeking God earnestly. They see what matters is not that as a crowd we look good, but as an individual. There is a change in us. They must have the experience of salvation in Jesus Christ. That is why I say there isn't actually a difference in being a Pentecostal and being a Christian. I don't think it is necessary to be called by the title of Pentecostal.**



**What Pastor Adams says is very true. Many churches which would not normally be considered as Pentecostal are now having praise and worship with clapping of hands, etc. Since that is true, then it may be one reason why Pentecostals do as Pastor Flandorp mentions. He says, "There is such a compromising going on that we never allowed before. People come as they want to and go as they want to. They are not as established in their worship. They go from one church to another without thinking anything about it."**

**If the real distinctiveness of the Pentecostal churches is lost, and the outward things that Pentecostals used to do are found in other churches, then it is easier to understand why people feel more free to change churches. If there is no difference between Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal churches, there will be movement between them as people seek for things outside of Pentecostal experiences which will meet some need within their lives and the lives of their families. The blending which Pastor Adams mentions is happening between Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal churches. But, is it happening to the extent that one could agree with Pastor Matthews that there is not a need to have a designation of Pentecostal? The majority of answers to Question 17<sup>28</sup> on the protocol shows that the emphasis of Pentecostal people is on the gifts of the Spirit – the evidences of the Holy Spirit, i.e., tongues, miracles, prophecy – and as such, the designation of Pentecostal can only be given to churches which accept and believe in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. However, if these gifts are no longer found within the Pentecostal churches then the Pentecostal churches have lost that special distinctiveness which they have always had. What then is the answer to this situation?**

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**28 Question 17 What things make a person Pentecostal?**

## **5.6.2 Three Choices for Pentecostals**

**Change cannot be ignored by the Pentecostal community. It is happening all around them. Schreiter (1985:27) says that “the Christian message, after all, is about change: repentance, salvation, and an eschatological reality to be realized. To think that Christianity will not change a situation is to rob the message of its most important part.” The gospel message is supposed to change lives and the communities in which the people live whose lives the message has changed. The gospel message will also undergo some change as it is understood in each new generation and in each new circumstance and situation. The reliability of the Bible, the sureness of the Word of God, does not change but the message changes as it ministers into the lives of each new generation. It has to happen. Inculturation is the process whereby message and people change as they come together in each new situation. The gospel message will change societies, cultures and people but the gospel message can not expect to be exempt from change due to the fact that it is working within the situations which it is changing. The Coloured Pentecostals, for the most part, have not been able to adjust to the changes which are being presented to the church and the gospel message. In refusing to change, in ignoring the changing society in which it lives, the Pentecostal is refusing to fulfill the mandate of God to take His message to all generations. The loss of identity, which the Coloured Pentecostals are experiencing, is a result of that refusal to change. I offer three possible solutions to the dilemma.**

### **5.6.2.1 Seek Out Those Like Us**

**One solution to this identity issue is for the older Pentecostal people to seek out others who believe just like they do. That is, find those people who keep “the standard” of what “used to be.” I am not in any way trying to put down the older Pentecostal generation. There would be no Pentecostal**

movement today had not the older people stood the test of time and faith. They are our examples of standing in the gap for what one believes. However, from the interviews, it is apparent that the beliefs of many of the older generation centres around what has been called "outward expressions of worship" rather than an inner work of God. By that I mean the answer to Question 17 shows that it is the clapping of hands, dancing in the Spirit, etc., that has identified one as a Pentecostal in the past. It is the wearing of head covering for the women, ties and coats for the men, that have been the predominant signs of Pentecostalism. The younger generation is now questioning the meaning of these outward expressions. The younger generation is saying that there is more to the Holy Spirit than speaking in tongues. Pastor D Muller expresses it this way.

Generally in the church, there is not that large emphasis in Pentecostal faith, not any longer. What is more emphasised now is the bearing of the fruit of the Spirit. That is largely emphasised more than the initial evidence of speaking in tongues. What one is seeing now is the children of those people who now remain in the church who have gone through matric and even tertiary institutions, there is just more questioning that is taking place and whether that is still necessary as an initial evidence of the Holy Spirit. But then I would say it is also a result of people having a strong understanding that tongues is not the essence of being filled with the Holy Spirit. Because that has been largely emphasised in the former years. If somebody did not speak in tongues, it evidently made that person not filled with the Holy Spirit. And because of that over emphasis, I would say of being filled with the Spirit, there is also a trying to reach a balance in connection with the other evidences of the Holy Spirit.

The older generation of Coloured Pentecostals still believes that one must speak in tongues as evidence of the infilling of the Holy Spirit. Because of this changing view, as expressed by Pastor D Muller, conflict arises within the churches.

**This option of “seeking out those like us” for Coloured Pentecostals is one that would, in my opinion, ultimately cause the Pentecostal church to die out. It is an attempt to keep one’s message unchanged, untarnished as it were, from the situation of the present. To seek out only those that believe just like one does, is not to advance but to retreat. It is not enough to live in the past. One must live in the present while looking toward the future hope of the coming of the Lord which one serves. For the older generation to seek those just like themselves is to seek those who dress like they do, those who live like they do. Not everything that the older generation seeks to keep is wrong or bad. The older generation of Pentecostals have much to contribute to the growing Pentecostal community. However, their opinions and beliefs will not be sought after if they decide to live in the past in what used to be.**

#### **5.6.2.2 Lose Pentecostal Distinctiveness**

**A second option for the Coloured Pentecostals is to lose their Pentecostal distinctiveness completely. That is, the Pentecostal community will become like the other churches around them who are not and have never been considered Pentecostal. As pointed out above, many churches are now doing a lot of the “things” that have been signs or symbols of Pentecostalism for many years. I pointed out that this is one reason why people can so easily change churches because the signs of Pentecostalism are now evident in other churches. There was a time when a person had to attend Pentecostal services if one wanted to sing choruses or dance in the Spirit or any of the other signs of Pentecostalism. The problem is in the way that Pentecostalism is being described. The question is what makes a person Pentecostal. Is it the outward signs which have been expressed by many of the interviewees? If being Pentecostal rests upon the outward signs of clothing, choruses which are sung, dancing in the church, then the transition from Pentecostal distinctiveness to become like other churches will not be a difficult one.**

**Pastor Matthews already has expressed his views that there is no need to be called Pentecostal as he feels that there is even now no distinction between Christian and Pentecostal. Pastor Erasmus in his answer to Question 17 indicates similar views but he expresses it differently. Pastor Erasmus makes the distinction for Pentecostals to depend upon a born-again experience rather than anything to do with the Holy Spirit as many other people did. If Pastor Erasmus is correct, then anyone, regardless of which church one attends, who claims to be born-again would be classified as Pentecostal. The difficulty here is that many people would not accept the designation of Pentecostal yet they firmly believe that they are serving the Lord with a born-again experience. If someone needs to change one's name, it would almost invariably be the Pentecostals who would take on a different designation.**

**Pastor Small would seem to agree.**

**I just wish we would all stop pointing fingers at other people and each one must look at himself and ask himself this question, "How do I stand before the Lord? What does the Lord expect of me?" This labels that is put on to a person because he is Pentecostal, he is the best, he is this, or he is that. You must just all know if we are washed in the blood and with the Holy Spirit in us, it is all we need.**

**Pastor Lindsay agrees with these pastors.**

**What I would like to say, is that my hope and desire is that all Pentecostal people filled with the Holy Spirit or whoever comes together and join hands and serve the Lord in Spirit and truth. To serve our country. We are here to serve. We are to serve to help our fellow men and fellow neighbors and our Christians. That is my hope that we would leave all the labels behind. Forget that I am Pentecostal, that I am that or**

**I am that. Come let us come together and worship the Lord and let the Spirit do the work.**

**If the desire of these pastors were to come to pass, it would definitely bring about a transformation of local Christianity which could then be a model for the rest of the Christian world. Realistically speaking, it is not likely to happen. It is not likely to happen for the same reasons that there are so many different church groups in Retreat. I have identified 44 different Pentecostal churches in the study area. Many of them are smaller independent churches which came out of other churches in the area. They left for various reasons, all legitimate to them at the time they broke away from the other body of believers or at the time they began their church. One has to question whether the circumstances have so changed that these pastors and members are now willing to lose that unique reason which they had originally for their existence. Are the Pentecostals willing to accept that there is no difference between what they believe and what all the other churches believe? The answers in the interviews do not indicate that they are. One of the reasons that was given for the loss of Pentecostal identity is the fact that they are becoming like the other churches. Although these pastors, in particular, desire to become less distinctive and to become known more as Christian than as Pentecostal, I do not see it happening within the Coloured Pentecostals of Retreat. As I have visited among them both as minister of the gospel and as a Bible Training Centre principal, I have discovered that most of the pastors are very protective of their individuality as a church. There may be some coming together for special occasions but there will not be, in the near future, any of them who will be willing to totally lose the distinction of being Pentecostal.**

**There is one possible exception. Pastor Adams expresses the one possible way that Pentecostals would become like other churches. He says,**

**I would like to know that the Pentecostal outlook would filter more through the nominal churches, that at some stage we**

would have one common Christian belief. I know that is a lot to ask for but that's what I would like. I don't like these difference in the tags. To me, it doesn't mean anything to the whole. It is dividing people, and I don't like that.

The one possible exception is that the other churches become like the Pentecostal churches. As Pastor Adams says "the Pentecostal outlook" would have to become the outlook of all the other churches. That is not likely to happen either. There may be some of the outward signs of Pentecostalism in the other churches, but it is not conceivable that the full understanding of what it is to be Pentecostal will become the beliefs of the other churches. If it was going to happen to them, it would have already occurred. I have not made any distinction in this study between Pentecostal and charismatic churches. Charismatic churches, such as Rhema, Hatfield, and Christian Centres, etc., however, show that it is possible for people to come together from various church affiliations and form a "successful" church structure whose teaching centres around the Holy Spirit. There is nothing from the answers to the interview schedules which indicate why a "Charismatic" type church grows to become a large church yet so few "Pentecostal" type churches do so. It might warrant further investigation to see if there is any distinction made that relates to the designation of "Pentecostal" or "Charismatic".

To my knowledge there is only one Pentecostal/Charismatic church within the study area that has attendance of over 500 people.

