

**PENTECOSTALISM AND DELIVERANCE OR EXORCISM?
NARRATIVES FROM THE BENEFICIARIES AND BENAFACTORS
IN LAGOS, NIGERIA.**

By

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PREAMBLE.

Pentecostalism is generally regarded as one stream within the Armenian evangelical tradition and places a strong emphasis upon a further experience after conversion, namely, the baptism in the Holy Spirit signified by speaking in tongues, prophecies, visions, healing, deliverance and miracles in general, perceived as standing in historic continuity with the experiences of the early church as found in Acts of the Apostles.¹

Pentecostalism has become an increasingly prominent feature of Africa's religious and political landscape. The movement's growth has been particularly dramatic since the era of decolonization in the 1950s and 1960s. According to recent figures from the world Christian database, Pentecostals now represent 12% or about 107 million, of Africa's population of nearly 890 million people.² This includes individuals who belong to classical Pentecostal denominations or Christian organizations like the Assemblies of God, The Apostolic Church, the Apostolic Faith Mission, that were founded in the early 20th century, as well as those who belong to the Pentecostal

¹ Kwabena Asamoah – Gyadu. African Charismatics: Pentecostalism in Ghana (Koninklijke Brill N.V. Leiden, The Netherlands, 2005), 12.

² www.pewforum.org/surveys/pentecostal/countries/ The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life 1615L Street, NIV Suite 700 Washington, DC 2003.6-5610,2009, 202.419,4550.4559

denominations or churches formed recently such as the Deeper Life Christian Bible Church, the Redeemed Christian Church of God, Living Faith Church world wide etc. in Nigeria.

Charismatic members of non-Pentecostal denominations, who in Africa are drawn mainly from Catholic and Protestant Churches and African Independent Churches (AICs), number an additional 40 million, or approximately 5% of the population. Fast tracking back to the 1970, Pentecostals and Charismatics combined represented less than 5% of Africans. Many scholars have tried to explain the phenomenon rise of Pentecostalism in Africa and the conclusion is that Pentecostalism has risen in order to meet certain real and felt needs which the institutionalized churches could not meet.³

PENTECOSTALS AND CHARISMATICS IN AFRICA

	1900	1970	1990	2005
Pentecostals and charismatics (in millions)	0.9	17.0	93.7	146.9
Pentecostals and Charismatic as percentage total population	0.8	4.8	15.2	16.6

Source: **World Christian Encyclopedia (2001) and World Christian Database (2006).**

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

³ C.C. Baeta. *Prophetism in Ghana*. (London: SCM, 1962), 104

The aims and objectives of this paper are:

1. To intentionally motivate the readers to appreciate the way Pentecostalism engages the less travelled terrains by the mainline churches and which science dismisses as unverifiable, secularism as superstitious and primitive contemplation.
2. To state that some of the Pentecostal leaders and practitioners especially within the area of the research were graduates of Western education . This meant that they knew their benefits, experiences and implications of their narratives to the readers.
3. To show that I value this research hence my being directly involved in interviewing, summarizing, evaluating, analyzing and synthesizing the authenticity of the narratives from the beneficiaries and the benefactors.
4. To present the readers with an informed argument that the core of Pentecostalism is a phenomenon of deliverance or exorcism. Conceptually, most of the phenomena of Pentecostal and charismatic movements are meant to bring deliverance to whoever needs help, be it economic, political medical, cultural etc and are seen from the spiritual (metaphysical) to the natural (physical). This explains why sometimes even some of those who are born-again relapse to born-against lane and keep coming to the pastor for further deliverance from other aspects of their lives. The total necessary salvation and

freedom from oppressive spiritual and physical forces attract most Lagosians to Pentecostalism. Lagos has been chosen because most of the vibrant Pentecostal churches are found here, some of the Pentecostal exports have their “International Ports” here and it is the miniature of Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Pentecostalism at the moment represents the most cogent, powerful and visible evidence of religious renewal and influence in Nigeria, especially in the city of Lagos. Lagos city prides itself as “The Center of Excellence”. It was once the administrative and commercial capital of Nigeria. It is still the commercial capital of Nigeria. According to the National Bureau of Statistics on Industrialization 2000-2010, there are more industries in Lagos than in other cities of Nigeria. The Lagos State Population Commission (2010) stated that Lagos is thickly populated and most tribes in Nigeria, West African States and peoples from other African countries and non-African nations live and work here. During an Interaction with the Lagos State Commissioner of Urban and Town Planning (May2011), Hon Toyin Ayinde, an elder of the Day Star Church, Oregun, Lagos, the city of Eko (Lagos) is one of the fastest growing urban centers in the world and first in Nigeria. Life in this city is full of complexities and spiritual challenges. This explains why Pentecostalism has flourished here and the exports are seen in other cities within and without Nigeria. There appears to be more

churches in Lagos than both the Private and Government industries put together. Not even filling (gas stations or petrol stations) can outnumber worship houses or places in Eko. Church enterprise is flourishing here very well.

Indeed, this is a city very much over stretched in terms of social and private facilities because of greater village-urban migration. Everyday people come into the city in thousands; they carry with them their village support systems like gods and goddesses, chickens, goats, dogs, sheep, donkeys, cultures etc . There is also the township-urban migration(people from townships moving into Lagos Metropolis), urban-urban migration (people of other cities in Nigeria moving to Lagos City), and the diaspora-urban migration to Lagos(most Nigerians who were living in cities of other nations returning back to Nigeria and choosing to live in Lagos). This pull to Lagos is mainly because of the multiple survival opportunities found in Eko.

When all these people come together, a second level of identity called Lagosian is created. Everybody in Lagos is expected to behave as a Lagosian (being very daring, rough, at times behaving unconventionally and sometimes being law abiding but in most cases doing what one feels is right according to his or her own set standard). Since multiple and complex problems, needs and wants follow and confront city sleeks , there is always a quest for safety, shelter, health, food, clothing, prosperity, social stability and above all spiritual supremacy. With all these uncertainties and a bleak

future, an average Lagosian easily becomes a prey of the invading Pentecostal army of the indoctrinated recruits whose chief message is “come to our church, Papa, meaning God, will solve all your problems.” Sometimes the word, “papa or Mama” is used when referring to the founder. This has created a less resistance wave for Pentecostalism in Lagos city and its nearby ecologies. Since papa or mama is available to solve problems, naturally people tend to flock to such places even without investigating to ascertain the veracity of the invitation. Most Lagosians believe that some churches have actually been able to meet some of their needs. This assertion has been buttressed by some notable men of God like Bishop Dr. Mike Okonkwo of The Redeemed Evangelical Mission, Pastor Sam Adeyemi of the Day Star Church, Pastor (Dr.) G.O. Olutola, President of The Apostolic Church Nigeria and Prophet (Dr.) Sam Ayorinde of World Evangelism Bible Church International

Pentecostalism is itself a movement that relies on direct experience of the divine rather than on codified beliefs, creeds or philosophies. One of the key features of primal spirituality is the belief in an invisible realm of benevolent and malevolent transcendent powers.⁴ Humankind not only stands in need of the powers and blessings of the benevolent beings, but may actually appropriate their protection from evil spiritual forces through covenant relationship with the transcendent benevolent helpers.

