

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

**CONTEXTUAL BIBLE READINGS OF 1 CORINTHIANS 14: 34-40 AND
WOMEN'S MINISTRY: A CASE STUDY OF SOME SELECTED
CHURCHES IN ACCRA**

BY

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Studies**

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature: Date:

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Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

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ABSTRACT

This work sought to use Contextual Bible Reading, where the text (1 Cor. 14: 34-40) was read with ordinary readers (women's groups) to find out what meaning they derive from the text. In preparation for the Contextual Bible Reading, a textual analysis of 1 Cor. 14:34-40 was done. The research went on to establish the implications of the text on the churches with regard to their doctrinal standpoint including the decisions of church councils or General Assemblies of the churches concerning women in Pastoral leadership in general and also the possibilities of their progression to higher positions of the Church's hierarchy even if they are given the opportunity for it. Recommendations were also made in the above mentioned regard, for improving women's leadership in the church particularly in the pastoral area.

The research came out with some findings. Firstly, more and more women take part in ministry and some aspects of leadership in the Church, though there are still decisions of the church that limit women from Pastoral leadership in the Church.

The women were of the view that there is a need for them to take up responsibilities for themselves. They opined that they needed to start training their young women to prepare them for leadership positions in the future. The women also said there is the need for the Church leadership to make deliberate policies to include women in higher pastoral positions in the Church. They also recommended an encouragement of a more proactive interaction where both ordinary and scholarly readers can learn from each other through discussions.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my beloved mother, Mrs. Florence Odofotsoo Amissah.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

Paul's letters are very important documents particularly for New Testament scholars who are interested in the development of New Testament theology. Chrysostom (1958) reiterates this assertion when he equates reading Paul's letters to listening to a "Spiritual Trumpet" which is extraordinary. However, he is not happy about the various interpretations given to the text by various authors and cautions that any interpretation of the text should to a greater extent, come with the knowledge of the man (Paul).

On the other hand, according to Cousar in his *Letters of Paul* "not every reader of Paul's letters, however, has responded with Chrysostom's enthusiasm; for some people, in fact, reading the letters has brought grief and pain" (1996, p.15). This means that there are those who are disheartened by the letters of Paul and are totally disgusted by them. For instance, "there are those who take offense at certain statements in the letters about women and others who find Paul anti-Semitic" (Cousar, 1996, p. 16). Consequently, the explanation for the church becomes long and there is a sordid oppression of women and Jews. According to Cousar, "Paul's letters show insensitivity to the anguish and distress of human life" (1996, p. 16).

Further more, 1 Corinthians has drawn increasing importance in biblical scholarship due to the issue of interpretation of Pauline texts in the scholarly field with the works of some scholars like Cousar (1956), Barrett (1968), Howe (1982), Fee (1987), Dunn (1995), Thiselton (2000), Fiorenza (2001) and Rakoczy (2004). In most of these works, the authors depict how Paul's writings to Corinth have had some impact on the contemporary church from the scholarly standpoints. Thus, the varying interpretations given to the texts by biblical scholars have, according to Barrett (1968), excited theological thinking and also opened new challenges to Paul's gospel and brought to focus his ideas of the Christian community which caused him to formulate his insight as a theologian and missionary (Dunn, 1995).

Though Paul's letters to the Corinthians have been debated by biblical scholars in terms of its attempt to address some of the doctrinal issues which the church in Corinth was confronted with, it is equally a fresh, creative and exciting theological thinking aimed at addressing some theological issues of the church (Barrett, 1968). "Paul's theology and teachings must have adapted and developed as new openings for the challenges to the gospels, and ideas of a Christian community caused him to formulate his insight as a theologian and missionary afresh" (Dunn, 1995, p. 21). This implies that Paul did not set out to develop theology but rather to respond to specific local issues by critical engagement and formulation of principles which the community can use in resolving those issues in their context. These are what have been put together by Pauline scholars as Pauline theology (Cousar, 1996). One of the major issues that Paul dealt with in

his letters is gender relations in the Corinthian Christian community which is seen in 1 Corinthians 14:34-40. In some cases, readers of this text indirectly mention how oppressive and subjugating the text is to women. Rakoczy opines that “there is a need to search for an alternative history and tradition to support the inclusion of women as full human beings” (2004, p. 18). She asks if there is any good news for women in the Christian tradition and cites the interpretation of the Pauline injunction that women should keep silent in churches 1 Corinthians 14:34 which is often interpreted in such a way as to stop women from teaching and preaching. Hence to ensure equity and fairness in assessing 1 Corinthians 14: 34-40 and stipulating the pericope, there is the need to take a careful look at the context in which this text was put by Paul.

In outlining the structure of Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians there is the introduction 1 Corinthians 1:1-9, news from Corinth 1 Corinthians 1:10- 6:20, Paul’s response to a letter from Corinth 1 Corinthians 7:1-16:4, and conclusion 1 Corinthians 16:5-24. Part of Paul’s first letter to Corinth, addresses the issue of spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:1-14:40 and the pericope of the text under study 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 falls within 1 Corinthians 14:1-40 that which addresses the issue of speaking in tongues and prophecy. The text is therefore within the general framework of the problems the Corinthian assembly encountered in exercising their Christian worship.

This research is particularly important because in contemporary times there are resemblances concerning the challenges that Christian communities face in the mode, essence, individual responsibilities and participation in worship and

will, therefore, help women in the churches understand the text in their own way. Barrett affirms that this text “applies to tongues and prophecy” (1968, p. 29) with respect to Christian public worship and thus, has problems associated with it. Consequently, not only are women to remain quiet in the assemblies since they have no permission to speak; theirs is a subordinate part, as the law stipulates in 1 Corinthians 14:34-35. 1 Corinthians 14: 34-40 is however, regarded as a pericope on its own and some scholars even see it as an interpolation (Fee, 1987).

1 Corinthians 14:1-33, also focuses on problems concerning prophecy and speaking in tongues and how they were to be practiced bearing in mind sensitivity, responsibility and the maintenance of order in the Church. Thus, from verse 34 onwards, specifically, the text addresses “the extent to which women were permitted to take part” (Barrett, 1968, p. 25) in these exercises, and it is this separate part (verses 34-40) which I am interested in and would want to focus on.