### **5.6.2.3 Restoration of Pentecostal Experiences**

There is a third option open to the Pentecostal community --- a renewing of the experiences which have made Pentecostals distinctive. The most realistic response to the apparent feeling of loss of identity is the

restoration of the Pentecostal experiences. I do not believe that either of the first two choices will be acceptable to the majority of the Pentecostal community. It is already evident that there are some pastors and churches who are retreating into an isolationism of their own making. The remnant syndrome is, in actuality, an attempt to retreat into former days or into what used to be. It will not be able to reach the growing number of younger people who will make up the church of the future. They are already beginning to outnumber the older people yet are being marginalised in the remnant churches. God never intended the church to cling to just a few "good" members but wants His church to reach out to the community in which it is placed in order to bring the gospel message to that community. The remnant church does not do this.

It is also evident that some pastors do not have an interpretation of Pentecost which calls for any distinctive feature not found in other parts of Christianity. I do not believe that the Pentecostals of Retreat are going to just allow their churches to become in their totality like all the other churches. I have already mentioned some of the reasons why I believe that will not happen. The answer to loss of identity is not conformity unless conformity is what one desires. Pentecostals have not been known as people who conform to what others think of them or what others think they ought to do as Christians. While the majority of those interviewed may feel that Pentecostals have lost their identity, there is not any indication that at the same time they are happy about it. Rather, there are many interviewees who have expressed their desire to return to what they consider to be true Pentecostalism. Pastor Wilschutte puts it this way.

It is my heart's desire to see the Pentecostals and fellow Christians come to grips with the Word of the Lord and come back to the fear of God. It is what I really sense around today, the people know a lot about God but the fear of God is what I am looking to see in the lives of men and women today. If we can have just a little bit more of that in ourselves, we would be



**a better Christian.**

**Member 29 says the Pentecostals are “moving back to the basics.”**

**We’re waiting day by day for revival in our churches. We are moving back to the basics of Christianity – our salvation, our first love, indwelling of the Spirit. It is reassuring to know that amidst the changes, God is still moving and His people are going back to seeking and serving Him in Spirit and in truth.**

**Back to the basics. That is the answer to the loss of identity among the Pentecostals. Pentecostals must move back to the basics of their beliefs which have always included the moving of the Spirit in their services, the operation of the gifts of the Spirit, anointed preaching of the Gospel, enthusiastic evangelism, fervent prayer, accompanied by the miracle working power of the Holy Spirit.**

**At the same time, Hollenweger (1988:373) suggests that the Pentecostals need to go one step further.**

**We must look beyond the gifts of the Spirit which are manifested in the Pentecostal movement to find modern gifts of the Spirit: the gifts of service to society and science. That is, we need gifts that will help us to understand better our sick world of politics, economics and science and to contribute to the task of healing it.**

**If Knight (1974:11) is right that “spiritual death results from the loss of the gifts of the Spirit,” then spiritual life ought to come from the renewal of those same gifts. However, as Hollenweger has pointed out, Pentecostals need to realize that they live in a post-modern age and not in the past. Renewal of the gifts of the Spirit, and all that entails, must be done in the light of the present**

situation in which the Pentecostals find themselves. To divorce the one from the other will lead the Pentecostals once again to the point of losing their identity. Pentecostals must be willing to allow the Holy Spirit to work through them to reach this present age in which they live. Unless they do, they will destroy themselves as a distinctive part of Christianity.

What will bring about this restoration of Pentecostal experiences? First, I believe it will take people like Member 36 who can sense a renewing of the presence of God. She says, "I think we are slowly but surely moving back to allowing this kind of manifestation of the Spirit in our midst (prophecies and miracles). I have a yearning inside me to see miracles, a yearning to experience supernatural things." Unless the Pentecostal people begin to have a yearning for the Spirit of God in their midst as it was in former days, there will not be a restoration of the Pentecostal experiences. I am not suggesting that everything that the older generation of Pentecostals are longing for is right for today. I am suggesting that there needs to be some of the same intensity within the Pentecostal church today that was in it in years past. The market place syndrome which I mentioned earlier (2.6.3 and 3.4) plays an important role in deciding whether or not there will be a restoration of Pentecostalism. The market place syndrome is one factor in the movement between churches. Modern society is so used to shopping for the things that one wants, that it has become just as common within the church to shop for the things you want 'in the Spirit.' The market place syndrome leads one to depend more on oneself than on the Spirit of God. "I can find what I want by shopping around." Often this shopping around leaves out the seeking for the will and presence of God which characterized the former days of Pentecostalism.

Second, it will take people seeking the will of God and the power of God. As Member 71 says, "God can restore and reconcile us to Him again." Restoration can only come if the Pentecostal people are willing to seek after the One who bestows the gifts. The Bible is full of examples of God's

restoring power when the people of God sought Him and then followed His teachings and instructions. If the Pentecostal people will realize that God is not only a God of the past, i.e., the things that He used to do through them, but that He is also a God of the present, i.e., what God wants to do through them now, then the restoration of Pentecostal experience can take place. It may take some of the type of praying that Pastor Jacobs spoke about - "praying until the walls sweat."

Third, it will take a willingness of all the Pentecostals, both young and old, to begin to see that God desires to use all of them in building His kingdom. It is not a question of who is right and who is wrong. It is a question of a part of the body of Christ realizing that if they are willing to work together, God is willing to work through them to build His kingdom. As I have already indicated, there is a tremendous amount of conflict over the boundary markers of the older and younger generations. The conflict cannot continue if there is to be a restoration of Pentecostal experiences. Even Jesus indicated that division will cause the downfall of the house. In this case, division will cause the continuation of the loss of identity among the Pentecostals of Retreat. There will have to be a certain amount of compromise resulting from the coming together of the younger and older generations. It is possible to reach agreements that do not compromise the Gospel message but at the same time allows for freedom of expression within the Pentecostal churches. Without this willingness to work together, the restoration of Pentecostal experiences will not become a reality.

### **5.6.3 Reformulating Holy Spirit Understanding**

One of the features of the Pneumatic Dimension of the CPC worldview (2.6.2) was that of Holy Spirit Understanding (2.6.2.1). There were clear indications that the CPC people had a very mixed understanding as to the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers. The Pneumatic Dimension of

**the CPC worldview implied that there existed with the CPC a dualistic attitude concerning the relationship of the Holy Spirit and the believer. This dualism was seen in the responses given when the Economic Dimension of the CPC worldview (2.6.4) was discussed. It became apparent that there were conflicting views as to what God, through the Holy Spirit, does and what the individual does.**

**This dualism brought to the fore the idea that if God works, people do not have to work, or, if people work, then it isn't God working at all but the individual who is no longer "trusting God" to supply and meet their needs. This view was true even when what people did was a result of something that God had done in their life. That is, if God gave a member a better job and the member was able to get better things for the family, then the member had stopped trusting God to supply for the family and was doing it within oneself. This dualism is contributing to the polarization of the church where economic benefits are concerned. It has to do with the issue of a God who only works vertically, that is, supernaturally interceding in the lives of believers without also allowing any horizontal movement of God working with his people. It is precisely in this area where the CPC is misunderstanding the work of the Holy Spirit. Should it not rather be that when God moves, we move with God? It is not just a one-sided issue – God doing all the work and believers doing nothing. It should be that because the Holy Spirit answers the prayers of believers that believers work even more.**

**There needs to be some reformulation of Holy Spirit understanding within the CPC. The Holy Spirit does not push us aside in order to do the work of God. Rather, the Holy Spirit, cooperating with us, helps to accomplish the mission of the church. This dualism needs to be overcome or the renewing of the Pentecostal experiences which I have mentioned in this chapter either will not occur or will not have the desired effect of renewing Pentecostal identity.**

## **5.7 Evangelism, Mission and Identity**

**A church's mission is bound up within its identity. That is, the answers a church gives to two questions defines both its identity and its mission: Who are we? What is our purpose for being in existence? This study has been an attempt to answer the first question by asking, "What makes a person Pentecostal?" The answers to that question have formed the basis of this study. The answers to the second question form the rationale for its mission. Mission can be described as a church's commitment to outward service and witness in society. Pentecostal witness has not formed a major part of this study because it was not mentioned by a number of the members or pastors interviewed. However, it is a subject which I cannot ignore as, to me, mission is the reason for the church's very existence. Identity and witness are interrelated. I have been arguing in this study that there are areas of conflict within the CPC churches of Retreat. Is it possible that the conflicts have overshadowed mission in the Pentecostal churches of Retreat? The answer is, probably so.**

**It is evident to me that the conflictual responses of older and younger generations of Pentecostals have diminished the witness and evangelism of the CPC churches. When a group begins to look within itself to the point that it no longer looks out – to its mission – it needs to reassess who they are and what is their purpose as a church. I have spoken in 5.6.2.3 of the restoration of Pentecostal experiences. That restoration can not be seen in isolation of renewal of Christian witness. A renewal of Pentecostal identity ought to, at the same time, bring a renewal of the church's commitment to outward service and witness in the society in which the church lives. At the moment it seems as if the conflicts which are within the CPC churches have, in effect, paralyzed their mission. If that is so, then it seems logical that if there is a renewing of the church's mission to society, that the renewal would serve as a means of redefining and renewing the church's identity. There must come in some way**

a breaking loose of the bonds which are keeping the CPC churches from fulfilling their mission in society.

The mission of the church includes evangelism. In 3.5, I discussed that many in the CPC feel that evangelistic efforts have decreased. It is true that to a certain extent evangelism is hindered by the conditions which exist in Retreat, such as gang warfare which threatens the very safety of all people at night. However, the commitment to society ought to include the church reaching out to others, for example, to the gangs in some way. It ought to form a part of the church's witness. Although there were no specific questions on the interview schedules concerning this type of situation, evangelism and witness should not be controlled in its entirety by the external situations of the society the church is called upon to help. The CPC's definition of a Christian (2.3.1.1) indicates their concern for people to be converted to serving Jesus Christ which is a result of a "born-again experience." Although there were no questions specifically designed to define evangelism in the CPC context, through observations of and conversations with CPC people, they tend to see other religions as inferior to Christianity thus prompting them to "win the lost" to Jesus. Although there are indications of decreased evangelistic activity, there is still a desire for others to be "born-again". In this regard, I did not find evidence that there were any differences between the older and younger generations of Pentecostals. The context of the times have caused changes in the CPC response to evangelism with its de-emphasis on certain types of evangelistic activity. It is an area which needs further investigation.