⁴ Kwabena Asamwah-Gyadu, 17.

Pentecostalism is popular in African cultures like that of Nigeria because it affirms the reality of God and other supernatural entities. Demons who seek to destroy the Christian and angels as transcendent helpers both feature in the Pentecostal world view.⁵

The Pentecostal movement initially drew a lot of converts from the lower strata of the society and also from the mainline historic or mission-related churches who have maintained rigid and hostile barriers to any kind of accommodation with and absorption of cosmological elements. These primal considerations, as was discovered in Lagos, Nigeria, also came to function strongly in the neo-Pentecostal or charismatic movements and to a large extent also provided one of the bases for the rise of the Deliverance and Prophetic Ministries with their specific message of prosperity and well-being. Most Lagosians talk about this freely in public that “any church we no fit do deliverance no go get tori and peoples.” Meaning, any church whose ministries or programmes exclude deliverance will not have the message and people.

The belief in the imminent pre-millennial and return of Christ became the primary motivation for evangelization and mission.⁶ Pentecostalism has always been a missionary and deliverance movement in foundation and

⁵ Alex Ofosu. A critical Assessment of Montanism with an Assessment of its implication for African Pentecostalism. Dissertation submitted for MTh. Degree (Bangor University, UK. 2009), 35.

⁶ David A. Shank. Prophet Harris: ‘The Black Elijah’ of West Africa. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994), 6.

essence. It emerged with a firm conviction that the Spirit had been poured out in “signs” and “wonders” in order for nations of the world, including Nigeria and her cities like Lagos, to be reached for Christ before the end of the age.⁷

Innate pessimism about deteriorating condition of the world, especially Africa and Nigeria in particular and Lagos for that matter where a number of Area boys (homeless boys) and Area girls (homeless girls) sleep under the bridges, street children scavenging food from rubbish heaps and containers, multiple sanitation challenges and other life threatening spiritual forces, is thought to have contributed significantly to the intensification of restoration and deliverance yearnings. Various Pentecostal and charismatic movements emerged in history all in an attempt not only to preserve but also to restore the spirit of the news and the Apostolic faith of the early church in the changing conditions of each ensuing generation. To buttress this, Harvey noted thus:

The story of the first Pentecost has always served as an inspiration for people who are discontented with the way religion or the world in general is going. They turn to it because it is packed with promises. It seems to presage a big change, and people believed that the future will be different because it will transform the way they feel about the present.⁸

⁷ A. Anderson. *Spreading Fires, the Missionary Nature of Pentecostalism*. (London, SCM Press, 2007), 294.

⁸ Harvey Cox. *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostalism, Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-First Century*. (Reading. MA: Addison – Wesley, 1995), 245.

I think Harvey is right here because day in and day out Pentecostalism continues to turn out a bunch of optimistic converts and disciples who see this world in a context of victory and progressive betterment in the power of the Holy Spirit.

CLARIFICATION OF TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Pentecostalism has grown out of humankind's efforts to engage collective behavior and the traces (history-Pentecost) that behavior leaves (for new members of the family to grow up on—contemporary church). The practice of humans trying to understand the issues of collective behavior has been going on for a long time. One of the ironies of modernist thought is the tendency to divorce current interpretations of experience from the historical and embodied nature of life and the history of the planet and cosmos. Darwin's contribution to modernism is, in my opinion, what catapulted us into the post modern era. Darwin's ideas made it essential that we look at history and our place as organisms in that history. Much of the sense of the term "participation" is derived from our complex and embodied experiences as living organisms.

Deliverance as a concept and term may mean different things to different readers. To begin the process of building, new concepts and ideas through a guided apprenticeship is critical. Concepts provide mental categories for sorting, organizing, and storing experience in memory. Abstraction on the other hand is the formation of an idea by mental

separation in particular instances, these skills are due in part to the need that arose with the development of language to reduce the complexity of lived experience. To “Chunk” our already categorized experience into manageable and memorable bits of information is an amazing ability. There is cost to this however. Context and the immediacy of participation can be eclipsed by a too intense focus on abstractions. The interplay between our own experience and the world of ideas is what it is all about: Some scholars have advocated multiple perspectives in understanding the phenomena of Pentecostalism especially Deliverance and or exorcism.

A word on multiple perspectives

I have two initial thoughts on multiple perspectives. First, I am struck by the complexity of our cultural history and our cultural/resources(personal and collective). This complexity makes any one totalizing description or view impossible. There is simply too much information at hand and too many locations and situations to fully comprehend. This, in itself, is humbling.

Secondly I think there may be some behavioural – even evolutionarily developed, impediments to the taking of multiple perspectives. That is, we may be constitutionally impeded from seeing the world through multiple lenses. The reason for this is, in my view, due to the importance of having a cultural view that both defines and anchors our identity and sense of self. This “view” is fundamental to our survival. To be ostracized or shunned

from community was (and I think is still) the kiss of death. Rejecting out rightly a given perspective is like ostracizing the owner of that perspective.

There are three things at play here:

1. The biological and social aspects of conditioning and adaptation.
2. Learning is a process of reinforcement of certain kinds of behavior and thinking.
3. Language allows us to “skate over” distinctions in the abstract.

We all come from somewhere and this “coming from” is a huge factor in our day to day consciousness. I may be able to define, identify, or categorize a ‘perspective’ but that doesn’t mean that I can see the world from that perspective and through that lens. I see the world from my lens. My lens is a product of my culture. My culture is located in space and time and has very definite characteristics and assumptions. My perspective is what makes things “real” for me. It seems to me that very few people actually embrace multiple perspectives.

One of the reasons that ontology is such a difficult area of philosophy is because in order to really get to the point of understanding “reality” of something we have to commit ourselves to a perspective. In making that commitment we necessarily cut ourselves from other perspectives. The most we are able to do, it seems to me, is to learn to respect and listen to other perspectives and perhaps learn and change our perspective just a bit

What is interesting to me in reading Mary Jo Hatch's work is that she takes the idea of multiple perspectives as relatively unproblematic – she seems to assume that one can just decide to be “committed to maintaining multiple perspectives in organization theory”.⁹ Her approach, in my view, is a modernist one in that she assumes by understanding the conceptual nature of a perspective we can somehow transcend the embodied nature of a perspective on our consciousness. I don't think it is that easy. Underlying the notion of “transformation” is the idea that there has to be a deeper and more systemic change, how exactly that happens is debatable. Certainly, however, it seems to take practice, discipline, and focus. I believe that merely an intellectual appreciation of the conceptual and abstract nature of these ideas is insufficient. The most important driving intention here is for the reader to try and adjust his/her position and critically conceptualize the reality of deliverance depicted by the narratives. Therefore, the following terms are assigned the below meanings:

- (a) Pentecostalism: This is the institutionalization of the belief in the active operation of the Holy Spirit in the modern Church age by the overlaying and imbuing of the practicing Christian believer with multiple spiritual gifts for personal edification and perfecting of the Christian community and by extension for holistic benefit of the entire human race. In simple terms, it is the belief in the baptism of the

⁹Mary Jo Hatch . *Organization Theory: Modern, Symbolic, and Post Modern Perspectives*. (2nd ed.) (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 176

Holy Ghost, as an imbuelement of power signified by speaking in tongues and other practices acceptable to the Pentecostal circle and some other Christian persuasions.