Statement of the problem

There are some Pauline texts that focus on gender issues. Likes of such texts are the ones in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 and 1 Corinthians 14: 34-40. Specifically, the debate over the appropriateness of women in leadership has been hot and heavy over the decades, focusing on Pauline theology in the New Testament which is partly related to 1 Corinthians 14: 34-40 and has given rise to some controversies over the role of women in the church. Through this, scholarly and ordinary readers of the text have arrived at conflicting interpretations of what Paul may have actually meant (Howe, 1982). This problem further deepened by

the fact that sometimes, the meaning given to a text of scripture creates an impression that seems to favour or at least encourage some form of restriction rather than liberation especially on women.

With this in mind the researcher is of the opinion that some interpretations and application of certain Pauline texts undermine the dignity of women and seem to put certain restrictions on them in society. Thus, the specific problem that the researcher is concerned with regarding 1 Corinthians 14: 34-40 is how it has been used to legislate on women's leadership roles in the church, specifically, institutional pastoral leadership even though women are mostly in the majority and are equally skilled. It must be admitted that, the text under study has been a contentious one and as such requires an act of engagement with contextual realities rather than an interpretative experiment or scholarly research (West, 2006a). In this regard, both the scholarly and ordinary readers will play their roles in finding solutions to how the interpretation of the text is used to legislate on women's roles in the church.

Purpose of the study

This work aims at testing how the interpretation of 1 Cor. 14:34-40, impinges on women in the church situation. Additionally, this study contributed to identifying other possibilities of new readings that throw more light on the text based on practical evidence and experiences from ordinary readers. Thus, by reading the text with the ordinary reader, the study lends flexibility to reading the selected text and how it is interpreted.

Significance of the study

This work helps both the academic and ordinary readers of the Bible to learn from each other in order to read the Bible from and for their specific context, focusing on the different ways in which the Bible could be read and interpreted to suit their specific situations.

Again, there has been a great deal of public discrimination against women both within the church and the society at large relegating them to the background, and this attitude is justified as being supported by the scripture (Rakoczy, 2004). Thus reading the Bible with the ordinary reader would be of aid to those likely to use this work such as churches, women's groups, and people in positions of decision making and perhaps to an extent, help in clearing the negative notions held by both the church community and society at large against women speaking in the church in terms of women holding higher leadership positions. Though there have been many works on women's issues by various scholars, the present study adds to available information by digesting or studying the scripture with ordinary readers in the selected churches. In addition, the textual reading and readings with the ordinary readers expose Church communities to how far trends have gone in the exposition and usage of this text in the community in terms of its application.

Objectives of the study

This study made an objective inquiry and analysis of 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 with ordinary readers of the Bible, to see what they had to say about the text. It

was also, to explore the bearing of the text on women's leadership in the church.

The specific objectives were to:

- Find out what readings there were to 1 Cor. 14: 34-40
- Explore the concept of institutional pastoral leadership in the church from the perspective of the ordinary reader;
- Analyze the ordinary reader's interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 with regards to women's leadership positions in churches;
- Establish the implications of 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 on the selected congregations and their doctrinal standpoint in relation to women's institutional pastoral leadership status;
- Make recommendations for improving women's institutional pastoral leadership roles in the church.

Limitations

In doing this research, the researcher became aware of certain difficulties that came her way. Since the researcher was dealing with ordinary readers there was some difficulty in translating some of the words in her questions into the Akan dialect especially with women of the Christ Apostolic Church International, Nima Assembly. This was because they were mainly Akan speaking people, since the researcher is not so proficient in the Akan language

The researcher also had difficulty in getting background information from some church officials, who were very reluctant in giving out such information. For instance, in an attempt to get evidences of decisions taken by the general

council of the Christ Apostolic Church International, they opined that it was too much to ask for, since I am not a member of their church.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Contextual Theology

Contextual theology is a term often used to cover a wide range of meanings. It is not a term that can be accepted uncritically, and in this regard, Mosala's article in the book *Resistance and hope* offers three grounds on which it is to be questioned.

Firstly, the notion implies a 'theological harmlessness'. The implication is that there can be a non- political theology, which must be made 'political' by applying it to a certain context and therefore thinks this is false. The second reason has to do with the social class origins of the term itself. In South Africa, this concept appeals more to the white and privileged theologians than to the Black and oppressed theologians. Thirdly, contextual theology as an attempt to do theology differently is simply tautological and theoretically bankrupt. This is because all theology is contextual theology. The real question is "what is the socio-political context out of which a particular theology emerges and which it serves (Villa-Vicencio & De Gruchy, 1985, pp. 103-104).

In this respect, the researcher understands contextualization not as the application of some absolute culture- free doctrines to a particular context (one which is not

often sufficiently understood in terms of the economic and political power structures). Rather it is:

The process of discovering what the spirit is saying to the churches in our context today and this is done in the light of what the spirit said to the churches and the prophets and Jesus in the past. Incarnation means God has already entered into our human situation and now we must open our eyes in order to see where God is, what the risen Christ is doing and what the spirit is calling us to do (Nolan, 1988, p. 27).

It is with this intent of learning to see the trained readers, do theology together with the ordinary people, and insisting that this theology must have meaning for the ordinary reader in their context of suffering, that this research is being conducted. Here trained readers refer to readers of the Bible who have had some formal Biblical Studies training (West, 1993), while the term “ordinary” is used in a general and specific sense. The general usage includes all readers who read the Bible in an untrained or pre-critical way. But the term “ordinary” is also used to indicate a particular sector of pre-critical readers, those readers who are poor and oppressed (including the vulnerable that is women). In the latter sense the term “ordinary” is similar to the terms “the people” or “the masses” as they are popularly used (West, 1993).

Research Process

This research project was built on the use of Huizer’s idea of an activist researcher, Philpott’s methodology as used in his work and West’s commitments

for a contextual study. Following a process which has similarities with the process described by Huizer, in his consideration of the requirements placed upon an “activist researcher”, he is of the opinion that what is firstly required is “an awareness of one’s own limitations, a sense of insecurity and of one’s relative ignorance (compared with the local people involved)” (Wisner, 1988, p. 273). In this case, it could be said that there is an awareness creation process or social investigation, where the researcher gets the opportunity to know things he or she has no idea of. Secondly, “in accepting one’s relative ignorance, one tries to learn from the people concerned through empathy and friendship, also, what their problems, needs and feelings are” (Wisner, 1988, p. 273). This process offers some level of education to the researcher with regards to the kind of challenges the people face in their daily lives. It is often realized that people who belong to the oppressed community are mostly the invisible participants of our society, the superfluous unknown people, and marginalized by the dominant sectors of society.