In section 2.3.1.1, I discussed "the Born-again experience" in which the idea was presented that being born-again made a person Pentecostal. I have to question, however, the additional qualifications which they seem to be applying to being a Christian. It is well and good to be concerned about a person's experience of knowing Jesus as Lord and Saviour but to redefine the terms of salvation by making that same person Pentecostal is questionable. It

is almost saying that people who come from a non-Pentecostal background cannot have the same type of experience as the Pentecostals. It is certainly clear that the Pentecostals have a boundary which others must cross to become Pentecostal but it is also evident that not everyone who has experienced salvation in Pentecostal terms would consider themselves Pentecostal. The term "born-again" is not exclusively used by the Pentecostal movement and to redefine it in these limited terms is to redefine evangelism in unacceptable terms.

A possible one-sided view of the mission of the church, as has previously been expressed (3.5) by Member 49 and the Assembly of God minister, is found in their use of the term "soul". Member 49 said, ". . . more souls come to know Christ." The AOG minister said, "You don't see souls being saved any more." Although they express opposing views as to what is happening, the issue here is their use of the term "soul" when speaking of people who have "come to Christ." If mission includes both a reaching out to society in service as well as in witness, the use of the term "soul" tends to highlight the spiritual aspect of a person over and above all other aspects. People are more than just "souls" to be "saved". The mission of the church includes more than a spiritualized concept of the soul which needs to be saved. The mission of the church does include witness but it also includes serving the community. I have observed that this terminology is used extensively in the CPC churches. In doing so, the CPC presents an incomplete reason for its existence. Although it is not included as part of the questions, I do not know of any church within the CPC churches of Retreat that is involved in any special service to the community. This one-sided dimension to mission needs to be reevaluated in order to understand the relationship between mission, evangelism and identity better.

A refocusing on the reason for the church's existence could also be what is needed to allow the CPC churches to get a new or better perspective on the conflicts which they are now experiencing. The renewing of

Pentecostal experiences, which results in renewed Pentecostal identity, ought to bring the mission of the church into clearer focus. A more focused witness will help the CPC churches to overcome the problems which they have pointed out as the issues which are currently causing the internal conflict of the churches. Identity is not a side issue to mission but forms an integral part of a church's mission. The CPC churches need to redefine their identity in order for their mission to once again become the reason for their existence.

## **5.8 Summary**

I have used as the basis of this study, Schreiter's view that boundary markers, world view and social change form the basis of identity. I have discussed some of the traditional boundary markers and world views. I have also discussed the effects of change upon those traditional boundaries. Schreiter's view that changes in the boundary causes changes in the identity has proven correct for the Coloured Pentecostals of Retreat. The Coloured Pentecostals are facing changes of identity in two major areas. First, they are facing changes in the majority cultural designation which they have had for many years, that is, being known as Coloured. This majority cultural change is a result of changes brought on by the changes within the country of a political nature. The debate over what name will be used by the majority Coloured culture will continue into the foreseeable future. It can only be changed by the Coloureds themselves. It cannot be legislated by an act of Parliament or determined by an academic study like this. That is what happened in the first place. Another act of Parliament would not erase the years of conflict over the designation of Coloured. Because the Pentecostals of Retreat are primarily from the previously designated Coloured culture, they have been affected by the political changes to the majority cultural designation. They will continue to do so until there is some "final" agreement on how they are to be known.



**Second, the changing social, economic, political and religious domains are causing tremendous change within the Pentecostal community itself. These changes go to the very heart of Pentecostal experiences. The very things that the older generation wanted for their children, i.e., better education, better opportunities, etc., have become the things that are causing so much conflict within the Pentecostal community. The changes which I have discussed in this study can potentially destroy the Pentecostal community in Retreat if nothing is done about them from within the Pentecostal community itself. The needed corrections, or solutions, cannot come from outside the Pentecostal community. They must come from within. There may be suggestions, such as the ones I have put forth in this study, but the solutions to the changing boundary markers and world view must come from within. In considering the issue of identity, it will take more than just a cosmetic change such as a new name, to bring about the restoration of Pentecostal identity. Pastor Erasmus is right.**

**It is not the term that changes a person. It is the person himself, his character, his inner man that should be changed. But he will still do the same things, eat the same things, wear the same clothes, speak the same language, feeling comfortable in the things in which he was born.**

**Lastly, I have suggested that possible solutions to the problems of CPC identity can be found by the renewing of its Pentecostalism. The renewal of the work and gifts of the Holy Spirit would go a long way in re-establishing the CPC's distinctiveness of being Pentecostal, which many feel has been lost. It will not be an easy process but a necessary one if the CPC is to remain as a special unique part of the Christian community in Retreat.**

# **APPENDIX A**

**List of churches and map of Retreat**

## **PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES IN RETREAT, WESTERN CAPE**

The churches which are listed below come from three sources. First, they come from personal knowledge of the church being in the area. Second, they come from the pastors' interviews as the areas which their churches are in. Third, they come from the members' interviews as to which areas their churches are in. As a result, there may be some duplication of existing churches since not everyone uses the same name for the particular area in which they live. For example, Retreat is the overall name for the study area, but each of the other names form a part of the overall area. This was discussed in Chapter 1. There are forty-four churches listed. To avoid duplication as much as possible, when I knew the exact location of a church, I did not list it twice.

### **RETREAT**

**AFRICAN GOSPEL MISSION  
APOSTOLIC FAITH MISSION  
BETHANY ASSEMBLY OF GOD  
CHRISTELIKE GEMENTE CHURCH  
DIEP RIVER GOSPEL FELLOWSHIP  
ELIM PENTECOSTAL CHURCH  
GRIQUA INDEPENDENT CHURCH  
HOUR OF DECISION GOSPEL MISSION  
JUBILEE CHRISTIAN CENTRE  
MARANATHA MORNING STAR  
METROPOLITAN EVANGELISTIC  
PENTECOSTAL FAITH CENTRE  
PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS CHURCH  
TRUE LIGHT OF CHRIST  
UNITED ANCHOR CHURCH OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**CAFDA**

**ELIM ASSEMBLY  
GALILEANS GOSPEL MISSION  
LOFDAL CHURCH  
NATIONAL EVANGELISTIC MISSION  
SHARON ASSEMBLY OF GOD**

**LAVENDER HILL**

**BETHANY ASSEMBLY OF GOD  
CHRISTELIKE ALEGEMENE  
DIEP RIVER GOSPEL FELLOWSHIP  
METROPOLITAN EVANGELISTIC  
MISSIONARIES OF CHRIST  
PEACE REVIVAL CHURCH  
PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS CHURCH  
REVIVAL REVELATION CHURCH  
THE THESSALONIANS**

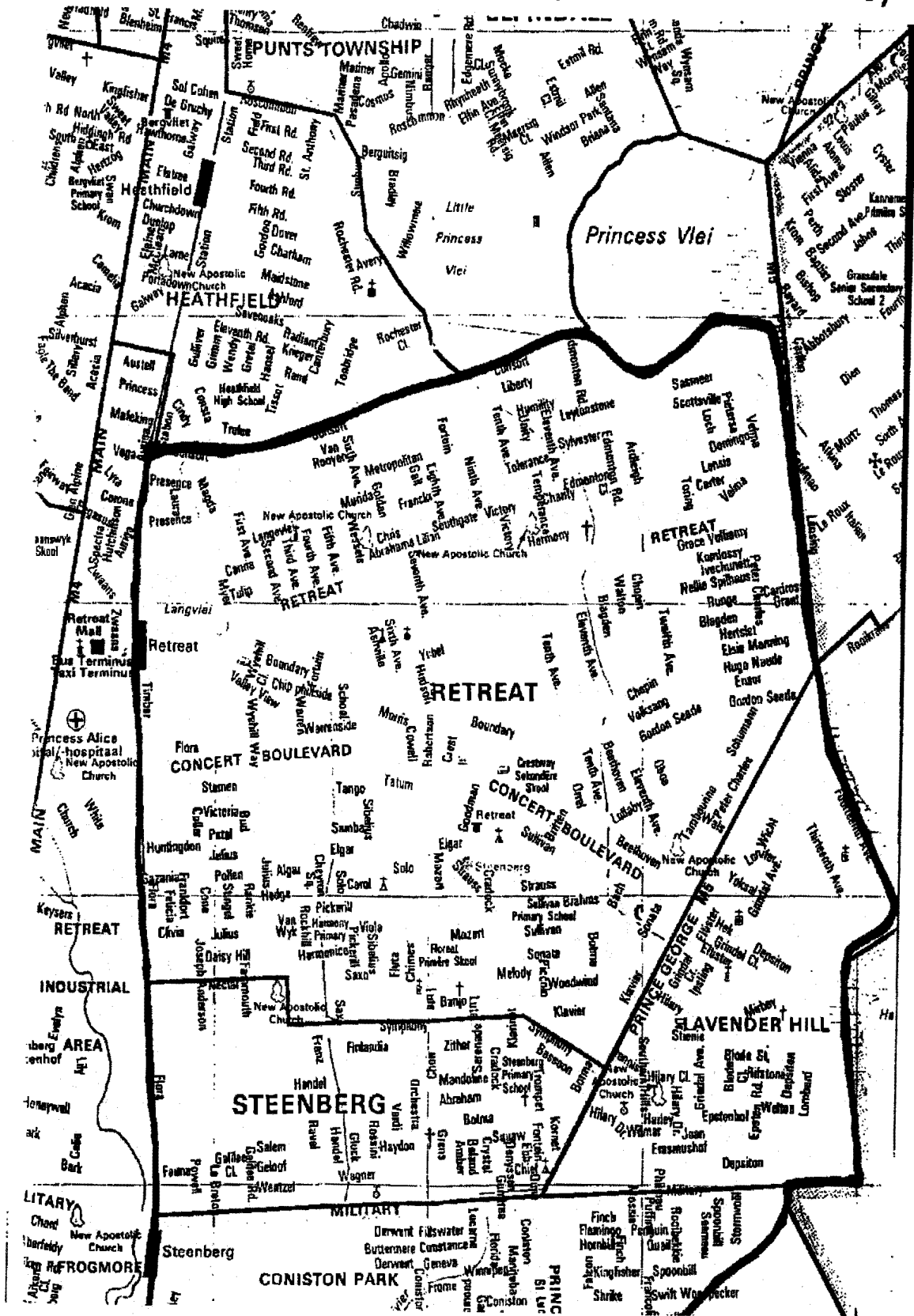
**STEENBERG**

**CAPE CHRISTIAN FAMILY CHURCH  
CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY  
CHRISTIAN GEMEENTE CHURCH  
FULL GOSPEL CHURCH OF GOD  
GALILEAN GOSPEL MISSION  
HARVESTTIME COMMUNITY MINISTRY  
PALMTREE MISSION  
PINKSTER PROTESTANT KERK  
UNITED DOCTRINE OF CHRIST  
UPPER ROOM ASSEMBLY**