(b) Deliverance: This is an old practice even before the birth of the Church. Jesus Christ was fond of using the practice during his earthly ministry. This is the practice whereby individuals or communities are set free through the expulsion of demons or evil forces that have either afflicted the victims with infirmities or stagnated the community's social progress. This has been evidenced by delay in marriages, joblessness, miscarriages, divorce cases, sexual pervasions etc and lack of progress in most communities where witchcraft and other traditional practices are made to dominate peoples' lives. But when deliverance is exercised in the community in the name of Jesus Christ, there has always been a dramatic transformation. Anything less than this may be similar to deliverance but it is not deliverance by Pentecostal's definition.

c. Exorcism. Sometimes this is also referred to as Deliverance but it is foreign to Pentecostalism. In the Catholic Church only the ordained priest can do exorcism or deliverance. It is a standing order that an exorcist is to be a priest (sacerdos) not a presbyter (presbyterus) as in the canon, which means bishops as well as presbyters may be appointed exorcists. The priest must have specific preparation for this office. During our research in Lagos,

we met with some Pentecostal pastors like Pastor T.B. Ogundele, of The Apostolic Church, Oregun District, Lagos; Pastor Bola Idowu, President, Harvesters International Christian Center , Bagada, Lagos, Pastor Oloyo, Guided Missiles Church, Ikeja, and Pastor Ikena, Senior Pastor Kingdom against Kingdom Church Lagos who did not want us to use the term exorcism because the leaders of their organizations associate exorcists with people using ancestral powers, wizardism etc. Exorcism is practiced also by African Traditional Medicine and Family or community Healers (ATMFCH). The practice is also found in other world or localized religions like Islam, Hinduism, Taoism etc. It also involves the casting out of demons from an individual or group and giving such spiritual forces orders (sometimes after a brief dialogue with the exorcist) to move out of the individual or community to their new abode as requested by the demons or decided by the exorcist. This also happens during most deliverance services. Most Pentecostal ministers prefer the term deliverance to exorcism. Therefore, in this paper, deliverance is used instead of exorcism and not even interchangeably.

(c) Narratives. This refers to re-telling of the lived experiences by the people who were disenfranchised by the demons or evil forces before they were delivered and the joy of their new life in Christ with all the rights and privileges of Christian believers. It also refers to how the Pentecostal Ministers tell their stories about deliverance

(d) Beneficiaries: This refers to those who have benefited from the activities of Pentecostal deliverance ministers.

(e) Benefactors: This refers to the Pentecostal Ministers who through the unction of the Holy Ghost have yielded wholly to spiritual discipline and exercise of spiritual gifts for the benefit of the Church and those outside the Church, as a means of winning souls for Christ through individual or community deliverance.

This paper therefore explored deliverance as a phenomenon of Pentecostalism, in that , its coming has led some Pentecostal Ministers/Pastors to tread on grounds that the mainline churches had earlier either ignored or are being challenged to investigate. It is likely and in some cases when Pentecostalism comes to the community, there seemed to be a remarkable change in the peoples' view of and about their self worth and the willingness to confess their inner burdens with the belief that the Holy Spirit has the power to make such an individual or community better. This paper states the methodology used during the research, the discussion of the narratives, Styles of Deliverance, outcomes and the conclusion.

Methods

My research involved two studies. The first and smaller study took place in the pilot stage in Jos city and the field one in western Nigeria with the Principal Investigator, Senior Researcher and the Research Assistants in

2010. During this time we interviewed few Pentecostal leaders, observed some of their services, took pictures, video recorded of some events, interviewed some members and bought a large amount of literature on Pentecostalism authored mainly by the Nigerian Pentecostal leaders. We also bought CDS, DVDS, Cassettes, and other relevant materials.

These were meant to enable us gain a sense of how and if Pentecostalism was expressed at the Churches or Christian institutions across western Nigeria. Based on the data from this initial study, Lagos was identified as having a strong culture of Pentecostalism as a result of the work of the Pentecostal leaders there. Data from the study indicated that Pentecostal members' participation at this city's churches included members participating in professional development with the leaders and use of members' focus groups to inform Pentecostal practice. In addition, the earlier city focus groups' data included compelling testimonials from several Pentecostal members attending churches who ascribed their successes in this particular metropolis to Pentecostalism's deliverance.

The second, larger study took place in 2011, during conventions, Holy Ghost Congress, Revivals, Crusades, Church, services, Conferences, workshops, ordination and deliverance services and Power Must Change Hands services in Lagos and other western Nigeria cities. In this cases, I used action research methods. The General Overseers, Presidents and Presiding Bishops plus their administrative teams were actively involved and

working to provide the needed information for the research. As a result, instead of using a more traditional form of research, I chose action research as a methodology. According to Stringer, action research is an inquiry that is done by or with insiders in a school, but never to or on them.”¹⁰ In this case my inquiry was beyond Stringer’s definition here. My action was done with the insiders for better desired results. The use of action research was also a natural fit because of the transformational possibilities it offered in building the capacity of Pentecostal leaders by “generating local knowledge back into the setting”.¹¹ This helps in enhancing members’ voices at any Pentecostal setting. Also, action research is based on the principles of collaboration, democratic participation, social justice and empowerment. These are the same principles that undergird meaningful beneficiaries’ voice efforts after deliverance.

The purpose of the 2011 study was to explore a number of Pentecostal phenomena. These included dramatic preaching, prophecies, women in leadership healings, miracles, types of anointing breaking of curses, exorcism or deliverance, child witches, prayers, etc. Out of the large data gathered on Pentecostal phenomena, I have picked a phenomenon of deliverance which I see as core to most Pentecostal activities especially in

¹⁰ E.T. Stringer. *Action Research*. (3rd ed.). (Thousand Oaks, C.A: Sage Publications, 2007), 3.

¹¹ K. Herr & G.L. Anderson. *The Action Research Dissertation: A guide for students and Faculty*. (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 2005), iv.

Lagos. Most Pentecostals and Charismatics in Lagos believed that one can not have wealth, education, and successes without some form of deliverance.