Not only are they invisible, their knowledge and practices as well as their wisdom and experience are also invisible and underestimated. It is presumed that they are merely at the receiving end of the expert’s superior knowledge and solutions. These ordinary readers have no access to the institutions that are responsible for the production of knowledge, thus have no way of influencing the development of appropriate and useful knowledge, let alone determining which questions and issues are researched, until researchers find the need to move into their communities to research and document things about them. Thus this research

is particularly interested in the meaning which members of a marginalized community generate from their reflection on who God has assigned as a leader of the church.

The importance of learning from the “invisible”, in our endeavours to better respond to the crucial issues of our society, is highlighted by Rappaport who argues that “social problems, paradoxically, require that experts, in order to discover the many different, even contradictory, solutions that they use to gain control, must find meaning and empower their own lives” (Rappaport, 1981, p. 24). This then brings to the fore, the importance of reading with the ordinary readers of the Bible, so that together, both the trained and ordinary readers find solutions to the problems the ordinary readers face. Thirdly, “after acquiring sufficient knowledge, and an understanding of the local problems, further dialogue with the local people, particularly through discussions in small groups, searching together for possible solutions is undertaken” (Wisner, 1988, p. 273). This is done to maximize participation of members and to relegate the researcher to the background as he or she comes in only at the plenary level.

In this particular study, the researcher read the text by adapting Gerald West’s “Commitments” for working with Contextual Bible Study groups, since they are in line with Graham Philpott’s methodology. Firstly, the study would be done from the perspective of the Ghanaian context, particularly with women groups whose participation in higher realms of the Church hierarchy has been denied. In doing this, the reader must first acknowledge, that all readers are, to some extent, shaped by their context which influences their readings of the Bible,

thus there is a need to recognize the environmental factors that have formed us. Readers must however be conscious of the fact that they read the Bible in their context (Ghana) and that is not wrong, but it would only be wrong if they do not recognize it. Hence, acknowledging the role the Ghanaian context plays in the reading of the Bible is important because readers do not only read in their context, but they should also desire to read the Bible explicitly from and for the Ghanaian context. The reader also needs to read the Bible from a particular perspective in Ghana which is related to gender issues and how the plights of women have been overlooked. For this reason, the text was read with women in three churches in Nima, a suburb of Accra. This area is a deprived one, dominated by Northerners who have a culture of male superiority hence overlooking the importance of women in their communities.

Secondly, the researcher is committed to reading the Bible in community with others, particularly ordinary readers from contexts different from hers. In doing this the researcher, through empathy and friendship would learn their problems and needs of the group under study in relation to the group's community and critical consciousness of the text. This method of interaction brings out the richness that reading the Bible with others offer, since we learn by listening to others and by sharing our own contributions amidst being careful that readings of the ordinary readers are not simply and uncritically accepted and also, not to dictate to them how they should read the Bible.

Thirdly, there is a need for a commitment to reading the Bible critically. In engaging in a critical reading with the ordinary readers, the researcher sought to

probe beneath the surface that is being suspicious of the status quo by asking systematic and structured questions. This approach became important because there is a need to be concerned that all readers recognise the ideological nature of the Bible and its interpretations and also. It is also important because we are concerned that all readers develop critical skills and tools so that they are empowered to do their own critical analysis of the Bible and its interpretations. Again, while most of us accept that interpretations of the Bible are shaped by the interests and experiences of those who read it, we find it hard to accept that the Bible itself is shaped by the interests and experiences of those who produce it. Thus a critical reading does not mean that we have a negative attitude towards the Bible, but rather, an attempt to minimize manipulations of the Bible by allowing the Bible to speak from its own contexts. Therefore we must question and study the Bible rather than just accepting and repeating what others tell us about the Bible.

Finally, the need for an action plan comes to bear. Through this, the researcher discovered the personal and social transformation that occurred through the Bible Study process by asking them what they were planning to do after the study and how they thought they could effect or apply the lessons learnt in their churches. It is evident that while a critical approach to the Bible and our context is acquired through learning, there are already a remarkable willingness and ability on the part of ordinary readers to appropriate and apply the Bible to real issues in their context. Again, a careful and systematic study of the Bible and a careful and systematic analysis of our context enable us to appropriate the Bible

more carefully because we are able to identify both similarities and differences between the Bible and its contexts on the one hand and ourselves and our contexts on the other hand. The second aspect of concern here is that our readiness to read the Bible for transformation should include both the personal and the social which includes all aspects of societal reality (the existential, the political, the economic, the cultural and the religious spheres of life).

This study was undertaken in a Bible study group, consisting of ordinary readers of the Bible, who are also members of the churches in focus which are the Christ Apostolic Church International, The Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Hope Congregation and the St Timothy Anglican Church all located in Nima, a suburb of Accra, the capital city of Ghana. The research was conducted in discussion groups, comprising the women's groups from each selected church who have a culture of studying the Bible. The focus group discussion method was applied. This was facilitated by the researcher as well as the members of the group. During this process, discussions from the meetings were recorded (written) by appointed recorders in the small groups and also, by the researcher during the plenary session, after which the written records were transcribed and typed in full.

Research instruments

The study employed both secondary and primary sources. Secondary data was obtained through published and unpublished works and books, journals, newspapers, the internet, brochures, as well as conference papers and working papers that treat aspects of the topic under investigation. This research was

conducted through a general exegetical study by using the Greek text, since that was the original language in which it was written. Corley, Lovejoy and Lemke (2002) in their book *Biblical hermeneutics: A comprehensive introduction to interpreting scripture*, are of the view that hermeneutics is a theory of interpretation and exegesis is a practice of interpretation. In accordance with Stuart's definition of exegesis from the *Anchor Bible dictionary*, exegesis is the process of a careful analytical study of the biblical passages undertaken in order to produce useful interpretations of these passages (1992). This process as emphasized by Stuart is systematic and interrelated, as no single text or passage should be treated or seen as independent. He has suggested that to do exegesis, an exegete must select a text of any length depending on his/ her interest but that it is important that the particular unit of the text is properly demarcated in order to follow or understand properly the order in which the periscope one chooses is following. The text was however, analyzed, using Textual Criticism. According to Ehrman (2005) in his book *Misquoting Jesus: the story behind who changed the Bible and why*, Textual criticism otherwise known as (lower criticism) is a branch of literary criticism that is concerned with the identification and removal of transcription errors in the texts of manuscripts. Ancient scribes made errors or alterations when copying manuscripts by hand. Given a manuscript copy, several or many copies, but not the original document, the textual critic seeks to reconstruct the original text (the archetype or autograph) as closely as possible. In the view of Vincent (1899) the same processes can be used to attempt to reconstruct intermediate editions, or recensions, of a document's transcription

history. The ultimate objective of the textual critic's work is the production of a "critical edition" containing a text most closely approximating the original.