**SEAWINDS**

**AFRICAN GOSPEL MISSION  
NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD  
REVIVAL EVANGELISTIC MINISTRY  
VERENIGDE PINKSTER SENDING VAN SOUTH AFRICA  
VRYGROUND GOSPEL FAITH MISSION**

# MAP OF STUDY AREA - - RETREAT (WITHIN DARK LINES)



# **APPENDIX B**

## **Sample Interview Schedule**

# SAMPLE INTERVIEW FORM

SURVEY OF PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES IN THE RETREAT  
AREA OF THE CAPE PENINSULA FOR  
MASTER'S DISSERTATION

MALE FEMALE AGE \_\_\_\_\_

CHURCH \_\_\_\_\_ AREA \_\_\_\_\_

1. When was the local church established? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Who established the local church? Current pastor \_\_\_\_ Previous pastor \_\_\_\_
3. How many people attend the local church?  
\_\_\_\_\_ less than 50 \_\_\_\_\_ 50-100 \_\_\_\_\_ 100-200 \_\_\_\_\_ over 200
4. What percentage of attendees at services are men? \_\_\_\_\_ women? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What are the percentages of the people who attend the local church?  
\_\_\_\_\_ under 20 \_\_\_\_\_ 20-35 \_\_\_\_\_ 35-50 \_\_\_\_\_ over 50
6. How many people serve on the local church board or council? \_\_\_\_\_  
How many of these are men? \_\_\_\_\_ women? \_\_\_\_\_
7. In which of the following positions are men allowed to serve?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Pastor \_\_\_\_ Assistant Pastor \_\_\_\_ Youth Leader \_\_\_\_\_ Elder \_\_\_\_ Deacon  
\_\_\_\_\_ Women's Leader \_\_\_\_\_ Sunday School \_\_\_\_\_ Other
8. In which of the following positions are women allowed to serve?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Pastor \_\_\_\_ Assistant Pastor \_\_\_\_ Youth Leader \_\_\_\_\_ Elder \_\_\_\_ Deacon  
\_\_\_\_\_ Women's Leader \_\_\_\_\_ Sunday School \_\_\_\_\_ Other
9. Are members of your local church allowed to belong to political parties? Yes No
10. Are there people who currently belong to political parties? Yes No
11. May they hold political leadership and still be church leaders? Yes No
12. Which of the following ethnic groups attend your local church?  
\_\_\_\_\_ 'Coloured' \_\_\_\_\_ European \_\_\_\_\_ Black \_\_\_\_\_ Other  
If other, please specify which ones \_\_\_\_\_
13. What percentage of your local congregation are formally employed?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Men \_\_\_\_\_ Women
14. What is the average salary per month for those working?  
0-2000 2000-4000 4000-6000 6000 & UP
15. How many people are living in your home?
16. What makes a person a Christian?
17. What things make a person Pentecostal?
18. What changes have you seen since 1980? (FOR YOUNG PEOPLE-IN YOUR LIFETIME?) (DRESS, LANGUAGE, SERMONS, SONGS, TESTIMONIES, SERVICE, ETC.)
19. How have these changes affected your church?
20. Have Pentecostals lost their special identity?
21. What is your favorite Bible verse? Why?
22. What is your favorite Chorous? Why?
23. What is your favorite hymn? WHY?
24. In the new South Africa, how do you feel about the term "Coloured"?
25. Other than SA Citizen, what term would you give yourself?
26. Why do you call yourself by this term?
27. Has this changed over the years? Why?

MAY I USE YOUR NAME IN MY STUDY? NO CRITICISM OR COMPARISONS WITH OTHER PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES ARE INTENDED BUT IT IS AN ATTEMPT TO IDENTIFY WHAT MAKES A PERSON PENTECOSTAL. I AM HERE TO SERVE THE PENTECOSTAL COMMUNITY. GOD BLESS YOU. THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE.

# **APPENDIX C**

## **Sample Sermons**



## **SAMPLE SERMONS**

**MARK KILLIAN, Assembly of God - Student Outreach 20 October 1996**

Greetings in the most wonderful name of our Lord Jesus Christ. It gives me great pleasure to stand here tonight as the servant of the Lord. When Rev Gorman asked me to speak I said Yes. With your God you are more than a conqueror. I said Lord what can I teach at Strandfontein Baptist. Now I come from a Baptist background, a very solid background, where the gospel is preached the way it should be preached. But the Lord came to me and said my time was up at Steenberg Baptist. At present my wife is still there. And the Holy Spirit is not releasing her to come away from there. I will never force her to come away from Steenberg Baptist. My daughter doesn't understand and has asked me Why I don't go to Steenberg Baptist. At present I am fellow shipping at Bethel Assembly of God. God has really undertaken for me these last few months. I have been drawn closer to Him. And you know there is a new word going around and I realized that if I don't have the Holy Spirit within me I am nothing. And I have been praying Lord, fill me with your spirit. When I wake up in the morning, I want to be filled with your spirit, when I go to sleep at night I want to be filled with the spirit. I want to have that intra within me. And I realized that I can show forth before God. And you know, one night I was laying in my bed and God you know I was touched by the Holy Spirit and I felt like I was on fire. And next morning I was sitting in my car I am driving from Retreat to Cape Town. The people must have thought I was mad. But I am praising The Lord and I singing and lifting up hands and I'm going and I am being touched by the Spirit of God. You know never before would I lift up my hands in the presence of God but now I'm filled with his intra. Beloved, if we don't have the 'intra' within us we are dead as this altar. But tonight that is not what I am going to talk about.

As my brother ministered here and he called upon those who needed a touch from the Lord. He said the water is being stirred and I said Thank you God you are faithful for that is what I am going to speak about - the waters. You know, Water is one of our most precious commodities. Cities are always built by water. When I was a youngster I was always reading that the farmers were praying for water. Because without water the land cannot produce. Every morning we have got to make use of water. If we do not wash we will know what we can expect of ourselves - we will stink we will smell. The house executives, as they are called today, know the importance of water. You cannot cook without water although they say they have waterless pots. My wife has those at home. When I cook I have to have water. You know my work takes me to many parts of the country. I am working for the Truth Commission as an investigator. And I was traveling in Upington and Upington is a very dry region but the closer you go to the Orange River you will see the beauty of God. The lushness

the greenest because water gives life. You will see the beauty of the vineyards. You will see the raisins. Uppington grows all of our raisins. There must be someone here from Afrikaans. We are going to see the importance of water.

I want you to turn with me to II Samuel 23: 15. "And David longed and said, Oh, that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate. And the three mighty men brake through the host of the Philistines and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem that was by the gate, and took it and brought it to David, nevertheless he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the Lord. And he said, Be it far from me, O Lord, that I should do this, is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives? Therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mighty men." May the Lord always add the blessing to His own inspired word.

Beloved, because David has not been anointed king yet the Philistines know if they can conquer David, they have conquered Israel and David is longing for this water but between David and this water is the Philistines. But three of the great warriors hear the King's longing and they decide to take a chance, that they are going to take a chance to get to Bethlehem to get the water that David is longing for and they break through and God's hand is upon them. The Bible doesn't explain to us how these great warriors break through the Philistines but God's hand is upon them all the time and they come back with the water. And David says, My God, my God, must I drink this water, These three men could have lost their lives. Their blood could have been spilled. I am not going to drink of this water and he poured it out on the ground as a sacrifice and these three warriors drank the rest of the water. Beloved, when we have to cross the waters we stand still and say God, no way, not now. I must finish this one aspect of my life. There is not time for me to cross the water, to go to the other side. Beloved that is why so many of our churches are sick today because many of us do not want to cross the Red Sea.

These Israelites when they came to the Red Sea said God what now? Moses what have you done. Look where we are. The Egyptians behind us and the Red Sea in front of us. Sometimes, exactly in our own lives. God has brought us so far what must I do.. Where to now? There seems no way out. God said to Moses, put your staff toward this and God opened up the Red Sea. Exactly that is what God will do for us. But many of us as believers, we suffer with all these infirmities, with all these sicknesses because we do not trust God to His full potential. We put God within the confinement of this building. God can not be confined. God is greater than the Red Sea because God created the Red Sea. That is why God opened the Red Sea for the Israelites could cross over. And the enemy stayed behind and that is what God wants to do for us tonight. God wants to open up the Red Seas in our life. So that we can reap the fruits and the full blessings of our Lord Jesus Christ. Some of us might be saved for years and we do not receive the full blessings of the Lord. Where

someone comes to God, say 5 years. And those people are blessed abundantly because they have left everything behind. They have passed through the Red Sea.

We look at the men with this great warrior, Gideon, and they were on the way to the war and they had to choose I think there were 3,000 men with him and they came to the river and at this river he said I will choose these men for you. And they came to the River and you know you will have to forgive me to say this but they became glutton and that is many of our Christians today, we are glutton but we are not glutton for the real things of God and they started drinking and their bellies were expanding. But some of these men were so observant and some of them were as wild dogs, watching and looking for the enemy and God said those men who drank as dogs put them to one side. As dogs. Because dogs are always observant and that is the way we as Christians must be. We must be observant. We must take cognizance of the things around us, amongst us, when our process became slack. And God said, these 300 are enough to conquer the enemy. We can read in the Scripture of many things where water plays a significant role. John the Baptist said Behold the Man, our Lord Jesus Christ. he came to the River Jordan. John the Baptist said, Jesus, I cannot baptize you, You must baptize me. Once again the importance of Water. You know to my amazement when I came to the Lord I heard of believers that were never baptized yet and I am shocked and amazed because it is a commandment of God that we must be baptized. NO matter what we say or what we do we must go through the waters because through baptism we die with Jesus Christ on the cross and we have a resurrected life. That is one of the most important things is baptism. God came to fulfil it and we as believers, as the body of Christ, must adhere to the commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ. Hey, we are going to miss the boat. When the Israelites came to the River Jordan, once again, they asked what must we do. The enemy is around me. We are surrounded by the enemy. We don't know the waters. There is water in front of us. We cannot cross. What must we do. God will make a way where there seems to be no way. In the Wilderness and once again at the River Jordan. And they passed. But that was not the end. When they came to the other side they thought we are in the land of milk and honey. Oh no, he said cut it off. Every man of fighting age. Make knives and cut off the foreskins. Once we have crossed the river Jordan we must cut the past, we must cut it off and then we will eat the solid foods. Only then they started eating solid foods.