The questionnaire instrument was perfected with the eagle eyes of a dogged consultant, Dr Katrina Korb. Also, interview questions were developed and administered accordingly. Greater aspects of Pentecostal phenomena involved active participation and observation. This would always make the members and leaders feel the researcher's acceptability. For example in 2010, during our pilot research, I went with a research assistant to one church in Jos Metropolis. After the usual offerings, there was a call by the pastor for everybody to "unlock heaven" with tangible offerings with a view to bringing favour to ourselves and families. This was to be a process leading to financial deliverance. Everyone was asked to come forward and drop the "unlock heaven" offering with the mandate to role down severally at the altar. I participated actively. Later, the Research Assistant expressed his shock that I could go that deep in the research through participation. My reply was that I needed to "unlock heaven", unfortunately, this is 2012 and it's almost calling 2013 to come to us yet I am still on the waiting list for the returns of that tangible offering to "unlock heaven". May be my heaven's padlock has been changed, no one can tell. Or I need to repeat this deliverance based on prophetic injunction. However, I may need to prepare for another tangible offering to end the year 2012 and open the New Year 2013.

Furthermore the research was to explore how the beneficiary voice was expressed at Lagos churches and to identify the role the leaders played in fostering a culture of meaningful narratives.

In short, did the Pentecostal churches in Lagos promote, authorized and validate the ideas and insights of the respondents to improve the church and the members learning needs for deliverance? Because of the collaborative nature of action research, I met frequently with the Generals¹² and their administrative teams to plan the design of the study, collect data, and analyze some of the results. The beneficiaries and the Benefactors plus the administrators were interviewed for the study. In collecting data from the Beneficiaries of Pentecostalism, deliverance for that matter, I interviewed respondents in focus groups of no more than twenty persons. Because we wanted members to have an active role in the study, members were recruited from focus groups to participate as “ Pentecostal Researchers” (PRS). I trained them on interviewing techniques and collaborated with them in revising the interview questions so they were more “Pentecostal friendly”. The use of “Pentecostal Researchers” (PRs) also ensured we had broad representation of Pentecostal participants in the study while creating an environment where Pentecostal and especially deliverance beneficiaries might be more open to sharing their lived experiences and insights with peers. The “Pentecostal Researchers” selected any one hundred Pentecostals

¹² Generals: This refers to General Overseers, General Superintendents, Presiding Bishops, Presidents, General Prophets and Evangelists plus any other title or rank in use by the Nigeria Pentecostal churches in Lagos.

of their choosing to interview, using the same questions that were asked of the focus groups. I interviewed the Generals, Administrators, Superintendents, Pastors and selected church officers plus the direct beneficiaries and benefactors of Pentecostal phenomena, including the phenomenon of deliverance individually. In our sample list, we have interviewed or recorded five hundred persons' voices (300 females and 200 males) in addition to the questionnaires.

NARRATIVES FROM THE BENEFICIARIES

There is a sizeable amount of data collected from the field and the process is still on going. The Researcher with the help of the Pentecostal leaders, interviewed most of the beneficiaries face to face. Where there was need for an interpreter, it was promptly addressed. To buttress the relevance of the contributions of Pentecostalism in total transformation of individuals and communities through deliverance, I have decided to bring forward some few narratives from the beneficiaries and benefactors in our data base.

The people whose narratives are penned down here are seemingly ordinary people, but harboured shocking secrets that will shake off the naivety of casual Christians. In their nefarious past, they ran sinister errands for the powers of darkness, to the detriment of humanity. But through Pentecostal activities of deliverance in Lagos, they were delivered. I now set the stage ready for the narratives/testimonies:

(A) My name is Blessing,¹³ I hail from Kwale town in Ndokwa East Local Government Area of Delta, Nigeria. My parents actually initiated me into the marine world. The initiation ceremony took place during New Yam Festival. The ritual was supervised by a witch doctor who sprinkled the blood of a sacrificial animal on my head three times. I also ate the food prepared with raw blood of the sacrificed animal. The witch doctor had told my parents that I came into the physical world from the marine and should be regarded with all the courtesies accorded to such people. The rituals were observed at regular intervals as years rolled by, until I turned eight. That year, my parents became born again Christians and in keeping with their new faith, they stopped the rituals and sacrifices. Then the torment began. The powers of darkness and their agents began to express their displeasure at the fact that my parents had opted to serve God. So I was afflicted with all sorts of ailments that defied medical diagnosis and treatment. It was then I had a full and vivid encounter with the marine world. Blessing gave a long narrative. The following were some of the key points from the narrative:

- (i) That one young boy called Leonard during his primary school days took her to the river bank under the influence of a

¹³ Blessing. Interviewed on 15/5/2011. World Evangelism Bible Church, Lagos, Nigeria.

strong force. Both of them went to the bottom of the river where she saw many people waiting for her initiation.

(ii) She tacitly claimed to have been received by the Queen of the Coast with much delight. She was then given a cup of blood to drink. That a handsome figure like Satan appeared briefly. To her, this was quite different from the misleading figure of the devil portrayed by most Nigerian churches and writers show-casing Satan as ugly, black, with pointed tails, stumpy horns, and carrying pitch forks.

(iii) That she was then returned to the physical world with the mandate to ruin the lives of many people. That she spent three days in the river and was given all the weapons to be used against unsuspecting humanity.

(iv) Blessing claimed her parents did not notice or suspect anything except her excuses of not wanting to attend church services. Also, that at times there were some noticeable physical changes in her body. For example, that for weeks, she would look really pretty, but after that would become very, very ugly. She assumed these organic and cyclical changes were inexplicable to them (her parents).

(v) That her state of affairs remained the same for several years until she moved to Lagos, Nigeria; from here again she ran

into Leonard at a friend's house. That he then made an appointment with her by the Bar Beach from where a female figure that was a half-human and a half fish met with them.

- (vi) That a marriage was conducted between her and a marinate under the Lagos waters. That she was given gifts that made her irresistible to men. They were drawn to her like a magnet. Principal among the wedding "gifts" were three female private parts – that the first of a serpent, the second of a scorpion, and the third of fish. She claimed to have had a special underwear and rings. With the rings, all she needed was to tap any man on the shoulder three times and such a man would be at her command.
- (vii) Blessing claimed that some herbalists and false prophets used to come to her for help. That She knew many of them in Lagos whose prophecies were directed from the marine world.

DELIVERANCE

This was what Blessing had to say regarding her deliverance: A sister invited me to the World Evangelism Bible Church in Lagos. It was a Tuesday Miracle service. As the service progressed, the man of God declared it to be a Deliverance Service, and asked those who needed deliverance to come out.

As I made to come out, the spirit in me violently resisted the move. But it seemed as if a greater force was propelling me to come out, so I went out to the altar. As the man of God began to pray, the marine spirit in me commanded me to go back to my seat. But as I turned back to go, I lost consciousness. That was the beginning of my deliverance.

After that episode, I was asked to fast for seven days. But two days into the fasting, the torment resumed. The marine group that I belong to began to unleash its anger on me for daring to leave them. Belial himself appeared to me in a dream and threatened to kill me for daring to break our covenant. He wondered who would take care of the children.

In an attempt to carry out his threat, Belial appeared to me in the physical, in broad day light and tried to rape me. I began to plead the Blood of Jesus and the Holy Ghost fire. Surprisingly, Belial disappeared! As a matter of fact I have not seen or heard from him since then. And to the glory of God, the torment has ceased. My deliverance is now complete. Praise Jesus! Amen.

