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NURTURING SPIRITUALITY
THE CASE OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION IN GHANA

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1. Introduction

All religious groups implicitly require their adherents to be "spiritual". But how to be religious/spiritual has been a major concern for many religious adherents in all religions. The religious organizations often prescribe how to be spiritual in their teachings. This may include specific activities the believer is expected to perform, either privately or together with other members of the religious community. These groups often develop or adopt various media through which they transmit their values and philosophies and instil specific behaviour in their devotees.

In this paper my attention will be directed to Christian organizations, and my goal is fourfold: (1) to study the biblical theological understanding of spirituality; (2) to explore the idea of spirituality vis-a-vis religiosity, clarifying their essential components; (3) to discuss the media through which Christian organizations evoke and nurture spirituality in their members; and (4) to discuss the specific case of Seventh-day Adventists' use of education in evoking and nurturing spirituality/religiosity in Ghana. It attempts to show how Adventist ministry in Ghana helped and hindered the growth of these essential religious experiences. The reason this is important is because it seeks to create an apologetic for Adventist work in Ghana to both reassure non-SDA Ghanaians of the Church's contribution to their country and to give courage to Adventists to keep up their efforts.

2. The Theology of Spirituality

It is necessary to make explicit the use of the terms "spirituality", "religiosity" and "righteousness". Spirituality is a personal relationship with one's object of worship, and intangible. Since it is personal and very subjective it is not amenable to any objective test. Its presence and/or intensity may be assumed only through the individual's observable religious involvement. This outward or practical demonstration of the intimate subjective relationship between the zealot and the object of reverence through certain prescribed activities, especially religious rituals, or other religious involvement which may or not give a fair

indication of their spirituality is referred to as "religiosity". Righteousness refers to a quality or state characterized by, proceeding from or in accordance with accepted standards of morality, justice, or uprightness. In the biblical sense, that which is in conformity with God's standard or in a state of acceptability to God, and the standard demands action on the part of the believer. I shall deal with these correlates: "spirituality", "religiosity" and "righteousness" largely in the New Testament for lack of space.

2.1 Spirituality in the New Testament (NT)

The Greek 'πνευματικος' [*pneumatikos*—spiritual], the adjective form of 'πνευμα' [*pneuma*—spirit], is used in three ways by Bible writers. First, it is used to designate that which is not physical or literal, but that which exists, or also exists, in the world of spirits, demons, angels, and God (1Cor. 10: 3, 4; Eph. 6: 12). Secondly, it is used to indicate the application of models taken from the OT prophecies relating to Christ and the Church (1Pet. 2:4-10), and finally, it is used for the nature of God's redemption of mankind in Christ and to the presence of God's Spirit (1Cor. 2:12-16; Eph. 5:18-20). We may differentiate these three applications of 'πνευματικος', a useful differentiation; however, they are not exclusive but are, rather, usually overlapping (Simpson 1988).

In the writings of Paul, 'πευματικος', the "spiritual", is contrasted with 'ψυχικος' (*psuchikos*), the "physical", or the merely physical (cf. 1Cor. 10:3; 1Cor. 15:44-46) in the context of the resurrection of the dead.[1] What is "spiritual" can be that which is brought into being or altered by the presence of the Spirit of God.

One encounters the frequent use of 'πνευματικος' in Paul's letter to the Corinthians in 1Corinthians. The most obvious reason for the frequent use may be because of the importance of the word to the Corinthian church due to that community's emphasis on Spiritual Gifts as evidence of the Spirit's presence. The designation 'πνευματικος' for persons endowed with the more evident spiritual gifts, such as prophecy, was clearly used by the Corinthians (1Cor. 14:37; cf., 12:1). Although Paul adopted the designation in his letter to them, he gave a twist to its emphasis.

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[1] Cf. also 1Peter 2:5 relating to the antitypical reality known in the Christian Church.

He gave the new implication that "the 'πνευματικος' is a person marked by stability and maturity in living by God's Spirit (cf. 2:15; 3:1)" (Simpson 1988). Similar import is given to the Galatians (Gal. 6:1). It can be concluded from Paul that 'πνευματικος' is a vital element in the portrayal of ideal Christian personal and community life. This encompasses the wisdom taught by Christian teachers[2] and the songs sung in Christian fellowships[3]. These are also described as 'πνευματικος'.