We look at the man, the man at the Pool of Bethesda. For 38 years laid there, lazy, late, the water was stirred for 38 years. He had a luxury life. You can imagine if you read into this man's life. He laid there for 38 years. He had a luxury life. Food was brought to him, water was brought to him, someone washed him. If he had the desire he would have said Man, stay here and put me in the pool. Then Jesus came along and God said to him for 38 years you have been laying here. That is exactly like some of us in the church. As soon as the waters are stirred. Or there is power preached, then we don't want to jump into the pool. Why

should I do it. Brothers and Sisters, when the waters are disturbed and a job to be done we must jump into the pool. There is a job to be done. I know the Baptists have just had their missions month. I know my wife has just come from a mission at Steenberg Baptist. And it is not only those people who leave the country are missions. We right here must be mission minded. We right here must stir the waters. We right here must tell the people that Red Sea in your life, God can open it up. That River Jordan that seems so impossible to cross, God can make it possible for you to cross. We are the Ambassadors. We are the ones to tell them those things but first of all we must cross the waters before we can tell them. Beloved, I was really blessed tonight at the obedience to the Holy Spirit, It is very seldom that we still have that in our churches. It is very seldom that we still have men who can discern the spirit of God and you know there is a spirit tonight and the brother started ministering and I knew that this was the anointing of the Lord in this place and I said God is it still necessary for me to preach after what you are doing here tonight and tonight I know we are all sitting here tonight, me included, there is a fountain here tonight that will never dry up. And God said to that woman, Give me a little water and she said this is a deep well and he said Listen, give me water. If you drink of this water, it is the living water, you will never thirst again. That is the importance of water. Even with our sanctification, Ephesians 5:26, water is part of our sanctification. you have to be washed.

In Ezekiel 16:6, And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood. Live, yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood. Live. WE are washed in His precious blood. I will rush on, I don't want to keep you any longer. We have crossed the Red Sea. We have crossed the River Jordan. There are many that are stuck in front of the Red Sea. There are many that are stuck in front of the River Jordan and it is our duty to go out there and tell them that our Jesus can make a way Our Jesus can open up the Red Sea. Our Jesus can dry out the River Jordan in your life and he can put a living fountain in your life. Beloved here at Strandfontein Baptist, Stephen is always talking about Strandfontein Baptist that your church is alive and that is the way it should be. It is not just an organization and that is why God has taken his blessings out of many churches. You don't see souls being saved any more. You don't see the sick being helped any more. Why, we are more to do with the worldly things and the church needs to be washed and I am glad that I can see that this church is an organism and is alive and God is the head of the church. And I want to encourage you tonight at Strandfontein Baptist that each and every one be come part of the body of Christ. No matter how small or insignificant you might seem, we are all part of the body of Christ. THE musicians, the deacons, the pastor, you as the fellow members, each and every one but first of the lord you have to come through the wilderness and let God tonight cleanse you, let God tonight wash you. I thank you and may God richly bless you. Amen and Amen

## **DIEP RIVER GOSPEL MISSION PASTOR LARUE**

I want to greet the children of the Lord this morning, our leader, the pastors, in the wonderful name of the Lord Jesus. In the wonderful name of Jesus. Can I get an amen to that? He is above all other names, and his name is Emanuel, God with us. I thank God this morning for the privilege and this opportunity to be the messenger this morning. I trust God the Lord will bless us further during the course of this few minutes. We have ministered to the Lord in song and praise His Holy name.

As our pastor has said we want to hear from God so we ...to hear from you. His name is wonderful. Brethren experiencing the closing times. The word of the Lord is true. And it is Yea and A..men. Glory to the living God. He has brought us together to come and hear /// all of us from the Lord this morning. I want to title this message **REMAIN IN THE CAMP OF SAFETY**. Tarry in the place where there is security. Remain at the place of security. For our scripture, turn to John 10. Praise the living God. Our challenges are great. The stakes is high. Two supernatural powers - humanity becoming caught in the middle. ....Children and who knows who don't know the Lord. Come and find safety at the camp of refuge. Glory to his name. Jesus makes these announcements with warnings by the crowd he was carrying with him. He was surrounded by multitudes. .... The thief cometh not but to steal, to kill and to destroy (balance of verse).

Praise Jesus, He says in this verse, I am the door. In the 11th verse he says, I am the good shepherd. But he also warns the crowd, about somebody that is out there to kill to steal and to destroy. Why? Why must this happen to Adams race? Why must this happen to us who has done nothing? Let me say this morning, he was thrown out of heaven, he has never created humanity, he has created nothing. But he hates us more than what you and I can ever think or imagine. It goes beyond imagination you and I were created by the evil one namely Satan. ....this morning. I want to say child of God remain in the camp of safety. Do not let go of what you've got. Don't throw away the other soil, don't test it, it's no good. It's no good. Don't gamble with what God has given you. Jesus says he will steal. He don't care from whom he steals or how much he takes.

But Jesus said to them and to us this morning. He steals from you and I. He will steal what God has given you and I. He wants to take that away what God has given to you and me beloved child of God. Your salvation is valuable. Hallelujah. No price, no silver no gold can be found in here or in heaven to pay or to buy salvation. Praise the name of the Lord. But Jesus wants to come. He says he will not only steal from you and I but he will also kill. He is out to kill. How many people has gone to a lost eternity being killed. How many saved and loved children of God who have left the camp of refuge and come back to the Lord Jesus Christ and been killed. How many loved ones is out there, and been taken away from society, open book in places where they have been robbed ready to die a Christ less eternity. But this

morning, child of God, you and I, must not look away from the Master, not but we must keep our eyes fixed on him. Walk soberly, walk with the Lord, like Abraham of old. Like he says, I'll walk before God and God says, "Walk thou before me". Remain in the camp of safety.

Young child, youth, mother father. If any god must have come across your mind, hear me this morning, Jesus said, He would kill, and to steal, and to destroy. He has been called the destroyer. Yes the destroyer. Why, Bro LaRue? I want to take you back to second world war. As God chooses his instruments as the sister has testified to go and to pray and to minister to the sick and for the needy so he, whom Jesus called the liar, killed humanity by the maniac. He uses Adolph Hitler and so many others to destroy, to destroy innocent young, old, hallelujah, but Jesus, Jesus warns you and I about reality. About the thief. But glory unto the living Saviour. But then he tells, he says unto them but I am come to give you life, I am come to give you life. I am come to give to you not to take. Not only just life but more abundantly. Abundantly, abundantly. glory to his wonderful name. Glory to the name of the Lord. Glory to Jesus. ...has got their hearts, Jesus come to them, and say to them but I, Jesus Christ, the son of the living God, has come to give life, LIFE! Life! Life! Life! Life! and not death. So you and I can have it more abundantly, more abundantly. Child of the living God, have you been experiences in exceeding, hallelujah, hallelujah to Jesus. He promises, he called himself some many, he called himself the door, he called himself the good shepherd. To leave the crowd and go back and fetch the hungry, the last one on the hills.

Today, I don't know your heart but God knows the hearts. And God tests the kidneys. He knows what is going on in our hearts. There is one thing we cannot hide—we cannot hide our hearts from God for God knows your heart and my heart right now. But the Spirit of the living God has gathered you and I to this specific message this morning, to hear from God and to take courage Remain in the camp of safety. I don't know if the tribulations and the trials might move you to go back to the world, but woe unto you. Hear what Jesus says, "He will kill he will steal, he will destroy." My Lord says unto his people this morning, Church of the Jesus Christ. The prize cannot be bought, the price which you and I is bought is in the ..... it cannot be repeated. Precious blood bought on Calvary. Hallelujah.

But you know why, because he is a caring Saviour, full of compassion, full of love, hallelujah. Never think that you are rejected. Never decide to go away from God. Because why, Outside of Christ is no life. Outside of Christ is no life. Hallelujah! Jesus cares for us. Jesus loves you and I. Jesus got feeling for your life. He is the good shepherd. The good shepherd. So I can say, the Good Lord is coming back again. And your life must remain in the camp. Never leave the camp of Jesus. Never leave because of people. Never leave because of hurt. You've got to hang in there. You've got to hang in there. You've got to hang in there. We are experiencing the closing time. Jesus says evil will wax worse in the

last days. So many things are going round.

There is one thing about an eagle.....Those that wait upon the Lord shall mount up with wings as an eagle. But you know there is something else about an eagle. Maybe some of us already know it. An eagle in a bird that don't go from nest to nest. It builds a nest and stays in that nest for years and years. It has been recorded that it has been known that you cannot find the nest of an eagle. Child of God, stay in the camp of safety. Stay in the camp of refuge. Stay in the camp of nurses. Stay where there is doctors, stay where there is people that cares. Don't leave, don't leave, don't leave. (A story of when he was a young man, and all he wanted was money, money, money all the day long. His grandma said to him, don't go to the extreme. Stay at the fountain where you found your blessings. Stay where the water is still flowing not where it runs dry.) They that call upon the Lord. He is the only one who can satisfy the longing of your soul. Hallelujah! Praise God. I can sense his wonderful, his precious presence among us. He has been called the Comforter, the Holy Ghost. He has been called the Son of the living God. He is here! Remain, stay in your nest. Don't leave the eggs, also. Don't leave the younger birds also. Come with them with your big wings of experience. Your wings that have tested the air. Come with them, remain with them because you are needed here, you are needed here. God will raise up someone else for somewhere else. You and I remain here sayeth the Lord of hosts.