Blessing's narrative may appear very weird and too good to be true, but this is what Pentecostalism is engaging in Lagos. The General Overseer Prophet Dr Samson Ayorinde and elders of the church confirmed the narrative to be authentic and that Blessing's life has changed for the best and now has a stable job. At the time of the interview, she was preparing for

her wedding. However, there was no external evidence either medically or otherwise to further authenticate this affirmation of the church leaders.

(B) TITILAYO¹⁴

At the time I interviewed this lady, she was 30 years old. But looking at her, it was hard to believe because her physique and mannerism were those of a young teenager. Her association with witchcraft had stunted her growth. As she sat and gave insights into the operations of the witchcraft group to which she once belonged, her childlike façade masked the murky depth of the sinister realm in which she operated as a practiced witch. Titilayo's problem started when she turned 12 years. She had constant convulsion, the type associated with babies. When the condition persisted and defied medical treatment she was taken to her grandmother for herbal remedies. On the pretext of treating her, the old woman fed her with strange concoctions, and that was how Titilayo was initiated into witchcraft.

From that time on, Titilayo began to operate in a witchcraft group. She attended witchcraft meetings regularly with other members of the group. When it was the meeting time, her body would lie on the bed "sleeping" but her spirit would leave in the form of snake for the meeting. Later on as she gathered more experience in witchery, she attended the meetings physically. This lady was completely frustrated when she came to the church for her deliverance. She was depressed and seeking a way out of her predicament.

¹⁴ Titilayo. Interviewed 15/5/2011. WEBIC. Lagos, Nigeria.

This interview was conducted after her deliverance from the spell of witchcraft.

Furthermore, she was initiated into witchcraft seventeen (17) years ago. The convulsion spells were not cured by her grandmother. That they used to start their meetings by 11.00 p.m. and midnight under a tree. They used to sit in a circle. They used to receive reports of wrong doings of the people of a given community. Judgments were normally passed against such persons with stiff penalties of: Incurable diseases, financial setbacks, sundry misfortunes, mysterious disasters, demotions or dismissals from jobs or schools, turmoil in families and blindness.

Titilayo further explains: “In our groups, forgiveness was a taboo-something unheard of. I remember the case of a certain woman who reared goats and chickens. One of our members had asked her for a goat but the woman refused. That refusal cost her serious penalty. She was afflicted with a serious sickness, and no one could say exactly what was wrong with her. The doctors were completely baffled because every test performed showed that nothing was wrong with her.

During the interview, Titilayo noted that one day some Pentecostal members visited the hospital where the woman was, after praying for her, the woman was healed instantly and “that caused serious damages in the witch Covent”.

In responding to another leading question, she explained that assignments for the recruitment of new members were given during meetings. A potential recruit could be selected and visited in a dream. A member assigned to initiate the victim would shake an object endued with hypnotic power in his or her face, urging the victim to accept it as a gift. Once the victim accepted it, initiation took place.

Titilayo also explained that witchcraft practice initially affected the memory segment of her brain and it was difficult for her to remember what she was being taught at school. As a result of repeated failure at school, she had to be withdrawn from school to stop the wastage of her parents' scarce funds. She was then made to learn a trade. Every where she was learning the trade she destroyed the life of the owner of the workshop.

DELIVERANCE

It took her father's determination to locate a Holy Ghost "Fire spitting church" for her deliverance having heard so much about the daring exploits of the church. According to this lady's father, he was not even sure the daughter's solution would come from the World Evangelism Bible Church (WEBIC) Lagos. Titilayo recalled thus, "When the pastors prayed for me on my arrival, it became practically impossible for me to get back to my witchcraft group. It was as though a dividing wall had been erected between me and the group. They could not get me and I could not get to them. As I talk with you now, I am born again and living in peace with everybody. My

dream is to go back to school and become a lawyer so as to help enact laws against witchcraft in Nigeria. Again, there was no medical evidence to justify or authenticate that her stunted growth was as a result of her involvement with witchery. The father, Pa Titi Ojobe and the Women leader plus the elders of WEBIC Church agreed that Titilayo got delivered in their church.

(C) BROTHER ADEBOWALE¹⁵

At 53, brother Adebowale looked like some one in his thirties. That phenomenon is steeped in the rudiments of his vocation, which he practiced for 20 years. “You see, in the herbal world, it is believed that the bottle is ageless! To remain young, we used to grind bottles into fine powder and we eat it with banana after chanting certain incantations into the powder”, he said. Adebowale was a herbalist whose vocation had taken him to virtually every part of Nigeria in search of occult powers. The high and the mighty from all walks of life flocked to his shrine for one kind of power or the other. Such was his reputation as a herbalist that even members of the dreaded Odudua Peoples Congress (OPC) , a militant group that used juju power, would scamper to safety when he was around.

Adebowale had an encounter with Jesus Christ, and was delivered. This interview was held shortly after his deliverance, in company of his wife. He comes from Obokun Local Government Area of Osun State,

¹⁵ Brother Adebowale. Interviewed 16/5/2011. WEBIC, Lagos, Nigeria.

Nigeria. His father hailed from Okemesi, from a long line of herbalists. The grandfather was an itinerant herbalist who came from an unidentified place to settle in the community.

DELIVERANCE:

The interview with Adebowale was a long one. However, this was how he received his deliverance. Hear Adebowale elucidating on his journey out of herbalism: My brother, a devoted Pentecostal man from Lagos came around so that we could travel for the burial. That day marked a turning point in my life. As we drove in his car, he began to preach to me. He told me to turn to God before it was too late. And just as I had responded many times before, I told him I was alright and that he should go and preach to other people, to enable him meet his quota of converts for the month.

Immediately after he dropped me back at home, I sat down in my living room to relax. As I turned on the television, I saw the man of God, Prophet Samson Ayorinde on the air. As he was talking, he asked anyone watching who had any problem to put a glass of water in front of the TV. Out of curiosity I did, and after he prayed, I drank the water.

But as soon as I drank the water, I lost my peace. All the conversation I had with my brother in his car came back to me as though a strange force had taken over me. For one week, I could not eat or sleep. Finally, when I could not help my situation, I went to Ojokoro Branch of the World Evangelism Bible Church, and there I gave my life to Christ. In accordance

with my new found faith in the Lord, I gathered all the materials in my shrine and set them ablaze. Was it the water that convicted him or something else? Prophet Sam Ayorinde answered that “It was the Holy Ghost in the water.” This may explain why most of his members carry water in bottles believed to have undergone or contained “spirit initiation”.

Adebowale’s narrative here may testify to the good part of Pentecostalism. This Personality claimed to have been a feared herbalist that if not for Pentecostalism, the world of Lagos was already his territorial den where the high and the mighty were harassed at will. Pentecostalism engaged him and that he intentionally surrendered. Some of his fellow church members we interviewed, believed he was a transformed leader of his community.