2.2 Religiosity in the NT: The Epistles

Bible writers use four words for the term 'religion'. First is ευσεβεια (*eusebeia*) (1Tim 3:16; 2T3:5), second θρεσκεια (*threskeia*) (Acts 26:5; James 1:26), third θεοσεβια *(theosebia)* (1Tim 2:10; John 9:31), and fourth δεισιδαιμονια *(deisidaimonia)* (Acts 25:19). *Theosebia* and its cognates (eg. θεοσεβης, *[theosebes]* — *adj.)* are normally translated as "fear of God" or "godliness" (adj., God-fearing, godly). *Deisidaimonia* on the other hand can also be translated as "fear of the gods [supernatural]", and "superstitious", and can be applied in a positive, neutral or pejorative sense. Both terms give a sense more of attitude than ritual practice. Thus more relevant to our discussion are the first and second terms: *eusebeia* and *threskeia*. Both *eusebeia* and *threskeia* and their cognates are commonly used in Greek literature, but one finds scanty use of them in the LXX and the NT. Opperwall-Galluch (1988, vol. 4) is of the view that this is due to the fact of the Greek concept of religion which emphasises intellectual understanding and cultic duties which has no consonance with the Biblical idea of God's calling of humanity to live in a personal relationship of whole hearted faith and obedience to Him, the Creator and Lord of history. The early Christians probably applied 'ευσεβεια' [to show piety or to show loyalty] and its cognates first for pagans or the Jewish religion and only later in reference to the Christian faith. Showing respect to one's parents was considered a religious duty not only by the Greeks but also by the early Church (1Tim 5:4; cf. Exod. 20:12). Schmidt (1965, III: 156) argues that "Herodotus (ii. 37) and other Greek writers, use *threskeia* to mean "'religious conduct or practice" in general with particular emphasis on the zealousness of such practice."

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[2] Co. 1:9; cf., 1Cor. 2:13; 9:11.
[3] Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16.

In James (1:22f.), *threskeia* denotes "the scrupulous observance of religious exercises in action or words" (cf. Johnson 1997), cf. Acts 26:5; Col. 2:18. The fundamental issue is that faith can bring about a perfect impact (vr.4). As Johnson (1997) puts it "for faith to be real, it must be translated into deeds. It is not enough to be a 'hearer of the word'; one must become a 'doer of the word' as well', otherwise one's faith is only a self-deception (v.22)." Just like other moralists of old, James seems to be saying that "theoretical correctness matters little if one's life does not conform to the idea one espouses (Johnson 1997).

Further, Paul describes "spirituality" within the context of the dichotomy between the "flesh" and the "spirit", i.e., "walking after the flesh" vrs "walking after the Spirit" (Rom. 8:4-9). The former is not desired as that sort of action would not please God (vrs 8), while the latter would please Him and such a fellow would be God's. Here Paul seems to link the "spiritual" with actions, that is "walking" that will confirm one's "spirituality". Similar sentiments are expressed in Matthew 5:8 and confirmed in the letter of St. James in James 1:27, where *"pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is .... To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world."* James proceeds to illustrate how one can do works of righteousness apart from faith in Jesus Christ (James 2:1-26). He goes further to give a clue as to what one needs to do in order to "please God" and "remain in the spirit." This he calls "pure undefiled religion" – *threskeia kathara kai amiantos* [θρησκεια καθαρα και αμιαντος] (James 1:27).

2.3   Religiosity in the Gospels
The classical biblical view of being religious is further elaborated in Matthew 23:23-28, and 25:31-46 in a series of 'woes' to the "teachers of the law", and in he view of doing good to others respectively. Reference is made to the display of one's "righteousness" [δικαοσυνη—*dikaosune*] in these passages. In these texts, one sees one of the major themes in Matthew: how to make it into the kingdom of God. To be "righteous" for Matthew is to, apart from believing in the Son of God, Jesus Christ, perform certain acts of duty as prescribed by God, acts that please God and man (Matt. 5:20, 5:48). In fact, righteousness and how to fulfil the mandate to be righteous is a major theme in the book of Matthew, as illustrated particularly in chapters 5—7, a section containing the "beatitudes" and other sayings of Jesus. Matthew insinuates that the righteous are those who are

"pure in heart", and they shall see God (Matt. 5:8), because they meet his standard. They *"do"* or act out their religion; they demonstrate righteous acts as their Father in heaven (cf. Matt. 5: 13-48).