But Pastor LaRue, I have not yet experienced this abundant life. I am still poor, the Americans say "Poor", Hallelujah. Undermining spirits will minister because we have been caught in the balance???? But listen to the ministering of God to your heart, listen when God speaks to your heart and pray to God to improve your ability to recognize also that voice of the Holy Spirit. I want to get away from what God is saying, I just get down and say thank you, bless you God. Praise you God. Young man, you have been fooling your parents, you have been coming to church, you have been a good boy at home but when you leave home mama and daddy don't know who you are or what you are. But the world knows you, you are a different character, you are a different person out there. Hear my voice this morning, if you have been longing after the camp. I am inviting you to come back to Jesus. If you, my friend, have been walking with the same wife or the same husband and not being saved by the precious blood of the lamb, don't just walk and serve him afar off, but come nearer, come and taste and see that he is the good Shepherd, that he is the Lord. That he is the compassionate father, that he loves you. There is a way of escape and it is via the cross of Jesus Christ. God brings you to a cross road this morning. You are going to make a decision what your choice will be when you leave this place. I urge you this morning, I plead with you this morning, come to the Lord, come to the Saviour. Make no delay, but come and experience for yourself the ????????. Hallelujah! He wants to give you the life more in abundance. You know what, I just picture that in my mind. The pastor must give me an apple, oh no, I

will put it this way. I know that I must get an apple from pastor but when pastor is about to bring me an apple, he just brings me a box, more than I expected. Its with the Lord. More than what you can think of is with Jesus. ??? because he is a good Lord. In my own way, I came to know that there is no one like him. No one like Him, Remain in the camp of safety. Don't let it cross your heart or mind to leave, it's not from the Lord, it's not from the Lord. But God wants you to stay and go after this huge nest of glory and of honour and of praises.

Therefore the people of the Lord will cry out, Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord the most high. There is going to come a time when you are gone to lift up your hands and you are going to pray for the sick who hold the promise and then the fire will come down upon you. don't think in the height when you must stay Don't leave for any other reason. There were the two, Esau and Jacob. Don't make any deals with your salvation. Don't gamble with what God has given you. Don't exchange it for what the world may promise. Listen to me today. Maar Pastor ek kan ver myself. I can decide for myself. I can do what I want to. Yes, but that will be your lost. (When you leave, there will be emptiness in your heart) (When you want to run away from God.) God is just the opposite of him that is after you and I. God offers the best for you and I. The enemy want to kill to steal and is a destroyer. Don't try him, don't play with him, don't test him. Because for generations and generations, he has stayed the same. He will kill, steal and destroy you. But stay under the blood of Jesus. But stay under the blood of Jesus and the devil will do you know harm. No harm No harm, no harm, no harm. Stay with the Lord. don't let him get you out of the camp of safety.

David cried because of Absalom. You know the story. You go and read it in II Samuel chapter 10 onwards, from chapter 9 onwards or chapter 8 onwards and you will see. Don't let God's heart cry over us because of our decisions. Don't let Jesus be ashamed because of our decisions. But listen to what I say this morning. He wants to give you live more abundantly. All that are within my voice this morning. Life exceedingly, abundantly for you and I today in spite of the economic system of this world. God reigns supreme. God reigns supreme in our hearts because he is the good Shepherd. He is the lover of your soul, the lion of Judah. You might have run away from the Lord but he is calling you home. He is calling you to come back, he is calling you to come back, to come back so that he can break down the hold and the bondage of Satan and sin in your life and in mine this morning. Put your trust in him. Depend upon him. While every head is bowed and every eye is closed. Heavenly father.(prayer.)



## **SERMON: FULL GOSPEL CHURCH**

**ACAPELA means without music, I was at a service not too long ago when I said to the congregation that I appreciate choir and coral music simply because there is no problem with these electrical instruments and microphones that you often hear testing, testing and often say to myself did not come for testing, testing: sing brother! So we want to say to the choir this morning we appreciate the singing that you have rendered. Pastor Erasmus said to me "go right ahead you don't need introduction". So I'm glad to be here. I am glad for the invitation again to minister. So it is my prayer that God would use me to be a blessing to us and I do trust as we would be looking at God's word at a very familiar passage of scripture that we would leave this place of worship this morning strengthening the inner man and are able to carry on the road which we are travelling. The passage of scripture we would be looking at this morning a well-known section in Isaiah 43. The passage of scripture that some of us should be well acquainted with and I do trust the Lord would again bless us this morning as we look at an aspect of that Isaiah 43.**

**I'm reading from N.I.V. version (reading of scripture). May the Lord add a blessing to his precious word and our meditation thereon. This book, written by the prophet Isaiah is known as one of the major prophets in the Old Testament and when scholars use the phrase that he is a major prophet it has mainly got to do with the volume of material that we have of this particular prophet. In the Old Testament the role of the prophet was a very important role, we have the Bible today and it is no real problem to have a communication from God. All we have to do is read the word and we have communication with God but the role of the prophet in the Old Testament at the time when they didn't have the scriptures like we have. His role was to bring a communication from God to man. Therefore when people find themselves in different situations, when they want to find the will of God, what is God saying, what is God's desire, what is His purpose, what must we do? It is at those times that the prophet came forth to tell the people just what God wants them to know. I dare say this is a very important role and in the history of the prophets basically they had two kinds of messages, it would either be a message of warning, or what must still happen.**

**He warns them. It could be a message of encouragement. Many times when they are in situations, many times when the people of God were in situations like you and I find ourselves where we wonder where is God? Does not God realise what I am going through? Doesn't he appreciate what I'm going through. At that time the prophet had a role, he brings a message from God to encourage the people. Where God let the people know that He is still in their midst, that he is still alive and that he knows what they are going through. So I repeat again the role of the prophet was a very important role. Now the prophet Isaiah stood and prophesied at a very strategic time in Israel's history. He gave a prophesy and various**

prophesies to Israel at a time when they were going through a dark experience.

An experience of exile. The experience of them being driven out of their land - the promise land and we know the story. The story was that God had said to the nation of Israel in Canaan. If you love me, if you serve me, if you do the things that I want you to do then I would be your God, and I will bless you, I will be among you, I will be your God, but we know the story of the children of Israel, they slowly started drifting from God and God warned them that my judgement is going to come on you, eventually in the history of the children of Israel they had driven so far away from God that God allowed his judgement. It was as such that the children of Israel couldn't understand how God could do something like this to us. How could God allow a heathen nation to come and take over the power of the world. They were the Babylonians they became a world empire which meant that all the other nations was subject to them and what the Babylonians and any other nation who became a world power did, was to destroy and conquer all the places that was under their control and the children of Israel in their beloved land, in their promise land Canaan. Canaan with the beautiful temple that they had build to worship God. Jerusalem with the wall around the city to protect them, found themselves in a situation where the Babylonians came and threw down the temple, threw down the walls and took the people captive to Babylon.

There while they were in Babylon amongst others, the prophet Isaiah prophesied and in chapter 43 you will find some of the most (and I could feel it with response to some of you) as I read it in chapter 43 in Isaiah you'll find some of the most precious promises that God gives the people the nation of Israel to let them know that they must not think that he has forgotten them. They are there in a foreign country, they are there under a foreign domain, they are there amongst a people who's serving and worshipping foreign Gods but God wanted them to know I am still here I see what you are going through and in fact God when they were taken into captivity, have already declared that the length of time that they were going to be in Babylon, it is going to be seventy years and then I'm going to bring you back to Jerusalem. In this passage chapter 43 of Isaiah (please go back home and read it prayerfully, slowly to sink in and allow the word of God just to fill your heart, but in chapter 43 I find that basically God reminds them firstly of his love for them. He reminds them that his love is a love that is not going to stop. I will continue to love you. Secondly he reminds them that he has a plan that no one will be able to obstruct. He reminds them that he knows what is happening and he will show them how he will work it out.

Then thirdly he reminds them and tells them that they are going to experience a deliverance about which they will not be disappointed. I want to take these three aspects in chapter 43 of Isaiah and I want us as the people of God to hear what God is saying to us today. He loves us with a love that will never end and I am going to attempt by Gods grace to let us see that God has a plan for our lives, a plan that will never ever fail or be obstructed.

Thirdly I believe God wants us to know again this morning that he has a deliverance for us about which we will never be disappointed. You know when we think of God and want to remember God, there's only one thing that you and I can do and that is to look back and see what God had done for us. I believe that the nation of Israel at that point yes, even though they were in captivity even though they were in a situation they could no longer stand they were really experiencing a repeat of history. You see they could at that moment look back at the words of the prophet. They already had the Egypt experience, and the Egypt experience was not a very nice experience for the people of Israel. They knew what it was to be in captivity, they knew what it was to be enslaved, they knew what it was like to be in a situation where there was a foreign Pharaoh who did not know God, who did not serve God. They knew what it was in that kind of situation and yet when they were in Egypt they knew what it was to experience God's love, because the Bible tells us that they called unto God and the Bible says God heard them and God was prepared to deliver them as he sent Moses the deliverer of the people of Israel and that time when they stood in Babylon they could look back and say yes, this God is a God that loves us with a love that would never end.

They could look back and remember a plan that God had, a plan no man would be able to obstruct. You see God chose Moses and God said to Moses go to Pharaoh and tell him to let my people go and we know the story how Moses had to go time and again because Pharaoh reasoned within himself who is this God that I should follow and when Pharaoh tried to obstruct God, God was going to show him that my plan was not going to be obstructed by anyone and it went so far that God had to allow every eldest son in every house in Egypt that did not have blood on the doorpost God had allowed death to come into that house because he had a plan that no one was going to obstruct. They could look back and could also remember a deliverance whereby God delivered them as the story of the Exodus the story of how God took this nation out of Egypt. This nation that had served as slaves and the first time I saw it I laughed. Do you know that in the story of the Exodus before they went away from Egypt God said to them go to your neighbours house and go and borrow jewelry, gold, silver the first time I realised what was going on: God was actually ensuring them for all the work they did and after they received it God allowed them to leave with it.

God had a plan and no one was going to stand in his way not Pharaoh, not the Red Sea, not anything was going to stand in the way when God's plans was going to be put into operation. I do trust that we as God's people this morning if I can succeed in one thing that we could come to the realisation of seeing these things come in operation in our lives today irrespective of what happened. I was present when we received the sad news that Brother Godfreys son was murdered and I want to say to you that in such times and we can pretend as much as we like, and it does not matter who we are, when things like this happens and we look to God then only one of two things could happen either we will be shaken in our faith

and wonder, is it worth while to serve God, where is God, why? That is one possibility and I want to tell you and I'm not ashamed or afraid to say it, oh yes I also faced an experience in life where I had to stand still ,I had to stand still and get my spiritual composure back again I want to tell you life can shake you to the extreme that you will say I don't understand, even saying I don't want to know God.