(D) SISTER ANTHONIA, THE EX-QUEEN OF RIVER ETHIOPE.¹⁶

This was the narrative of an ex-marine “queen”. Before she was born into the physical world the spirit possessing her had lived for more than one thousand years and wielded enormous powers as the marine queen of River Ethiope, a popular river in Delta State of Nigeria. One of her evil assignments was to send marine agents into the world. When the queen was coming to the physical world, she made a covenant to live for thirty five years only. At the time of this interview, she was 46 years old. This means she should have died eight years ago before this interview. However, her

¹⁶ Anthonia also known as Tonia. Interviewed 19/5/2011. The Redeemed Evangelical Mission. Lagos, Nigeria.

earthly husband, a reverend in the body of Christ, would not wish to hear of her death in the hands of devils and stood solidly in the gap for her. During the interaction, she strongly indicated her desire not to “go back” to the marine world because she feared the terrible consequences awaiting her for flouting the covenant.

In her words, “my earnest search for deliverance led me to The Redeemed Evangelical Mission (TREM), where I was totally delivered by Jesus Christ.” Tonia further revealed that the overall boss of the evil Kingdom is Satan. That everyone in the kingdom has a code number which indicate his or her rank. Individuals are not addressed as witches, wizards, familiar spirit or mermaids as called by the occupants of this physical world. According to Tonia, Satan’s call code was 010, the king of the powerful kingdom – 009, the queen 008. The mermaids (that half-fish, half human creatures) – 007. The mermaids give power to familiar spirits (popularly called emere in Yoruba), which are coded - 006. The next in hierarchy are the witches and wizards, coded 005. The assassins and hired killers are next in rank. That a hired killer must be sending blood somewhere and the killing must be demonically induced. She emphasized that these killers along with kidnappers who deal with human parts and professional armed robbers are coded as 004, the occult youths in higher institutions of learning, who drink blood are in the 003 group. They carry out operations in their schools when blood is desperately needed in the kingdom of darkness. In

the 002 group are the herbalists and witchdoctors. Some of these herbalists collect powers from 007 and others from 006 groups above. For example when a barren woman consults a herbalist, the herbalist in turn consults the mermaids. Tonia claimed to have been a senior person in the dark kingdom's spiritual ranking.

DELIVERANCE:

How was Tonia delivered from the powers of darkness? During the interview, she explained thus: I was fortunate to meet a concerned sister. After detailing my problems and the difficulties encountered by numerous men of God who tried to deliver me, she led me to a brother, himself a former herbalist but now born-again. He prayed for me and discerned that I had a strong spirit. So he directed me to TREM.

When at TREM, as soon as the man of God came out to see me, I noticed that as usual, spiritual monitors from the marine world stood ready to photograph him. But as they started to take his photograph, there occurred a total equipment failure in the marine world. King George, my spiritual husband was livid with rage and blamed his marine boys. He rushed into the marine laboratory and wanted to personally photograph the man of God, but still the equipment would not work. It was then I knew I would be delivered.

At 34, when my return was just a year a head, I was afflicted with all sorts of terminal diseases, including high blood pressure, heart and eye

problems. These ailments were to lead to my death and return to the marine, and I knew it. But today, I am totally healed by the blood of Jesus Christ. Now I am in perfect condition – very much delivered. This is a claim from Anthonia.

Sister Anthonia was married to a reverend gentleman and today she is a mother and an active government civil servant in Lagos. She narrated her experience and wished that others should learn from it. The narrative again shows how Pentecostalism has cut across all fabrics of the society – that is, both government and private sectors. There are five hundred recorded voices(data) which we collected from this Pentecostal phenomenology research detailing several narratives/testimonies on deliverance by the beneficiaries.

NARRATIVES FROM THE BENEFACTORS

In this section, out of the sizeable narratives gathered from the field, I briefly put here a few to buttress the contributions of Pentecostalism to Lagos and Nigeria by extension through deliverance ministry.

According to mama shade Olukoya¹⁷, Pentecostalism has liberated or delivered a number of individuals, communities, nations, from shame. She narrated how their ministry has come to destroy the works of Satan and his agents. I asked her to explain the meaning of “fall down and die” which is a

¹⁷ Shade Olukoya is the wife of the General Overseer of the Mountain of Fire and Miracle Ministries with the Headquarters in Lagos, Nigeria. The General Overseer is Pastor Dr. D. K. Olukoya. The Interview took place during the Power Must Change Hands Service. MFM. July 30, 2011. Lagos, Nigeria.

common phrase during their prayers. In her detailed explanation, it was clear that it is the demons they are killing not the people. But this is another theology for another time to determine if demons really die or can be killed by men or women.

Mama Shade Olukoya further explained with excitement how the book titled, “Dangerous Prayers” is delivering families. She elucidated thus: This book is good. For example there was a man who had five of his daughters married to different men. But unfortunately they were all sent packing back to their father’s house in one day. When they came back their father distributed to them rooms in his compound with shame. But one of the daughters, a younger one started attending our prayer meetings in the Headquarters here. She also bought our book, “Dangerous prayers.”

The young woman was determined to know the source of their problems. She started dangerous prayers. After the brief prayers in the night on the first day, the grandmother came in the morning and warned her against such type of prayers. On the second day, the young woman prayed for two hours. The following morning the grandmother came to her and said, “my grandchild, stop this prayer you are doing, you will kill somebody in the compound o”! With this report, on the third day, the young lady prayed from 12 midnight to 6 am. She was just throwing dangerous prayers like lightning and thunder. When morning was at hand the grand mother did not show up. By ten (10) a.m. when they forced the door to her house

opened, she was found dead. This was not the end of the story. There was a padlock found in the old woman's box. It was anointed with MFM oil and forced open. Inside the padlock was found a small piece of paper stained with blood. The paper had the names of all the daughters (the five grand daughters) with the inscription, "They will never give birth to babies and if they are allowed to get married, they will all be divorced in one day". The good news is that the day the padlock was broken was the same day the husband of the first daughter came begging his father-in-law for his wife. By the weekend of that week all the daughters were back to their husbands' houses. This is " Pentecostalism in action", concluded mama Shade Olukoya.

The implication of the "Grandmother's death" leaves a lot of room for speculation and critical analysis of Mama Shade Olukoya's testimony/narrative. With a very sense of modesty, Mrs. Shade Olukoya talks about deliverance with passion. Her narrative was corroborated to be true by some of the members who serve as her aids and elders in their church. The above narrative refutes the claim of "some who look at deliverance as superstitious, foolishness; others think it does more harm than good. Some think it is at best nothing but pop psychology and thus out of place in the church, at worst unscriptural and damaging".¹⁸ In another

¹⁸ John & Mark Sandford, A comprehensive Guide to Deliverance and Inner Healing. (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 2004), 15.

development, Bishop Dr. Mike Okonkwo¹⁹ narrated that when he was a young minister, he used to pray and fast before engaging in deliverance because to him, deliverance ministry wrongly handled can kill or harm a pastor. He recalled a story of some pastors who in the process of deliverance became blind and had to be delivered by him. He further explained that one of the pastors lost his son. The son died and was kept for two days in the house before he, the Bishop arrived. Upon his arrival, he called upon the boy's name in Jesus Christ's name and cast out the spirit of death and the boy sneezed seven times and came back to life. However, I was not given access to interview the boy or the parents. In Lagos, Bishop Dr. Mike Okonkwo is one of the few ministers being held in high esteem and of high integrity. I have no reason to doubt his narrative here.