The conclusion we may draw is that, those who are righteous are the pure in heart, those who have pure undefiled religion, pro James, because they are, walking in the Spirit, the 'πνευματικος', in Paul's terms. These are the ones who shall see God, since they are the ones who please Him. In summary then religiosity is the display of the believer's spirituality and the confirmation of his/her state of standing before the deity. While "spirituality" and "righteousness" are intangible and unobservable in themselves, these can be made visible and concrete through "religiosity".

The discussion above permits us to suggest that to be practically spiritual, the believer must perform (must be engaged in) the following activities: (i) regular worship participation, (ii) prayer and meditation, (iii) provision for the needy – philanthropic, (iv) search for the ultimate meaning of life, (v) active promotion of social justice for all people—altruism, and (vi) lifestyle adjustment (diet, health, etc). Our attention presently is not on the question of motivating factors for religious behaviour, nor is the issue here to say that because some people practise what has been stated, they are religious or spiritual. The above stated practices are often used by sociologists as external or observable indicators for spirituality.

3. Nurturing Spirituality

We may pause to differentiate between two definitions of religion in order to place our discussion in its context as a sociological discourse: the substantive and functionalist definitions. The substantive definition is normally adopted by religionists and theologians, and the functionalist definitions by sociologists and psychologists (McGuire 1992:10-15). The substantive view of "religion" may be described as the belief in, the worship of, or the submission to a sacred power considered to be divine or have some, if not absolute, control of human fate. This implies that religion may assume several forms, and may have several supernatural beings to be revered. It also implies that the act of believing in, worship of or submission to any of the several supernatural powers is of the same qualitative nature.

The functionalist approach to religion, however, calls for the practicality of religions to the individual or to the community. It describes the benefit(s) of religions to adherents, and how religions interact and affect the entire fabric of society (social, psychological, political, etc) in terms of the impacts of their values on the believers. By what means do they seek to influence society and thus achieve their goals and objectives? How do these Christian organizations engage their advocates and the larger society in order to evoke and nurture spirituality? The earlier question will be tackled shortly but the latter shall be handled in the next section.

It is agreed that the individual gets his/her values from several sources. This includes the family—early life experiences (parental upbringing), religious organizations, educational institutions, peers and the media (Blackwell, et al. 2001: 614).
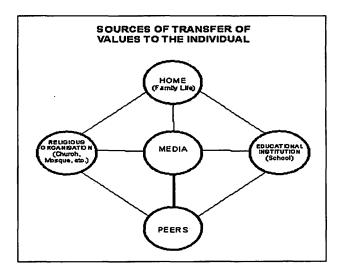

Fig. 1. Sources of Transfer of Values to the Individual

Although religious organizations, in this case churches, are but one source of disseminating specific values to the individual, this medium makes use of other sources to its advantage. The Christian churches are employing the educational medium to their advantage and more and more of the media today. The media does not include only radio and TV programmes, it includes also the print media and the electronic media—the internet, DVDs, M3s, mobile phone text messages, etc.—in which religious teachings are

disseminated to the society. It also includes the establishment of printing houses and sale of denominational literature printed there from. One of the major means of promoting spirituality among Christian organisations today, particularly charismatic and neo-charismatic is the public evangelistic thrust. This can be either public preaching or through the media (big time), or both. We should not forget the appeal of philanthropic projects through which also Churches propagate their brand of religiosity/spirituality. Special agencies are set up in many of the church organizations for this purpose. One may mention the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), the Catholic Relief Agency (CRA) and the Development and Projects Directorate (of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church).

Internal evoking and nurturing of spirituality is also undertaken. Programmes such as fasting and prayer bouts are organized, and individual members are encouraged to get involved in altruistic and philanthropic projects.