After textually analyzing the text, the use of primary sources was applied. This comprised focused group discussions (FGD) and in-depth interviews. A Focused Group Discussion is a form of qualitative research in which a group of people are asked about their perceptions, opinions, beliefs and attitudes towards a product, service, concept, advertisement, idea, or packaging. Focus groups allow interviewers to study people in a more natural setting than a one-to-one interview. Questions are asked in an interactive group setting where participants are free to talk with other group members. Focus Group Discussion produces data and insights that would be less accessible without interaction found in a group setting, listening to others' verbalized experiences stimulates memories, ideas, and experiences in participants. This is also known as the group effect where group members engage in "a kind of 'chaining' or 'cascading' effect; talk links to, or tumbles out of, the topics and expressions preceding it (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). The Group members also discover a common language to describe similar experiences. This enables the capture of a form of "native language" or "vernacular speech" to understand the situation and again, Focus groups also provide an opportunity for disclosure among similar others in a setting where participants are validated. For example, in the context of workplace bullying, targeted employees often find themselves in situations where they experience lack of voice and feelings of isolation. Use of focus groups to study workplace

bullying therefore serve as both an efficacious and ethical venue for collecting data (Tracy, Lutgen-Sandvik & Alberts, 2006).

In this research, the Focus Group Discussion applied the contextual Bible study method of Gerald West, using study outlines which are in line with the objectives of the study. This outline was used in formulating an in-depth interview schedules with two women elders selected from each congregation. In the end, the researcher made use of qualitative data analysis (QDA) to analyze the responses from the women's groups and the six interviews, where each person's view was taken into consideration and then a critical evaluation of the outcome was done. Qualitative research aims to gather an in-depth understanding of human behavior and the reasons that govern such behavior. The qualitative method investigates the *why* and *how* of decision making, not just *what*, *where*, *when*. Hence, smaller but focused samples are more often needed, rather than large samples. This means that each interview or ideas of each participant is crucial to the existence of this work. Participants of the focused group discussions included members of women's groups in the various churches that are committed to studying the Bible.

Furthermore, the selection of the congregations was done in representation of Churches that are decided on having women Pastors and leaders in higher courts of the Church, Churches that are not decided on having women Pastors and leaders in higher hierarchies of the church and Churches that are undecided on having women Pastors and leaders in higher decision making bodies, that is neither for nor against having women leaders in the Church. These various

categories are represented by The Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Hope congregation; The Christ Apostolic Church International and The St. Timothy Anglican Church respectively, all situated in Nima, a suburb of Accra even though there are many Churches that fit these profiles. These churches were also selected due to some contacts the researcher had already made in these Churches and the openness of these Churches for the researcher's topic. The women's groups in the respective churches were used for the Contextual reading, while the selection of interviewees was through purposive sampling of two women leaders from each of the respective churches. After the data collection, there was an analysis, presentation of the results from the analysis then a reflection, summary, conclusion and recommendations made on the survey.

Chapter Organization

The study was made up of five chapters.

- The introductory chapter looked at the statement of problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, objectives of the study, limitations, research methodology, research process, research instruments, chapter organization, and review of relevant and related literature.
- Chapter two dealt with the exegesis of the selected text for the research.
- Chapter three presented the actualization of the text which involved a Contextual Bible Reading of the text with some members in the selected congregations.
- Chapter four focused on analysis of the findings from the Bible study.

- The final chapter presented a summary, bringing to the fore an analysis, presentation of the results from the analysis, reflections on the survey and recommendations to shaping contemporary leadership roles of women in the Church.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Relevant literature, commentaries on the text and other materials on how women have struggled in some situations and as a result got the chance to play phenomenal or unique roles in the church were reviewed. The review was done under the following headings:

- Background of the text, 1 Corinthians 14:34-40.
- The Corinthian community as perceived by scholars
- Concept of leadership and the role of women in the early church in Corinth.

Background of the text

1 Corinthians, as Barclay (1956) in his book: *The letters to the Corinthians* has said, takes the lid off a New Testament Church in a way that no other writing does. Barclay could not have said it much better. This is because it helps readers see how Christianity established itself and what it meant to be a Christian, and also what it meant to be the Church in a Mediterranean city in the middle of the first century. According to Dunn (1995), it soon becomes clear from

even a casual reading of the letter that the church in Corinth was a very mixed group, with several differing views and practices which put considerable strain on their common life. The researcher agrees with Dunn on this view, since the people of Corinth were from different socio- cultural backgrounds and varied beliefs; there were pagans who were converted to the Christian faith, the poor and uneducated, as well as people from the upper classes among others. As a result of their different backgrounds it would not be easy for them to always agree on everything. To Dunn, the most fascinating is the way in which Paul dealt with these tensions, and since the letter was preserved and later placed among the canonical book, we may infer that its handling of these tensions was recognized to be of lasting value. Another interesting aspect of 1 Corinthians is that it has attracted an amazing amount of attention over the years, precisely because it deals with so many practical issues of mutual relations within the first- century and between its members and their neighbours. It is not simply a theological treatise of all purpose such as the book of Hebrews and the book of Revelations which were about the Christians keeping faith and hope without being moved by their persecutions. Of course, this is due to the fact that 1 Corinthians is normally used as a form of authority in attending to the day to day situations in the Christian church and larger society while at the same time it causes controversies with regards to certain aspects such as gender issues.

Freed (2001) thinks that the status of some women was also raising concern in Corinth. To him, women had perhaps joined the Jesus movement apparently without the consent of their husbands 1 Corinthians 7:13, and were

sharing in such functions as prayer and prophecy 1 Corinthians 11:2-16. I disagree with Freed in the sense that I do not see anything wrong with joining a movement to be involved in praying and prophesying. Obviously, he said, such women were not conforming to what was usually expected of females in that day, thus this non conformity in the church at Corinth may have led to the first women's liberation movement in developing Christianity. As a result, Paul wrote to suggest a compromise for the situation, but what he wrote in 1 Corinthians 7:1-40, 11:2-16 and especially 14:34-40 raises many questions about how he actually felt. Paul's writings, in my view, are nothing close to a compromise, but rather trying to suppress the God-given talents of women.