Bishop Mike Okonkwo said he was a bank manager before God called him and since then he has been getting souls and investing them in the Heaven's bank. He claims that if not for Pentecostalism probably the streets of Lagos would have been taken over by Satan and his agents. He is passionate about Pentecostalism and believes God has raised him to deliver people spiritually before getting them to physical development.

¹⁹ Bishop Dr. Mike Okonkwo is the Presiding Bishop of the Redeemed Evangelical Mission World wide and a senior pastor of the TREM Headquarters Church, Lagos. Interviewed, August 8, 2011.

Unlike Bishop Mike, Pastor Sam Adeyemi²⁰ believes that not everything befalling man should be blamed on demons. That spiritual deliverance should go hand in hand with physical deliverance. Pastor Adeyemi believes that God has given him the mandate to raise a generation of leaders and followers who are successful in all endeavours of life. This explains why he has a programme called Success Tips which is aired on Radio and TV channels of some media houses in and outside Nigeria .

In fact, in the city of Lagos, Pastor Sam Adeyemi is one of the top ministers respected by the Lagos State Government. Most of his members are in key government positions. He said, “Our deliverance style is geared towards the total person and the environment”. This is a post modernist deliverance minister.

In another development, Omobola Dapo – Thomas compiled and edited over 100 (One hundred) narratives tagged, “Wonderful Stories of God’s Working Power as Told by Pastor E.A. Adeboye.”²¹ Under the section of deliverance, story no. 40, the following narrative took place:

While I was a lecturer at the University of Ilorin in Kwara State, some people came to me and said “Sir, there is somebody you must come and pray for.” I told them that I am a very busy man and that they should bring the

²⁰ Pastor Sam Adeyemi is the Founder and President of Daystar Church International, Lagos. He is also the Senior Pastor of the Headquarters Church and a much sought for conference speaker. Interviewed 15/9/2011, Lagos, Nigeria.

²¹ Pastor E. A. Adeboye is the General Overseer of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) with branches in all the continents of the world.

person. They replied, “Ah! She can not come because she is suffering from a peculiar disease”. I don’t know if the doctors have a name for it. The disease was such that if they switch on any electrical appliance, in the house, instead of current to flow in the appliance, it would be flowing in the woman. For example, if you switch on the electric iron, the iron will remain cold but the woman will become hot; if you switch on the fridge, the inside of the fridge will not get cold but the woman will get cold. I asked them to go and bring her but they told me that there was a time they tried to take her to the hospital and they put her in a pick up van. As soon as they turned the vehicle engine on (you know the current has to flow from the battery to start the engine) the current picked her up and threw her out of the vehicle. The lady could not leave her house and they dared not put on electricity anywhere she was. I therefore had to go where she was. She was not a Christian but I explained the situation to her that the only fellow who could set her free was Jesus. I did not have to do long preaching before she gave her life to Christ. We prayed a simple prayer after which we switched on the fan and the fan began to rotate, we switched on the electric iron and it began to get hot.²²

The above narrative may not be satisfactorily explained by science. In any case, these are real spiritual human needs Pentecostalism is providing solutions for in Lagos and Nigeria in general. The narratives of the

²² Omobola Dapo –Thomas. 100 Wonderful Stories of God’s Working power as Told by Pastor E. A. Adeboye. Vol. 1 (Papa Ajao, Mushin, Lagos: LWCA20, 2010), 14-15.

Benefactors here show that their total reliance on the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ's name may be the primary reason for their successes. Pentecostalism appears to be doing some good than harm to Lagosians.

STYLES OF DELIVERANCE PECULIAR TO LAGOS AXIS.

1. There are different styles of deliverance within Pentecostalism as practiced by the leaders of different churches like, the Guided Missiles Church, Kingdom Against Kingdom Church, Virgins for Christ Church, Eunuchs for the Kingdom, Bullets of Christ Church and so forth in this populated city of Lagos. Most of the leaders of these churches are very much information technology and communications compliant. Some of them, according to the classical Pentecostals, have gone beyond the traditional practices of Pentecostalism as far as deliverance is concerned. In some of the deliverance sessions of the few churches mentioned above, our research team observed a pastor either embracing a woman or lying on top of a woman in the name of deliverance through direct contact to the anointing from the "man of God". My further search confirmed that some of these pastors got influenced by some of the practices posted on the net like the one below. Some of the young founders of churches with unconventional names tend to draw their inspirations from the internet and from the satellite TV stations. For example, at the Kingdom Against Kingdom Church, the pastor kept on referring to

his “ mentor and father” who he claimed was sending messages to him daily via the internet. That he watches him(father) preach via satellite and also listens to the “father’s” CDs,DVDs and tapes “24 hours a day and seven days a week”. Here one can see a pastor lying on top of a woman in the name of deliverance and healing. Some deliverance ministers in Lagos also imitate this style of deliverance.



action²³.

Deliverance

2. Anointing Service. During this service those believed to be under demonic attacks, having delayed promotion, unable to travel to their respective villages because of witchcraft, delayed marriages and unable to travel abroad are smeared with some oil or have their feet washed by the man of God. This would demand a very participant sowing some “devourers’ offering” meant to avert and destroy the evil spirits responsible for the above misfortunes_____

²³ [http://www.theinfostrides.com/index.php?topic=45831.0/downloaded 17/9/2011](http://www.theinfostrides.com/index.php?topic=45831.0/downloaded%2017/9/2011).

3. Fire Style. This is where and when a camp fire is made and organized during the night vigils for the deliverance of those suffering from attacks of either their neighbours or demonic forces. The participants are made to pass through the baptism of fire by jumping over a large heap of fire as a cleansing process. This normally is done around 2:00Am outside the church hall which is barricaded by some coloured clothes so that the outside public may not view the process of deliverance. As the participant struggled to brave through the fire, other worshippers kept on repeating after the pastor “Fire! Fire! Fire! FFFFFFFFFiiiiiiiiiiiiirrrrrrrreeeeeeeeeeee! Some of the people we interviewed testified that some of the participants always get burnt in the process. When that happens, it is believed such persons have received his/ her instant answer to prayer. That the wound sustained was a mark of overcoming the world as Paul, the apostle also testified in some of his epistles. This is taking Paul’s testimony out of context. It is worthy to realize that most Pentecostal Churches in Nigeria today encourage shouts of “Fire! Fire! Fire!” in their services. Some of the Evangelical Churches have not been spared by this phenomenon either.
4. Water style. Under this style, the pastor pours water in the basin or bucket and commands every participant to speak out their problems to the water. This is similar to the traditional practice of appealing the

departed “living dead”, the ancestors. I was a participant observer in all the above styles. After the speaking exercise, the pastor then orders one of the elders to carry the water to his office for his sacrificial prayers.