4. The role of Adventism in promoting spirituality/religiosity in Ghana.

The Adventist Church arrived in Ghana (then the Gold Coast) in about 1888 and had its beginnings through the distribution of Christian literature (Owusu-Mensa 1993:59). The Adventist Church was established most probably by both Francis I.U. Dolphin and William Kweku Atta Dawson, both Ghanaians who got the Adventist message through Adventist enthusiasts and sea captains (Owusu-Mensa 2005:10-16). It was not until 1894 when a real outside missionary intervention took place in Ghana. The first two Adventist missionaries arrived in the persons of Karl G. Rudolph and Edward Leroy Sanford on February 22, 1894.

By the end of 1904, it was reported that the Adventist Church in Ghana composed of one company, seven baptized members, four isolated Sabbath keepers in a group, a Sabbath School of thirty members, one licensed minister, one literature evangelist, two labourers, one school, two teachers and twenty-five pupils (*Review and Herald,* 1905: 26-27). Today, the Adventist church can boast of a printing press, a number of hospitals and clinics, and several formal educational institutions at all levels – kindergarten, primary, secondary (including vocational and technical schools), and tertiary (1 College of Education; and a University—begun in 1979, accredited in 1995 and chartered in 2006), the first accredited and chartered privately owned and operated in the country.

4.1 Promoting Religiosity/Religious Values

In this section of the paper I shall attempt to answer the following questions relating to the contribution of the Adventist church in promoting religiosity in Ghana. The questions are (i) How do Adventist strategies convey biblical beliefs and Christian values in Ghana? (b) How effective is Adventism in its education strategy in making positive impact in terms of beliefs and values on students, and the general public, both Christian and non-Christian? and (c) What changes, if any, are needed to bolster the effectiveness of this means employed by the church?

Just a few years after its inception in Ghana, the SDA Church embarked on a concerted effort to instil biblical beliefs and Christian doctrines, or in short Christian teaching and lifestyle, as Adventists know it, in the societies they find themselves (SDA Church Manual:2005, 17th ed., chapters 13—15). The teaching of these biblical beliefs are expected to be translated into religious worldviews and practices such as suggested in the data discussed earlier.

4.2 Strategies for Missions

(i) The Adventist Church in Ghana adopted the common approaches and methods being used elsewhere by the church around the globe. This includes three dominant strategies of (i) direct public evangelism; (ii) publishing ministry (printing press and literature evangelism); and (iii) formal education. Later, two methods were introduced in the area of (iv) health/medical facilities, and (v) philanthropic programmes such as those run by the church's specialised agency—the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) that has branches doted around the world. Each of these strategies employed is viewed as an opportunity to evangelise, more so in the educational institutions at every level. While each of these approaches is an important means of instilling religious behaviour in adherents, I shall concentrate my attention on the role of Adventist formal educational institutions.

4.3 Adventist Education and the Individual

In 2001 a statement.[4] by eminent Adventist educationists was adopted. In this document is spelt out the assumptions, the philosophy, and the aim and mission of Adventist education. It is made clear in that document that "The Seventh-day Adventist philosophy of education is Christ-centered." This philosophy derives its "distinctive characteristics from the Bible and the writings of Ellen G. White which "point to the redemptive aim of true education: *to restore human beings into the image of their Maker.*" It is also well articulated that the agencies of education includes the home, the local Church, School, College and University, and the World Church. I shall draw substantially on this document (*The Seventh-day Adventist Philosophy of Education*) in this section of the paper.

The Role of Seventh-day Adventist Schools, Colleges, and Universities is emphasized in the document mentioned above. The implications for schooling only is highlighted with eight key elements. These key elements include the student, the teacher, knowledge, the educational curriculum, the instructional programme, discipline, the school life, and assessment. All these elements have serious implications for spiritual nurturing for the schooling enterprise.

For responsibilities and outcomes, it is admitted by the church educationists that it "has made a commitment to provide a broad education and spiritual formation for its children, youth, and young adults within the context of the Christian worldview. The Church extends this same opportunity to other children and youth of the community who share similar values and ideals." By this Adventist education does not limit spiritual nurturing to its children, youth and adults only but also to all others who attend Adventist educational institutions.