Freed continually alleged that Paul's statement that "women should be silent in the church" 14:34-35 contradicts 11:2-6 where it is clearly implied that women properly veiled can participate in praying and prophesying at public worship. Due to this contradiction, Freed said, verses 33b -35 interrupt Paul's discussion about prophecy and speaking in tongues which is resumed in verse 37 and because the thought of those verses coincides with that of 1 Timothy 2: 11-12 and Ephesians 5:22 it may be a later interpolation. To Freed, if the words are from Paul, he may have in mind a kind of meeting different from that in 1 Corinthians 11:2-6. In partial agreement to Freed's perception, Paul was contradicting his speeches, thus it becomes quite difficult to figure out what Paul actually intended to put across to the Corinthians. Freed (2001) thinks Paul may have been influenced by the practice in Jewish synagogues, where women did not speak, or he may have been trying to counter a strong feminist movement at Corinth that

was contributing to disorder in worship, or perhaps, Paul may have wanted to ward off discussions between husbands and wives that might result in insubordination of wives to their husbands as indicated in 1 Corinthians 14:34 and Genesis 3:16. I agree with Freed on the fact that Paul might have been influenced by his Jewish background, but do not agree with him on the point that women were causing disorder, since I do not see anything wrong with women sharing ideas with men concerning matters related to the well being of the church or for that matter spiritual issues.

The other feature Wire (1990) draws particular attention to is the appeal to considerations of *honor* and *shame* (11:5-6), which she perceives as an important motivation in the ancient world. It is also noticeable that the only other passage where Paul talks of *shame* is (14:35). “That the appeal could be made in these terms indicated that the women were not of low social status but would recognise and respond to such considerations” (Wire, 1990). She presumes that they had thus far understood their honour in terms of their new baptismal status in sharing Christ’s image. I side with Wire, that perhaps, the women meant no harm, but rather found the need to share with others in their new found image, which obviously has nothing to do with shame.

As Fiorenza (1983) among others, has pointed out, the solution probably lies in the recognition that the instruction is directed not to all women but to wives. The clue she said, is given by Paul’s advice of their ‘*being subject*’ and ‘*at home*’. In this regard, it could be said that “Paul’s concern, therefore, is more for the good order of the household (wives seeming to usurp the authority of their

husbands by their questioning, or so it would appear), and so also of the assembly (1 Corinthians 14:40), than to promote a theology of women's subordination to them" (Dunn, 1995, p. 75). I partly agree with Fiorenza on this point because no particular category of women was specified. Besides only wives had husbands, but interpretations given to the text seem to be applied to all women in the churches of today. Meanwhile, I find absolutely no correlation between women praying and prophesying and the usurping of authority of their husbands, since the assembly is not opened only to men.

Barrett in his commentary on *The first epistle to the Corinthians* thinks, it is possible to argue either that verses 34 and 35 are in their rightful place, or that they were not an original part of the epistle, but a marginal note based on 1 Timothy 2:11-15 and inserted by a copyist at different points (1968, p. 330).

Barrett further stresses on the fact that "it is a strong argument in favour of the latter view that there appears to be a contradiction between verses 34 onwards and what is said about the role of women in chapter 11:5" (Barrett, 1968, p. 330). On the other hand, "it may be argued that verses 34 onwards appear to interrupt the discussion of prophecy in the assembly, and might for this reason have been moved from their original place by a copyist wishing to produce a smoother text" (Barrett, 1968, p. 330). Barrett could not be right about this because Paul here, was addressing two different communities and besides would not want to repeat himself in a letter. As a result I am of the view that Paul was on the side of men in

addressing women with relation to the exercise of spiritual gifts in the assembly to be silent.

Barrett (1968) just like Ellis (1981) and Barton (1986) highlights the idea that according to Acts 21: 9, prophetesses were not unknown in the church, thus only two possibilities could be worthy of serious consideration; that firstly, Paul did not write verses 34-40. They were added later as a marginal note at a time when good order was thought more important than the freedom of the spirit. I disagree with their views, because, 1 Corinthians is part of the unopposed Pauline Epistles. If Paul did not write it, then the authorship of this book must be revisited. If women were not unknown in the Church, then why the injunction of silence now? However nothing depicts disorder on the side of women if they are exercising their spiritual gifts. Barrett, went on to say that it could also have been possible that “ Paul had been informed of feminist pressure (possibly of feminine chatter) which was contributing seriously to the disorder in the Christian assembly in Corinth, and took energetic measures to stamp it out” (Barrett, 1968, p. 332). This could not have been possible since Paul did not give evidence of what they actually did. Therefore, I think Paul was just being unfair to women. In this regard, one would want to study the nature of the Corinthian community in order to find out if there was any hidden evidence on women in the assembly for which Paul asked them to keep silent.

The Corinthian community

Barrett states that Corinth was situated at the south- western extremity of the isthmus that connects the mainland of Greece with the Peloponnese. The region, he said, “was not fertile, but its economic advantages were great” (Barrett, 1968, p.1). It controlled the land route between north and south and also acted as a land link, indispensable until the cutting of the Corinth canal (begun but given up by Nero, and only completed in 1893), in the sea route between east and west. Ehrman (2000) also has it that Corinth was a large and prosperous city south of Thessalonica, in the Roman province of Achaia, of which it was `the capital. Ehrman added that it was located on the isthmus dividing the northern and southern parts of modern-day Greece. It was a major centre of trade and communication which served by two major ports within walking distance. In harmony with Barrett and Ehrman the access that the Corinthians had to trade and communication might explain the wealthy nature of the members of the Corinthian community of which women were no exemption. The city was destroyed in 146 BCE by the Romans but “after 100 years of desolation, Corinth was re-founded by Julius Caesar a century later, as a Roman colony” (Barrett, 1968, p. 2). Corinth in Paul’s time, according to Ehrman, “was a cosmopolitan place, the home of a wide range of religious and philosophical movements” (2000, p. 317). Barrett made it clear that after the destruction,

The citizens were killed, or sold into slavery; the city itself was leveled with the ground and rebuilding was forbidden. The territory became public land of Rome, except part that was given to the neighbouring state of

Sicyon, on the understanding that henceforward Sicyon in place of Corinth, would maintain the Isthmian Games (1968, p. 2).

Perhaps, the public nature of Corinth accounted for the varied lifestyles of the inhabitants. This may therefore be associated with the influence of the culture of the conquering states on Corinth, where they had other people coming to live in Corinth from different places with different ideas and cultures.