5. Pictures. During the deliverance services, mostly women came with pictures of either their children in need of getting married, fruits of the womb or who were denied visas to travel to the USA, Canada, China, and Europe. These pictures were placed at the feet of the “apostle” who then rattled some apostolic unction by way of tongues and suddenly declares that “All your prayers are answered.” This normally is followed by jubilation and ululations from the participants. Later after the service, I asked the “apostle” about the veracity of his declarations. He said, “ As the founder of Eunuchs for the Kingdom Church, my prayers are very potent and God’s mind and my own are one. I am Jehovah in a black skin.” This type of deliverance is embraced because some Lagosians are notoriously religious.

6. White bed sheet deliverance. This is where a man of God goes from row to row or chair to chair wrapping the heads of those being delivered. This type of service is mostly for women who are pregnant and expecting to deliver their babies smoothly. This is done also to those who wish to live long. It is believed that as white as the bed sheet is so shall the participants’ future be without a spot. This is a

very expensive type of deliverance because those insuring their future are normally charged fees ranging from N50, 000 to N500,000(The Naira is Nigeria's official currency) only. Most members believe that their pastor received the white bed sheet through the hands of angel Gabriel from Heaven. We observed that when the white bed sheet was put on some of these peoples' heads, some went hysterical and convulsed and started bubbling in "tongues". After the service, those who bubbled in "tongues" were asked to go to the pastor's office. When we enquired from some of the members why the people were being asked to go and see the pastor, the answer was, " To collect covenant cards." Covenant cards actually meant bank tellers. This is deliverance in Action.

7. Bishop or Apostle's/General Overseer's Seat. This type of deliverance is where a seeker, a participant gets delivered only by seating in the Bishop's or General Overseer's seat. It is believed that women looking for the fruits of the womb could easily conceive immediately after seating in the exalted chair . Apostle J.O. Owolabi²⁴ of the Kingdom Against Kingdom Church(KAKC) claimed that "even men with low sperm count received their deliverance through seating in the exalted chair. If anyone with any problems seats in the Bishop's chair that person's problem ends immediately". The seat is highly guarded.

²⁴ Apostle J. O. Owolabi is one of the top leaders of KAKC, Lagos. Interviewed on 12/9/011 at the Church premise.

8 Thy Rode and Staff Deliverance. This is picked from Psalm23:4 but applied based on the “advanced” revelation of the church, Virgins for Christ Church. This is a young Charismatic Church. The Mama Prophetess carries two rods and those coming for deliverance are literally beaten to drive out either death, demons and misfortunes or caned through proxy the government officials who failed to pay the contractors, beat through proxy and force embassy officials to issue visas to the intending travelers. As I sat in the congregation, one need not to be told of who patronizes this Prophetess. Everyone who came for deliverance was asked to say something briefly about their professions. Some of those who came for deliverance were medical doctors, Politicians, contractors, government officials, business men and women, students and pastors needing help to make their churches grow.

During some of the deliverance sessions of the churches whose styles have been detailed above, there were people who came forward to give testimonies of how they were delivered and how their lives changed for the better. Our team also noticed that some of the people who came for deliverance were also members of other Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches as well as from the main line Evangelical Churches. There appears to be a multiplicity of intercourses within Pentecostalism.

However, there are some Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches whose leaders still hold on to multiple traditional methods of doing deliverance like the laying of hands, shouting to the top of a leader’s voice to cast out demons, serving holy communion for purpose of deliverance, washing of feet with water, holding of candles to drive out darkness and attract light to the soul, reading of Psalm 91 to a pail of water and re-packaging same for members to buy for protection and deliverance from armed robbers and winning of favours etc.

OUTCOMES

Gleaning from the narratives of the Beneficiaries and Benefactors, the following outcomes are very glaring:

1. Pentecostalism has the transforming power of making the spiritually oppressed become spiritually expressed with due determination to making their, nuclear and extended families and communities better spiritually and physically.

2. Pentecostalism serves both the Church and those outside the church by providing physical salvation (healing of the body and environment as noted by Pastor Sam Adeyemi of Day Star Church).

3. Pentecostalism is not only about prosperity but meeting real human needs by travelling on the terrains that were once neglected or yet to be investigated by the mainline churches based on the narratives of the beneficiaries.

4. Some Pentecostal leaders have attained high western education, (For example: Pastors Dr D.K Olukoya, Dr. E.A.Adeboye and Dr.Kumuyi etc) , meaning that their activities can not just be brushed aside as pop psychology. They are not superstitious and foolish but progressive, intelligent and civilized. Indeed there are some Pentecostal leaders who are semi-educated based on western classification that still do weird things that are typical of African Traditional Religions.

5. Pentecostal phenomenology is an area that requires the reader to adjust his or her perspective for better understanding of the narratives that

appeared weird but real and very close to the African world view of the general cosmos.

6. Deliverance Ministry is an integral part of biblical Christianity. Sometimes deliverance activities are unscientific and beyond rationality. As such, may be accepted by faith.

7. Based on my critical observation and discussion with the Lagos Commissioner for Urban and Town planning, a lot of people are moving into Lagos as a result of village urban, urban-urban township-urban and diaspora migrations thus making Lagos the most populous black city in Nigeria, Africa and the world over. However, this has also become the most fertile ground for Pentecostalism. Pentecostalism to some extent has been able to meet the spiritual needs of these migrants.

8. Lagos used to be “a Lion’s Den” in terms of induced crimes, poor traffic management and dirty environment with drum holes in the city roads. But with the influence of Pentecostal leaders like Pastor Paul Adefarasi and Pastor Sam Adeyemi and their members in the Government of Lagos State, today Lagos city is becoming a serene city with green lush everywhere, free traffic flow and organized Lagosians. But one still need to think as a Lagosian.

9. Some of the people delivered from various nefarious evil activities like Tonia (civil servant) are today contributing progressively towards the

growth of Lagos and their States. They claimed no involvement again in the shading of innocent blood.

CONCLUSION

Pentecostals for the most part, do not know their own strength. In the last five percent of Christian history, they have become a major global force in Christendom.²⁵ Interestingly enough, those among them who are first discovering the immensity and astonishing diversity of Pentecostal movement – and of its offspring, the Charismatic movement – are the scholars. And this is a tradition uneasy with the academic enterprise.²⁶ The statements described in the conclusion here were made by Professor Russell P. Spitteler of Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California, USA. They may still be true of some Pentecostals in Lagos, Nigeria. Deliverance Ministry appears to be one of their greatest strengths which some Pentecostal churches are sacrificing for popular-make-people-happy messages today. It may true that when people were delivered from the evil works, such became a booster to the ministry of a particular benefactor. Effective deliverance ministry may likely lead to multiple church growth. This work has encapsulated the methodology used for the research, narratives/testimonies from both the beneficiaries and the benefactors, deliverance styles and outcomes.

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