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[4] This statement reflects a broad consensus of Adventist educational leaders and teachers attending the First International Conference on the Seventh-day Adventist Philosophy of Education convened by the General Conference Department of Education and held at Andrews University, April 7-9, 2001. The draft of this statement was prepared by a committee consisting of Humberto Rasi, Chair; Paul Brantley, Secretary; George Akers, John M. Fowler, George Knight, John Matthews, and Jane Thayer. The same committee inserted the adjustments recommended during the conference and prepared the final version of statement for wide distribution, study, and application.

Specific outcomes are tailored to each level of formal schooling in Adventist educational institutions. In the elementary schools students are offered a four component objective: (i) a climate in which they can understand God's will, commit their lives to Him, and experience the joy of helping others; (ii) an organized program leading toward spiritual, physical, mental, social, and emotional development; (iii) a basic core of skills and knowledge for everyday living appropriate to their age; (iv) a wholesome appreciation and respect for the home, the church, the school, and the community. Thus the elementary level student graduate at an Adventist school should, relevant to our discussion, among others, "have had the opportunity to commit their lives to God through conversion, baptism, service, and a desire to do God's will in very area of living."

For Secondary Schools, in continuity on the previous level, focus is placed "on values, choices, and Christ-like character." The students receive an integrated formal and non-formal curriculum of academic study, spiritual values, and are offered further contingencies for developing a Christian lifestyle of values, service, and witness. Hence on completion, the secondary school graduate at an Adventist school should

> Have had an opportunity to commit their lives to God and therefore manifest a maturing faith in Him characterized by personal devotion, public worship, and service and witness to others in fulfillment of the Church's mission.... Demonstrate maturity and Christ-like sensitivity within the family circle, in the choice friendships, in preparation for marriage, and in broad participation within their church and community ...... [and] careful use of time and discriminating selection of music, media, and other forms of entertainment.[5]

On the tertiary level, Adventist institutions pay more attention to careers that directly support the mission of the Church; acknowledges the vital role in seeking for truth in all its aspects as it impacts the total development of the individual in relation both to God and human beings; use available resources – revelation, reason, reflection, and research – to discover truth and its implications for human life here and in the hereafter; guides students to develop lives of integrity based upon principles compatible with cherished values – religious, ethical, social, and service – vital to the Adventist ethos; and fosters — particularly at the graduate level – the mastery, critical

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[5]*Seventh-day Adventist Philosophy of Education* document.

evaluation, discovery and dissemination of knowledge, and the nurture of wisdom in a community of Christian scholars. In the end, a tertiary level student at an Adventist educational institution is expected to "Have had the opportunity to commit themselves to God with a desire to experience and support the message and mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and to live a principled life in harmony with God's will." Living a principled life in accordance to the dictates of the will of God covers a spectrum of expectations such as demonstrating "proficiency in critical thinking, stewardship, creativity, aesthetic appreciation, social sensitivity—loving concern for the well-being of others—fellowship within the community of God and a consistent lifestyle conscious of optimal health practices and forms of entertainment.

Life-long Learning

Adventist philosophy of education thus dictates that proper Christian education should focus on providing a conducive atmosphere to the members of the academic community to ensure a balanced development of the intellectual, spiritual, physical, psychological and social dimensions of life. This could be termed as a wholistic development of the individual, "an all-round education" (White 1930:174). This implies both practical and intellectual preparation for a life of service to one's community, which is intended to direct the student to choose a life of dedicated service to God and humanity. Education is viewed by Adventists as going beyond formal schooling, and should meet the needs of both professionals (continuing education for certification and career enrichment for educations, clergy, business and health-care personnel, and others); and non-professionals (local church leadership, family life, personnel development, spirituality, Christian growth, and service to the church and the community). Formal schooling combines with the other agencies of education in preparing the student "for the joy of service in this world and the higher joy of wider service in the world to come." (White 1952: 13).