That can happen or the other possibility and this is my purpose this morning the other possibility is that we can look to God and on the basis of my message this morning make three declarations and the declarations that we make is on the basis of my past experience with God because I have already experienced him and can say that he loves me with a love that cannot end. My God has a purpose for my life that nobody will be able to obstruct. My God has a salvation for me which I can prove. So that was the children of Israel they only had to look back to their Egypt experience and know that God is still there and in this 43rd chapter of Isaiah and the section I want to zero in this morning oh there is so many parts of this chapter that we could look at but I want to look at those two statements verse 10 and 12. In verse 10 where God says to the children of Israel he says "you are my witness" and in verse 12 he says "you are my witnesses and this is my message this morning, God calls us as the church in 1996 because he wants us to be witnesses. You are my witnesses when you look in the past what I did for you, you are my witnesses to what I have planted in you this morning, you are my witnesses that I have worked out a salvation which we can prove, and I want to say to you that the times that we are living in are not the same times that the church enjoyed not too long ago, things have changed. Things have changed in our country and the Christian faith and the Christian religion is no more enjoying that privileged position that once we knew, no more enjoying the favour of all those who governed, things have changed and in many respects God is calling the church today. You are my witnesses in these times irrespective of what will happen, irrespective of the situation, you are my witnesses that I love you. I love you with a love that will never cease. You are my witnesses that I have a plan that no one will obstruct, a plan for your lives. You will be my witnesses of my salvation for everyone to see.

I'm very interested to see that God is calling us to be witnesses. He is not calling us to argue about it, he is not calling us to fight about it, he is calling us to demonstrate, for he is calling us to prove it. I told the scholars that we are not here to prove God. If people don't want to believe God it's their problem we are not called to put God in a laboratory situation to prove him. I said to them if people want to argue with you and want you to prove God to them, that's not what God has calls us to do is to be a witness for Him. Acts 1:8 is a very popular Pentecostal text and there is no problem with it there's nothing wrong with it, it is such a strategic verse to us who belong to a Pentecostal church but lets notice what this verse says. Remember in Acts 1:8 the Lord says that you will receive power when the Holy

**Spirit comes upon you and then the verse goes on and you will be my witnesses. In other words you will receive power to be my witnesses, and I want to say to the church today that the time has come that we must stand up and be witness to these three things that the prophet Isaiah put before the nation of Israel let us work through them.**

**In the first place he says we must be a witness to a love that will never end, notice he was speaking to them in their captivity notice (I was already painting a picture of what they were going through the picture was simply that now they were not so free anymore to worship God. In fact a very nice picture of their captivity was found in chapter 42 verse 22-25.) "But this is a people robbed and plundered, all of them are snared in holes and they are hidden in prison-houses, they are as prey and no one delivered for plunder and no one says restore who will give ear to this? Who will listen in time to come? Who will give Jacob for plunder and Israel to the robber, was it not the Lord to whom we have sinned against".**

**What a situation! You can go and read Psalm 137 in many respects a very sad Psalm, because in Psalm 137 the servant says about their situation in captivity. He says that they sat down at the rivers of Babylon and they wept when they remembered Israel and when they remembered Canaan. It says that they hung their hearts on the willow. It says that the people in captivity are sent to sing a song of Zion. That Psalm 137 says that people of God could not sing a song of Zion because they said "how can we sing a song of Zion in this place. That was the situation in that place and even in spite of that, what Isaiah 43 verse 1 says notice that in spite of the fact that they were in that situation the Bible says the prophet says on behalf of God says fear not, "Fear not for I have redeemed you". Fear not because you are mine. I do not know who the Lord is talking to this morning but there might possibly be somebody who came through a trying situation where you were wondering where God is. Where you cried out for your salvation. Where is the solution?**

**God wants us to know this morning, not to fear because he still loves you. I love you, you are mine. John 10 says about all of us who are his. Jesus says no one will be able to plug them out of his hands and so about the love of God we must hear this morning what he says don't be afraid you are mine. Secondly in verse 4 and there are quite a few things in verse 4 about this love he also says that we are precious, verse 4 says were precious in my sight. It is so satisfying to know that even if nobody cares that he still loves me. Even though no one considers me anything, the Bible tells me that in Gods sight I am precious. The Bible says in Psalm 116, that you are precious in the sight of God.**

**Irrespective of the circumstances a child of God dies, the Bible says "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints" and so he wants us to know that we are precious this morning. Verse 4 does not only say that, it also goes on to say that you have been honoured, you have been honoured and this is again an experience that not many people have this privileged in life to experience many people are honoured for various things well**

God wants to say this morning that even though you were taken out of the pit of sin though you were that, today in my sight you are honoured. You know Ephesians tells us that positionally we are seated in heavenly places, we are seated there where the Lord is in heavenly places with our Lord Jesus Christ, and then verse 4 goes on also to say that God says to us I have loved you and again many people in life, in a very loveless life and a loveless situation of life can have one assurance if you are saved. Today you can know beyond a shadow of doubt that if no one loves you that the Lord says I have loved you. You know a person could spend the rest of this sermon just speaking of the unconditional, undeserved love that God has for us, it's a love that we never can and never will understand how it is that God could be able to love me and notice, love me in spite of my sin, love me in spite of who I am. We can never understand and explain how He could have love us so much even to die for us.

The Bible says there is no greater love than this that a man can be prepared to lay down his life. Someone and Jesus did that for you. Jesus did that for me. The prophet wants to say to us the church today firstly that God loves us with a love that will never end. Our love might end, our love might dry up. God wants to say to us that from His side His love for us is not going to end. Praise the Lord for that, secondly the prophet also wants the children of Israel to know that they must be a witness for God and of a plan that will not be obstructed and this aspect of theology, that I have always rejoiced in that I must acknowledge God in His Sovereignty. Sovereignty means that there is no one higher than God, Sovereignty means he is on the throne and he is the one who has control over everything that happens in this life and so verse one says the prophet says "fear not for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name and then verse 7 says "everyone who is called by my name, who I have created for my glory. I have created them for my glory, therefore the plan which has been worked out for my life is to glorify God.

One of the titles that God wants to be known by is that He is the Alpha and Omega. Only God can save us. He is saying in fact that He is the beginning of everything and with Him it's not a matter of what is going to happen. He says I'm the Alpha the beginning he goes on to say that I'm also the Omega- I am the end and it is like an arch, He is the beginning, He knows what the end is going to be and all the things that happens in between is in the control of God. I want to be careful and I don't want to be misunderstood, this is not entertaining fatalism. We do not believe in fate. We do not believe in 'what must happen, must happen. We are stating that God is Sovereign and that everything that happens in life will and can only happen in God's Sovereign and divine plan. I stand here this morning in a human capacity, and I must say that I don't always understand. I don't always understand the ways of God, we do not understand the will of God because we do not see the end the way God see it and many a time the things that happen in between causes me to wonder, causes me

to ask my question, but I must always remember that God also says that he is the Omega, he is the end and He is the one that in a sense will eventually put all the pieces together. Then we will see the finish product. I'm telling you many times when we see the product afterwards we stand back and say - yes God was right after all, he knew what he was doing, and we as God's people stand back and we praise him and we worship him.

Many times it's only when we see the reason why. So he says to the children of Israel - I have a plan and my plan I'm telling you is going to be that even though you are here in exile, even though it seems as if the sky is dark, even though it seems as if God is not to be found. I'm telling you that my plan is that I'm going to bring you back out of captivity. The history of the children of Israel tells us that as history went on another world power took over and a foreign-ruler was again in power and eventually God moved it so that this foreign world power made a declaration and said that the children of Israel can no longer go back to the promised land and if you read Psalm 125 where the psalmist also uses the illustration and he says when the Lord returned again the captivity, he said it was like a dream. They could not believe it. That is the power of God and I want us to know this morning as Gods people we not fear the future, this is one of the most exciting things of the Christian life that we can be assured that we need not fear the future because the God whom we serve already knows what the future is going to be like and I am bold this morning to say that he shows himself time and again he's proved himself time and time again even in the political scene we don't need to fear the future because God is in control politically.

He is in control historically, we don't need to fear what will happen. Many times I hear and I don't listen. Yes I am interested in the value of our Rand, yes I am interested in it's decline it is a not matter of concern to me so much, so that I sit with my head in my hands I believe God. I know that what happens historically the Lord is in control. I as an individual must be able to say and be honest about it that even though I do not understand even though I cannot see the outcome , I must honestly be able to say as an individual I don't fear because I know that my God is the one who has a plan that no one is going to thwart or overthrow. I am sure that most of us had bad experiences. I will not forget properly two years ago I had to attend a certain meeting that I feared and I said to the 'Lord if I can only climb of the face of the earth just for the week I will climb back on at the end of the week again' because I really feared it I knew that there was going to be fireworks. I prepared myself and said to myself today I'm going to loose my salvation! The problem looked so big but we will be surprised how God solves problems. I attended the meeting and you know the person that were the obstacle were not there. We hang our heads in shame to think that we doubt him and when he really comes through for us we are amazed.

That is the way God works, many times we find ourselves in situations where we cannot see the plan of God. We just cannot see. This morning we must believe he is the one sitting

on the throne, we must believe he has a worked out plan for our lives. Romans 8 verse 28 Yes there was a time in my life when this verse was used when things went well. I used it just when the good things came my way then we want to say "all things work together for good....."but when things go wrong we forget all things work together for good. This is unconditional and we as Christians must about all be able to say that all things work together for good. This is what God is telling his people through Isaiah. You might be in turmoil but it is going to work out. I'm telling you we have the history that the children came back out of captivity by means they thought not possible. God move in the heart of an unsaved king who said these people can go back to the promise land.