The new settlers, to whom the tradition of Corinth meant little, were drawn from various parts of the empire; many might have been discharged soldiers. No doubt, Barrett said, there were Greeks among them, but it is impossible to think of the Corinth of Paul's day as in any way distinctively Greek (Barrett, 1968). New Corinth was thus a cosmopolitan city. The immoral reputation of old Corinth (words derived from the name Corinth seems to have been used in the Old Comedy with the meanings *to practice fornication, whoremonger, and the like*) may not be simply carried across a century; it cannot however be said that the new foundation went out of its way to redeem the past (Barrett, 1968). The new city faced an immoral reputation due to the fact that there were settlers from surrounding communities who were of different cultural orientations. In Paul's day, Corinth was probably a little better and little worse than any other great sea port and commercial centre of the age (Barrett, 1968). Due to the exposure Corinth was opened to, women had prominent roles to play, and some of them worked with the Apostle Paul. However, he gave a command for women to keep silent in the church which contradicts his initial utterances with respect to women, thus there have been some scholarly opinions on the text

in 1 Corinthians 14:34-40. Paul might have just wanted to take sides with the Corinthian men to keep their women from the eyes of the men they traded with, perhaps for the fear of losing them, thus limiting them to the home. This idea, might account for the use of this text to put fear in the women and make them not to participate in public worship in the Corinthian assembly.

According to Barrett's commentary on *Spiritual Gifts*, "the command that women should keep silent in the churches does not mean that they should take no interest in what happens in the assembly, of which they are members" (1968, pp. 330-334). I disagree with Barrett, due to the fact that considering the nature of women, it is very impossible for a woman to take interest in something without possibly participating or making contributions. Barrett's opinion on verse 35 is that it actually contemplates married women whose husbands are Christians, so if 'they wish to learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home'. How about those unmarried members of the assembly, who are they going to turn to? Barrett in this instance suggests that if they wish to learn, they may presumably persuade married friends to put questions to their husbands since nothing is said in the Bible of any minister or teacher who may or should be consulted about the content, or application of Christian truth (Barrett, 1968). Hence if women should speak, it is seen as a disgraceful thing for them to speak in an assembly. I agree with Barrett on this view, because in other words the unmarried women are being pushed to usurp the marriages of their married friends, which would rather cause disorder.

Another way in which a Church may sometimes present a viewpoint more clear-cut than the New Testament documents allow, relates more specifically to women's participation in public worship (Howe, 1982). This issue on women is more often opened and closed with nothing more than a quick reference to 1 Corinthians 14:34. Howe could not be far from the point. 1 Corinthians 14: 34-40 is quickly used to suppress the desires of women participating in public worship anytime they make attempts, hence making the Bible or text more oppressive than liberative. In Howe's book entitled *Women and Church leadership*, she thinks that "it is supposed, the text precludes a woman from occupying the pulpit of a church and therefore, by definition, from being ordained to higher leadership positions in the church" (1982, p. 17). To her it is a quick reference since this passage is but a small part of a somewhat lengthy letter, addressing anomalies in the church and it suddenly jumps into this. Of course, this passage is in a way, a sort of an everlasting deterrent for women to get into public worship.

Howe is continually of the view that the passages in Paul's letter to the Corinthians have given rise to all manner of controversies over the role of women in the church. This, she said, may be because "the ideas expressed in 1 Corinthians 14: 33-36 have sometimes been taken out of context and Christians have arrived at somewhat differing interpretations of what Paul actually meant" (Howe, 1982, p. 58). This passage has indeed created varied interpretations and emotions about women's place in the church, making it seem as if they were never a part of God's idea of the spiritual duties in the church that is the perspective with Paul's exhortation in 1 Corinthians 14:34-36: "the women should

keep silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate...it is shameful for a woman to speak in church” (1 Corinthians 14:34-36). Howe reports Calvin to have written that, he thinks the text clearly teaches that “women are inferior to men and should not participate in Christian worship” (Howe, 1982, p. 63). A woman, as Howe quotes Calvin to have said, “derives her origin from the man; she is therefore inferior in rank and that all women are born that they may acknowledge themselves inferior in consequence of the superiority of the male sex” (Howe, 1982, p. 63). Calvin is not right because women were created as helpmates to men and not to be subjects to men.

Aquinas, in his commentary entitled *The First epistle to the Corinthians* is of the view that more women are recorded to have prophesied like the Samaritan woman (John 4:39) and Anna the wife of Phanuel (Luke 2:36) and Deborah (Judges 4:4) among other prominent women in the Bible. To him, “there are two things in prophecy, which are revelation and its manifestations; but women are not excluded from revelation, for many things are revealed to women as to men” (dhspriority.org). If Aquinas is right about this assertion, why then does Paul ask women to keep silent in the assembly if they are all championing the same cause?

It is sad to know, that the power of the patriarchal nature of the church severely limits the ability of women to exercise their gifts for the good of the church community. “As women become aware of their God-given dignity and giftedness, their alienation in the church increases” (Rakoczy, 2004, p. 198). Rakoczy is right. The more women became aware of their God-given talents, the more they got relegated to warming the pews in the church. It is true, that in

Africa, women have a wider role in the African Indigenous Churches- founding them, leading them, ministering as prophetesses, evangelists and healers (Rakoczy, 2004). However, for most African women, the words of Oduyoye describe their experience:

The way western churches that have been implanted in Africa look at women mirrors their Euro- American predecessors . . . Issues such as the ordination of clergy and ecumenism are prime examples.... These churches which most often take the form of patriarchal hierarchies, accept the material services of women but do not listen to their voices, seek their leadership, or welcome their initiatives (Oduyoye, 1995b, pp. 172-173).

I see eye to eye with Oduyoye on this point, because with the patriarchal orientation of the church, all the Church leadership knows is that the church is entirely a masculine affair and thus a woman has got nothing to do with Church leadership. As a result

The exclusion of women from decision making in most of the Christian churches ... represents the power of the patriarchal perceptions that women are not fully the image of God, lacking true equality with men, are seductive and dangerous, weak in intellect and will, thus providing the basis for the denial of women's gifts for ministry and leadership in the church. Thus a twisted and false anthropology has infected the church to the detriment of all (Rakoczy, 2004, p. 199).

This perception is not true, since there is no other way apart from biological differences that women lack equality with men, and besides, men could be as seductive as women and even more dangerous.

Concept of leadership in the Church

In Ehrman's book *The New Testament* he states that

it has long been thought that women never played a significant role in the ancient Jewish Synagogues... that they could not assume positions of leadership, that they could not participate in the services, that they could not even sit with the men but had their own galleries from which to *observe* the action (2000, p. 43).