The central role of Adventist education, therefore, should be seen in terms of instilling in the individual the following nine desirable qualities: (1) Open-mindedness which carries with it a sense of adaptability; (2) Understanding: a sense of historical development, and universal understanding; (3) Useful Work and Community Outreach which prepares students to appreciate work in its varied forms as a duty and for its own sake, and reaching out to serve their communities; (4)

Love of Learning, Breadth and Depth of understanding and Independence of thought; (5) Possessing a high sense of Integrity and Moral maturity which makes a forge with moral uprightness and considered to be an important and indispensable mark of a successful career in life; (6) Aesthetic Maturity, which instils in the individual a critical appreciation of the fine and performing arts, in order to empower them to appreciate human civilization of all sorts and an appreciation of the value of the natural environment; (7) Physical and Mental health: an ethos which operates on the principle that "a diseased body affects the brain," functioning as a catalyst in emphasizing the idea of a healthful living (White 1968:3, 4); (8) Literary and Numerical Maturity to nurture students to possess the capability to locate, and to read with full comprehension and to promote the understanding of the nature of mathematical forms of inquiry, thus inhibiting the tendency of the feeling of alienation from a technological society, and hence enabling students to appreciate the significance of numerical and statistical data; and (9) Spiritual Maturity which aims at leading students to acquire an unshakable trust in God.

Relevant to our discussion one can choose six of the nine principles listed above: (i) Open-mindedness- adaptability; (ii) Sense of Historical Development and Global understanding; (iii) Useful Work and Community Outreach; (iv) Possession of a high sense of Integrity and Moral maturity; (v) Literacy and Numerical Maturity; and (vi) Spiritual Maturity, for further comments.

(i)   Open-mindedness- adaptability

Adventist education makes it possible for students on all levels of the academic ladder, but most directly on the tertiary level to have a keen sense of open-mindedness that will enable them the ability to adapt to situations in life. Students made aware that the world is dynamic, that even well-entrenched axioms are subject to change; indeed that much of human thought has undergone significant transformation over the centuries.

(ii)   Sense of Historical Development and Global Understanding

This principle fosters a clear understanding of the history of its own discipline and how, generally, it relates to the history of other disciplines, and a universal comprehension of and appreciation for how the world system works nationally and internationally, and more importantly, the historical development of the human race from a theistic point of view, a view that looks at the world as coming from an intelligent creator rather than by chance. The institutions of learning offer a wider chance to

Adventists, in fact all Ghanaians to have a universal worldview and mutual benefits. This gives them a good basis of understanding Paul's statement of universal salvation, and hence cordial attitude towards others. In Galatians 3:28, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

   (iii) Useful Work and Community Outreach

Adventist education promotes useful work, i.e., it prepares students to appreciate work in its varied forms as a duty and for its own sake. This is in the true spirit of the reformers in the Calvinist tradition who considered 'work' as a 'calling' which needs to be responded to in a positive and conscientious manner (Weber 1905/1976). In the performance of this work, recipients of Adventist education are assisted to possess a bold attitude in taking initiative, and a tenacious perseverance in the performance of their duties. Students are urged not only to work with their minds, but also with their hands, bearing in mind that no labour should be considered as below one's status. In this regard persons receiving Adventist formal education are urged to give back to their communities what they have received from their educators. They are to reach out to serve their communities in improving conditions there, while pointing to the one and only source of their success, God. Ghanaians, through this sort of teaching in Adventist institutions, come to appreciate the spirit of volunteerism in offering themselves as lay evangelists and preachers in the church.

   (iv) Possessing a high sense of Integrity and Moral Maturity

Integrity, the adherence to moral principles-or, honesty, is considered as an important and indispensable mark of a successful career in life. This has affinity with moral uprightness. For that matter students are assisted through the various co-curricular programmes, to equip themselves with this virtue. There is the hunt for men and women of integrity in our morally twisted and crooked world,

> *men [and women] who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men [and women] whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men [and women] who will stand for the right though the heavens fall* (White 1952:57).

Adventist education, therefore, prepares students for a life of integrity and honesty—people who are ready to stand up to be counted. Thus, in Adventist educational institutions, students in the country are encouraged to own up and tell the truth in all situations without fear of intimidation.

As a result Adventist formal education in that as elsewhere trains students to be able to make sound moral judgments—the ability to identify moral questions, weigh competing considerations in complex situations, assess criticisms, and determine when an inquiry is sufficiently advanced to warrant drawing conclusion. In fact students in our institutions of learning, no matter the level,

> *have valuable privileges, not only of obtaining a knowledge of the sciences, but also of learning how to cultivate and practise virtues which will give them symmetrical characters. They are God's responsible moral agents* (White 1930: 170).