In the third place the prophet is also busy telling them that God wants them to be a witness to a deliverance that will never disappoint them. Verse 2 he says - and now we glory in these verses. When you pass through the waters I will be with you and when you go through the rivers they will not overflow you, when you walk through the fire you will not be burned nor shall the flame scorch you. God says not only will we not be burned, he also says that we will not even smell like smoke I think we must also admit this morning that God doesn't promise that we will not pass through waters. We must remain focussed. I went to fill up my car and the attendant asked what kind of work I was doing and I told him, immediately he started to reason and he tried to bring the kind of approach, then things are going well with you. I said no, we are still on this earth. Life is also lived just as you have to live it and I had to add this to it, I said this: it is how we handled life that is the difference. We must not be deceived. God is not promising that we will not get waters that we will have to go through. God is not promising that there will be a river in my life that I will not have to go through. God is not promising the church that we will face the situation that fire in front of us but what God is promising is that when you have water that's going to be deep that you will have to go through, he is promising that when you go through it I'm going to be with you. He is promising us when that river is in front of us and we got to get over there is no way around us to get over but he is promising that he will go through it with us. He is promising us that when that situation where it is like a dense fire in front of us he is promising us that when we face these fiery trials he is going to be with us so that the fire will not burn us and the fire and the flames will not scorch us.

The children of Israel could again look back to their own history and they could look back at the Red Sea experience. God did not remove the Red Sea he led them through it. The Bible says when the feet of the priests stepped into the river. It is significant to me that God waited till their feet was inside the river before the river opened and our Bible tells us that they went through on dry ground. They could think back of those three men who were thrown into the fiery furnace and the Bible says they were thrown into a fire that was heated more than it was usually heated, when they were thrown in even the very king who had ordered



them to be thrown in stood in amazement and his testimony is "were there not three men that we threw in? How is it that I see four men". God said I'll be with you when you go through it - Daniel in the lion's Den. The Bible talks about a den of lions and the Bible says when Daniel was thrown in God even shut the mouths of those lions, that they did not touch Daniel. Paul in 2 Cor. 11 testifies of all the experiences that he have had he could not testify about them which means that out of all the experiences God had delivered him. Steven was martyred. Let us look closely at the story of Steven. He was martyred yes, but God allowed that the heavens be opened and Steven could look into and see how the son of God looking upon him and giving him a signal, Steven I am with you.

So the Lord God wants us to know the church this morning that he is going to be with us that he has the deliverance for us about which we are going to stand amaze. We will today, tomorrow and all the days ahead come up against situations where we will look for a way out. The prophet is saying unto the children of Israel, you are my witnesses to a salvation that I will bring about. So in closing let me say this morning I take out of chapter 43 he says "you are my testimonies". Let the people out there not wonder but let them see the testimonies. Let us this morning continue to testify the love that we know, of a love that will never end and we know of a plan that God has for our lives and even though we cannot always understand it but we testify that the plan will come fruition. Let us be a witness 3rdly of a deliverance that our God will give us a deliverance that we will enjoy. I trust that as I have also heard the word of God this morning that when we leave this place willing to be a testimony for him, for his name sake Amen.

## **Pentecostal Holiness Minister**

I want to greet everybody, Bro. Gorman, Sis. Gorman, every friend, every visitor, every believer, in the name of our Lord. He is still on the throne; he is still the same. The chorus writer says there is no one like him. He is yesterday, today and forever, the same. We might change, believers might change, but Jesus will remain the same. If we can get the same attitude that was in Christ Jesus, then, I believe, we would be better Christians and I am privileged to be in this presence.

Let us page to Luke 9:57. (Reading of Scripture) The Lord blesses the reading of his word. The title of the message is shortly, very shortly, "Priorities." What are our priorities? What are your and my priorities in godliness? Here we stand this morning, blood washed in the precious blood of the Lamb, but what comes first in my life, what needs to come first, now that I am a child of God? Shouldn't Christ come first in my life? Shouldn't he receive number one in my life? Now that I have accepted him as my personal Lord and Saviour, what comes first in my life? Does my work come first? Does my business come first? Does my wife come first or does my children come first? What comes first in my life? The time has arrived brethren that we as children of God, should get our priorities in order. Why should there be so many empty seats in the house of the Lord? Why is the prayer meetings so empty? Why are the people so lax to come up to the house of the Lord especially on a Sunday evening? Are our priorities right? Does Jesus really come first in our lives, or, are we different persons – one at work and someone else at church?

The time has arrived, we are living in the last days. We are living in the days where the coming of the Lord is in the thresh-hold. We should decide if Christ really comes first in our lives. Are we really children of God, or, are we Christians when Sunday mornings arrive, then we know to get dressed and go to church. We read here in Luke 9:57. He says something very dangerous, something he might not have understood at the point of time, because to move with God meant that you would have to accept anything. Jesus gave him an answer. He says, "Foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay down his head." In other words, my friend, you have to be prepared to sleep anywhere. If you want to move with Jesus, then you must expect anything. You must expect to be on the road for days. You have to expect to go without food for days. You have to be prepared to sleep between the mountains and that is what Jesus was trying to tell him. The birds of the air have nests, foxes have holes, but the Son of Man has no place to lay down his head.

Are you prepared to always go when he does? Another one come up to him. The Lord says, "Follow me." He answers, "Lord, allow me first to bury my father." Jesus answers him, "Let the dead bury their own dead." You must set out your priorities in life. When you have made a promise to follow the Lord, you have to put in your heart and soul in the matter. The two blind men of Jericho, they were sitting there along the road. They heard the crowd passing by. They had a need. They were blind. They cried out, "Son of David, be merciful unto us!" Jesus stops. He touches their eyes. What they then did, was to follow Jesus. They decided to follow Jesus because their eyes had been opened. They have been healed of their blindness. They decided in their lives, "I must follow Jesus. I must not turn around and do my own thing. I must do what is right and that is to follow him, because my eyes have been opened." This brethren, we look in these days. That is why the churches are so empty, that is why the people do not have the desire to come to church, because their priorities are wrong. They lost too much along the line with Jesus. He is no longer number one. He is

somewhere at the back, but be encouraged this morning, and place Jesus number one and then others.

Is it not he who saved you? Is it not he who took you out of the muddy pool of sin? Is it not he who wakes us every morning and gives us strength to go to work? Is it not Jesus? He needs to be number one. If your priority in Christ is not in check, get it right please brother and sister. The times that we are living in are evil. We can place God one side. We need to have him on our side. Zacchaeus heard that Jesus was passing by. He got into a fig tree. He was sitting there. Jesus told him, "Zacchaeus get down. Today I want to visit your house." Zacchaeus made bold confession. He said, "Lord, if I have robbed someone, I will give it back double." After Jesus came into his house, his first priority was to confess the things which he had done wrong. His priority was right. He asked for forgiveness of what he had done. Therefore, brother and sister, you must decide which side you are on. Are you on the Lord's side, or are you not with the Lord? You must decide if Jesus really is in your life, if Jesus really is number one in your life.

Another one comes to Jesus and asks, "Lord, first let me part from my family members." Jesus answered him, "No one who puts his hand to the plough and looks back is fit for the Kingdom of God." He first wanted to do his own things, he wanted to see which one is more important than the other; he wanted to see which way is the Lord's. Therefore the Lord answered him and said that anyone who puts his hand to the plough and looks back is not fit for the Kingdom of God. We cannot afford to look back brethren. We had put our hands to the plough, therefore, we must look ahead. We must look at the price that was paid for us. If your priorities are correct then you will not worry about what is in the past because you cannot change the past. We can achieve things but we cannot boast in them. We must boast in Christ Jesus which came to change our lives. Therefore we should not look back this morning. Rather get your priorities straight in the Lord. Tell the Lord this morning that he will be number one in your life. The time has arrived that you will start serving him in spirit and truth. Many people place their wives first. Many people place their children first. Many people place their business first, but this morning, make sure that Jesus Christ takes number one seat in your life. The past week I had a problem – somebody threatened me. This man is so filled with evil he was determined to do what he said. I wanted to go to the police but I changed my mind, I rather came to the sisters. I went to Pastor and his wife and to the sisters. We then laid the matter before the Lord and the Lord solved the matter. I want to say in this same statement, that the Lord proved himself in this matter. The priority was to pray and not to do my own thing because my thoughts are not God's thoughts and God's thoughts are not my thoughts. My first priority was that I should have prayed about the matter.

When God saw I was putting him first in the matter, he solved it. You see, you must put God first in your life. A lot of people place different things first in their lives. You can every time; it is my car; my car. Christ should be first in your life. If he is not first in your life, then nothing else should be first in your life. The Lord grant us grace and help us. We put our hands to the plough brethren. We said, "Lord, we are going to follow you. Wherever you go, I will follow." We made a promise to God. Is the promise still standing? Are we still standing in the calling, or, are we still standing in the promise which we made the time when we came to the Lord. Let us get our priorities with the Lord right. Let us do what we have to do, brethren, and I believe this morning, if we will do it, then God will surely bless us. If you are

unemployed, and you place him first, he will bless you. If you do not work, and you place him first, he will give you work.

The Lord first, then your work, then your debts and your family because when you don't work, then you will not be able to pay your debts. Therefore, you have to work. It should become priority in your life. The things will come. I believe this morning that we will honestly place the first thing first. We see that David placed God first in his life and therefore he could have done that which he did. He was faced with problems. He knew where to go when faced with troubles. Then he could conquer lions,. He could conquer bears. So we can go through the bible and look at men of God who placed God first in their lives.

The question we need to ask ourselves this morning is, "Who comes first in my life?" Grant us grace, Lord. The Lord is good, brethren. His grace is overflowing and his love is so big. Therefore we have no choice but to put God first in everything. Let God grant us grace that we might not place him second in our lives. May the Lord help us that in the time of need, in times of trouble, in times of difficult situations, whatever it might be, let us place Christ Jesus first in life. Many of us think when things are not going well, then things is not going right at home. Many of us just acknowledge him when there is not money, but you will have to place him first even in the good times. That is why I want to advise you this morning, you will know what it is to be first for services. Then I will know, Monday evenings are prayer meetings. Then I will know, Wednesday evenings are cottage meetings. Then I will know, Thursday evenings are praise and testimony. Then I will know Friday night is prayer night, because your priorities in the Lord are right.

It shall be in your heart because you will know where your priorities are and that is to be in the house of the Lord. If you have not reached that stage in your life, you have not come to that point, then I want to come to the point this morning and to that place where Christ must come first in your life. May the Lord bless these words and grant us grace to help us put him first . Amen.

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