I would agree with Ehrman on this basis that an explanation to Paul's hostility towards women may be due to his Jewish training. In part, this view was based on Jewish sources written long after the first century. For instance, the Talmud is:

The great collection of ancient Jewish traditions that comprises the Mishnah, called Gemarah). There are two collections of the Talmud, one made in Palestine and during the early fifth Century CE and the other in Babylonia perhaps a year later, which is normally considered the more authoritative (Ehrman, 2000).

These are sources written by men and they incorporated their own viewpoint of what was desirable; in part it was based on a form of feminist Christian scholarship that many people today would consider anti-Jewish (Ehrman, 2000). If this is the fact, then on the basis of cultural adaptations, Paul

might be doing all these due to the effect his cultural background had on him. Perhaps, this statement could be trying to say that Jesus, who had women amongst his followers, was much more liberated than the oppressive Jewish chauvinists of his day. Ehrman went on to say that it is possible that Jesus' special concern for women among his followers and the presence of women among the leaders of early Christian churches is tied to the role that women sometimes played in the Jewish synagogues. Even today, Paul plays a critical role in the debate of women leadership in the church as he is often thought to be a misogynist who tried to "keep women in their place" (Ehrman, 2000, p. 395). Indeed Paul, unlike Jesus is only being biased and oppressive towards women leadership in the church where everyone during Jesus' time was seen as equals when it came to matters of worship.

In the same way also, Cousar (1996) finds it essential to explore the male-female relationship further since Paul, in spite of Galatians 3:28, is regularly accused of excessive misogynist tendencies. To Cousar,

Paul's concern is not with who has authority over whom. He is drawing on the creation story in Genesis 2:18-23, in which God creates Eve from Adam's rib. In doing so Paul acknowledges the gender distinctions between male and female and their implications for worship in the community (Cousar, 1996, p. 137).

Though I partly agree with Cousar on the issue of Paul's accusation of excessive misogynist tendencies, I do not side with him on the fact that God created woman

from the rib of man to be a servant to man, but a woman was created as a companion for man.

According to Ehrman (2000), women played prominent roles in the earliest Christian churches, including those associated with the apostle Paul, serving as evangelists, pastors, teachers and prophets, while the wealthy ones amongst them were giving financial support to the apostle. Likes of such women were Phoebe, Prisca, Aquila, Mary among others. Why, then, do most people today think that all of the early Christian leaders were men? Despite the crucial role women played in the earliest Christian churches, by the end of the first century they faced serious opposition from those who denied them the right to occupy positions of status and authority. “This position succeeded in pressing Christian women into submission to male authority and obscured the record of their earlier involvement” (Ehrman, 2000, p. 396). In my view, this blame should be put on the patriarchal nature and gender bias of those who put the Bible together. For if it had not been for them, women would have had their voices heard in public decision making processes.

The Pauline churches eventually moved to the position embraced by the Pastoral Epistles where they restricted the roles that women could play in the churches, insisted that Christians be married and made Christian women submit to the dictates of their husbands both at home and in the church (Ehrman, 2000). I agree with Ehrman, for it would be easy to attribute this move simply to male chauvinism, which was much active in ancient times as it is today.

People in our world today, typically consider males and females as two different kinds of human beings related to one another like two sides of the coin unlike in antiquity where males and females are not thought of as different in *kind* but as different in *degree*. “In Roman society, those who were ‘weaker’ were supposed to be subservient to those who were stronger, and women were, by their very nature, weaker than men” (Ehrman, 2000, p. 404). Thus Ehrman articulated that “nature itself had set up a kind of pecking order, in which men were to be dominant over women as imperfect and underdeveloped beings and women accordingly were to be submissive to men” (Ehrman, 2000, p. 404). In fact, I do not see the point here; because there is no way physical strength could be compared to the exercise of spiritual duties in the church to the extent of silencing women from exercising their spiritual gifts.

Women’s virtues, on the other hand, derived from their own sphere of influence, whereas a man’s were associated with the public arena of power relations such as a forum, military, the work place amongst others. Thus the domestic nature of a woman’s virtues generally required her to keep out of the public eye.

At least this is what the Roman men who wrote moral essays for women urged them to do; they were not to speak in public debates, they were not to exercise authority over their husbands, and they were not to be involved with other men sexually (Ehrman, 2000, p. 404).

For this reason, women who sought to exercise any power or authority over men were thought to be *unnatural*. When women did attain levels of authority, as was

happening with increasing regularity in the Roman world during the time of the New Testament, they were often viewed suspiciously. They were maligned for not knowing their place, for not properly maintaining female virtues, and for being sexually aggressive, even if their personal sex lives were totally unknown. Ehrman's argument here is very unrealistic. 1 Corinthians focuses on exercising spiritual gifts and not the exhibition of physical strength, therefore if women are being kept out of the public eye; it is tantamount to hiding the gift God has given them thus denying the public of the benefits of such gifts.

This ongoing theoretical discussion of the ideology of gender in the Roman world, that is, of the way that people mentally and socially constructed sexual differences, gives us a background for reconsidering the progressive oppression of women in the Pauline churches and hence our present day churches. It would be however, befitting to note that though women were in prominent positions during the period of Jesus and that of Paul, women may have been disproportionately represented in the earliest Christian communities.

It is not uncommon to encounter dialogue between people who hold different opinions concerning the place of women in the church community. In Howe's view,

some people are persuaded that a woman's role is a secondary role. They believe that women may be actively involved in the everyday running of a church, may devote their time to visiting the sick, their money to worthy projects and their energy to the effective operations of missionary outreach (1982, p.15).

There is however, no text in the Bible that states that the roles of women are secondary and that only women are capable of the above listed duties. Men could also do it and perhaps even better. Therefore, both men and women are capable of taking up all roles in the church.

This then implies that, women are only needed for the hospitality growth of the church. Irrespective of these roles women are engaged in, “women still maintain that the decision-making process of the church should be assigned to men, as well as any teaching ministry which is conducted from the pulpit” (Howe, 1982, p.15). Just as women can play hospitable roles, so can men. In the same way, women as much as men could be leaders of the church since they all have the well being of the church at heart. On the other hand, others hold views that support the stance that Christian women should share with men in the decision-making process and should participate freely in the teaching ministry of the church in addition to the above mentioned activities basing their views on Paul’s writing in 1 Corinthians 11:11-12 which states: “Nevertheless, in the Lord a woman is not independent of man nor man of woman; for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God”. I fully concur with this for in Christ all are one.