With this in mind Adventist educationists encourage their students to have the strength of character to do what they judge right, regardless of social pressure or personal sacrifice as the word of God dictates.

(v) Literary and Numerical Maturity

Adventism contributes immensely to literacy in the whole world, particular in Africa-South of the Sahara. In Ghana, the schools (primary and senior high), colleges (nursing and teacher training) and a university established have contributed immensely to reducing the illiteracy rate, and developing the manpower resource, not only for Ghana but across Africa as a whole. The benefit does not go for only the Adventist church, but also for the other churches whose wards attend the Adventist schools. Refer to table 1 below for some information on educational institutions in Ghana.

Table 1. Seventh-day Adventist Educational Statistics in Ghana: 2006/07 Academic year.
Source: Ghana Union Conference of SDAs Education Department.

No.	Educational Level	No. of Schools	No. of Students	No. of Teachers
1	Elementary (Primary) Schools	857	152,248	5,473
2	Elementary (Junior High) Schools	178	6,092	(Statistics Not Available)
3	Secondary (Senior High) Schools	13	7,505	381
4	Tertiary (Colleges and University)	3	3,472	140

Through these educational institutions people are introduced to varying degrees of literacy-and numeracy. They are nurtured to possess the capability to locate, and to read with full comprehension, the most demanding materials, whether in a book or on a computer. The institutional curricula are

designed to assist students to be able to develop a position orally and present it effectively in writing. Their writing skills are sharpened to encompass both the ability to write correctly, and intelligently in order to advance a reader's understanding in a pleasant and rigorous style. The institutions of learning therefore assist believers to understand intelligently biblical concepts and values as they can read directly from their Bibles, study their Sabbath School Study Guides and be able to participate in worship by joining in the singing of hymns from their hymnals, either in English or the local languages.

Literacy and numeracy in the educational world are bedfellows. Adventist education promotes the understanding of the nature of mathematical forms of inquiry. At times there is the tendency of feeling of alienation from a technological society. This tendency is reduced, if not completely eliminated, and students helped to overcome this alienation and enabled to appreciate the significance of numerical and statistical data. We are reminded that

> *The Lord bids us love Him with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and with all the mind. This lays upon us the obligation of developing the intellect to its fullest capacity, that with all the mind we may know and love our Creator* (White, 1930:173).

The role of the Adventist institutions of learning become evident in the lives of students who grow to become responsible church members who are able to manage their own affairs and businesses well and thus able to finance the church through the return of faithful tithes and offerings.

(vi)   Spiritual Maturity: An Unshakable Trust in God

One of the cardinal tenets of Adventist formal education is to help students grow spiritually, having an unshakable trust in God. The ultimate goal for Adventist education, therefore, is redemption. It has rightly been said that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding" (Prov. 9: 10). It is the singular aim of Adventist education to instil in young minds the fear and knowledge of God. This implies that students have a growing relationship with the Lord nurtured through Bible study, personal devotion, commitment to witnessing, and selfless service to humanity, no matter the field of study.

Regular worship forms part of the learning process in Adventist institutions in Ghana. Students are encouraged and led to participate in campus ministry, by playing specific role during worship or

leading out in the organization of any religious activity or groups in the school or on campus. As students take part in these activities, they set on the path of spiritual maturity and unflinching trust in God.

5. Effectiveness of Adventist Education

We can now evaluate how effective Adventism in its education strategy in making positive impact in terms of beliefs and values on students, and the general public, both Christian and non-Christian have been. While much positive advances have been gained, there appears to be some challenges in the attempt by the Adventist church to convey its form of religiosity to Ghanaians. Her attempts, like those of other missionary churches operating in the country, have resulted in cultural determinism, in the sense of the erosion of certain African values since Christianity, as brought by European missionaries, was delivered wrapped/parcelled in European culture.

The Erosion of certain African Values

Adventism is a universal phenomenon, that is to say, it is a world-wide movement. As such it tends to carry with it some measure of cohesion on the part of the authorities that shape the path of the movement in the way it should go. Although Adventism may be perceived as a global phenomenon it is nonetheless dominated by Western values and ideologies. The various segments of the movement, including education, are expected to chart the same, or similar path and as it were, sing the same song. This includes Adventist educationists, notwithstanding Africans among them. For that matter, Adventist educational institutions are expected to have similar, if not the same, characteristics all over the world. This is illustrated in the establishment of the Accrediting Association of Seventh-day Adventist Schools, Colleges, and Universities (AAA). This organ of the education segment of the church is assigned the task of not only monitoring the academic performance of Adventist institutions of higher learning, but also to see to its Adventist calibre. In the process, often students that have undergone Adventist education stand the risk of losing much of their African heritage. It is true that there have been much evolution lately towards accommodating African traditional values, but there is still room for improvement.

Example of the erosion of African traditional values, though not entirely the doing of the AAA but implicitly re-enforces it is seen in the way Adventists worship—particularly relating to music, and

other rituals. Examples include the western style of music which is termed "worship hymns". There is also the case of behaviour during worship time. The use of African musical instruments (e.g., drums, and the various percussion instruments), and actions such as clapping of hands and ululating during worship are frowned upon. The use of western musical instruments and the exclamation of "Amen" are, however, preferred.[6]

The dress code is another case in point. Among most educated Adventists the Western three piece suit is the favoured choice for worship, particularly among the clergy. Although it is claimed that there is no "uniform" for the Adventist clergy, it appears generally considered that the western dress code is the right choice for official clerical duties. Hence, Adventist education, in some way, reinforces the departure from African worship and spirituality.

In the light of our discussion on some of the shortcomings of the Adventist education, what changes, if any, are therefore needed to be institutionalised to bolster the effectiveness of this means employed by the church? These are recommended below.

6. Recommendations

In the peculiar case involving African worship and spirituality, it is seen largely to have eroded or ignored certain African values. It is, therefore, strongly suggested that in order to bolster the effectiveness of Adventism in the country, much contextualization should be considered as follows:

- more emphasis be placed on commendable African ways of worship and spirituality. For example, more use of African rhythm and lyrics be explored and adopted to enhance the worship atmosphere among the unlettered.

- The use of African items in some rituals as emblems be strongly considered, and encouraged, e.g., the use of the abundant and cheap orange juice instead of the expensive grape juice (wine), the raw materials or the wine itself which are neither produced in Ghana. One may also use "abolo", the Ewe traditional cornbread, for the communion bread.

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[6] Investigation into the actual origin and effects of some of these musical instruments and practices will be interesting. However, this is beyond the scope of this paper.

- The African receiving the Adventist brand of formal education should be encouraged to remain an African at the same time a Christian. His/her mind should be directed to loving things peculiarly African which do not in any way infringe on Christian beliefs. For example, the virtual imposition of—in certain situations—the Western "wedding" on couples intending to get married.

7. Summary and Conclusion

Believers have the duty to demonstrate their relationship with their revered deity. This relationship is intangible, and may be referred to as spirituality. To nurture and make ones' spirituality visible, the adherent is often required to perform certain activities sometimes referred to as rituals, although, either alone or together in the religious community. This is described as being religious. Most religious traditions have laid down strategies for ensuring the evoking and nurturing potential and already warn members. The SDA church is not an exception.

From the very beginning of the church in Ghana the SDA Church adopted publishing (printing and literature evangelism) and the formal education strategies in conveying its brand of religious beliefs, values and lifestyle to their adherents. Later other strategies like the medical ministry came on board. It has been the pillar of Adventist educational philosophy to nurture students to become useful citizens in the communities they find themselves in, and to prepare them for life eternal. This means that recipients of SDA education are trained physically, mentally, and spiritually. In the attempt to accomplish this three prong objective of wholistic development, Seventh-day Adventist education comes to play a fundamental role. This role is made up of nine areas of human endeavour out of which six relevant ones have been discussed in this paper: open-mindedness which breads easy adaptability; understanding of one's historical development, and universal understanding relating to one's cultural position in the world; physical and mental health, a principle that places premium on total health; moral, spiritual, aesthetic, literary and numerical maturity; and community service. Although the Adventist church has contributed immensely to the religious outlook in Ghana, there are some challenges which need to be addressed if its efforts are to be fully effective.

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