“A church may strongly resist acknowledging that cultural adaptation is necessary and yet allow cultural norms to govern its thinking in relation to women and church leadership” (Howe, 1982, p. 22). This, Howe said could be seen when considering the church assembled for worship. She further explains that “in many churches (although the situation is changing) the person occupying the pulpit is a

man” (Howe, 1982, p. 22). He leads the congregation through the entire liturgical process, where his message may be geared towards teaching doctrines or explaining Christian ethics, thus aims to move the congregation to a response that may take the form of repentance, re-evaluation of standards of life, or renewed consciousness of the vitality of the Christian experience. The congregation sometimes depends on him for guidance in spiritual matters, for encouragement in times of difficulty, or inspiration when faith is waning. In this instance, it is true that women are some sort of decorations in the church though they might form the majority of the congregation. Since the congregation depends entirely on him whether he correctly leads or misleads them, they all follow.

Howe probes; “why has this particular leadership position been assigned to a man?” (1982, p. 23) While others maintain the view that the minister is a priest and that the ancient Hebrew priesthood was reserved for men, others conceive of God as a male being and think it fitting that his representative be male, and others also argue that because the apostles were men all church ministers should be men (Howe, 1982, pp. 23,24). This however, does not seem to be right, what about the women disciples who held churches in their homes and those who evangelized? Most of these women have been mentioned in other parts of the New Testament.

On the other hand, Howe expresses that “there are problems too, in attitudes toward sexuality. Although this opinion is not often stated, some people feel it is ‘improper’ for a woman to stand before a church congregation. What is usually implied is that “a woman’s body is sexually stimulating to men and that a church setting is not a suitable place for such stimulation” (Howe, 1982, p. 25). I

would be prompt to ask if women are therefore to be held accountable forever for men's passion, while it is discreetly overlooked that men may arouse the same in women.

During the present century, however, significant changes have been taking place thus it is now widely recognised that there are scriptural and historical reasons for challenging customs which have led to male dominance in church leadership, hence "there are efforts being made towards the establishment of a new church structure that gives equal honour to both sexes" (Howe, 1982, p. 129). This will absolutely be acceptable, if it would give women their required liberation.

Elizabeth Behr-Sigel of France, in September 1976, delivering a keynote address at a consultation in Agapia, Romania maintained that orthodox women are not necessarily happy about the place "assigned to them from time immemorial by nature and by tradition" (Tarasal & Kirillova, 1977, p. 17). She claims that social customs and conventions rather than true theological insights, frequently govern attitudes towards women. "Unhappily", she says "women have been subordinated by social and cultural mechanisms; they have been separated from men and have been relegated to the inferior position" (Tarasal & Kirillova, 1977, p. 17). Somewhere along the line, the church has overlooked the fact that "the revelation of the One God in three persons... is reflected as the Creator's will in the multiplicity of persons and the unity of human nature in humanity" (Tarasal & Kirillova, 1977, p. 19). This is very true, for in the majority, orthodox women have been left to be spectators of the day to day worship in their churches, making them quite defective in the exercise of spiritual gifts in the church.

Reuther attributed the exclusion of women from church leadership not to “the order of creation”, but to “the fallen disorder of injustice” (Gardiner, 1975, p. 31). She challenges the entire symbolism sustaining the Roman Catholic Church’s hierarchical structure – symbolism which speaks of power, lordship and authority. Other scholars like Carr and McBrien, have remarked that women featured prominently among Jesus’ disciples throughout his ministry and were also present within the Christian community at Pentecost, while others helped in founding churches and did other things without being restricted by men. It would then be important to know how present day Christians read and interpret the biblical texts and as a result restrict women’s leadership in the church community. They may be right with their assertions, for due to some beliefs of churches, they tend to ignore the vibrant participation of women in Jesus’ time, which obviously opposes their quest to silencing women, hence the relegation of women to the background in the church today.

From the above discussions, it comes out that the behavioral problem of the people of Corinth could have been as a result of their different socio-cultural backgrounds hence making it quite difficult to agree on many issues since they had different orientations or training about those issues. It is also evident that most scholars agree that 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 could either be an interpolation, a quick gloss or perhaps a marginal note. Others also think that the situation of Corinth contributed to their exposure. However, other scholars are of the view that since women never played any significant role in the early church there was no point to argue over their roles. Some also felt that Paul just hated women and as such was

dealing with the women on Patriarchal leadership lines or was expressing his sentiments based on his Jewish background.

For these varied reasons and opinions, the researcher paid a closer attention to the focus of the text which is in 1 Corinthians 14: 34 and 35. This was done through a textual criticism of the text. In doing a textual criticism, a researcher utilizes a manuscript copy, several or many copies, but not the original document. However, the textual critic seeks to reconstruct the original text (the archetype or autograph) as closely as possible. The next chapter will however deal with the textual criticism of 1 Corinthians 14: 34-35 to find out whether the text is in its right place or was transposed from a position after verse 40 and fixed after verse 33.

CHAPTER TWO

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF 1 CORINTHIANS 14: 34-40

Introduction

Textual criticism (lower criticism) is a branch of literary criticism that is concerned with the identification and removal of transcription errors in the texts of manuscripts. Ancient scribes made errors or alterations when copying manuscripts by hand (Ehrman, 2005). Given a manuscript copy, several or many copies, but not the original document, the textual critic seeks to reconstruct the original text (the archetype or autograph) as closely as possible. In the view of Marvin Richardson Vincent in his book, *A history of the textual criticism of the New Testament*, the same processes can be used to attempt to reconstruct intermediate editions, or recensions, of a document's transcription history (Vincent, 1899). The ultimate objective of the textual critic's work is the production of a "critical edition" containing a text most closely approximating the original.

In this chapter, the researcher did a textual analysis of the text in order to arrive at a meaning which is as close as possible to the meaning of the text. In doing this analysis, the researcher dealt with two main topics: First, the external evidence of the manuscripts and secondly, explain the internal evidence of the text. By textually analyzing the text, the researcher's main purpose was to place

the text in its larger context, within the book of 1 Corinthians for the purpose of further clarifying its meaning and application. The researcher decided to use Nestle - Aland's Greek - English New Testament 27th edition, because the editors have most of the variant readings of the New Testament in one volume. They have combined the readings of the three major text families: the Alexandrian text, the Western text and the Byzantine text and provide notes on a variety of variant readings as well as indicate the readings that they have decided on which could be utilized by other textual critics. This is therefore, the form of the text that would guide the researcher's analysis after doing the Contextual Bible Study.

External evidence

In order to determine whether the history behind the verses are authentic or not, there is the need to study the external evidence found from sources outside the manuscript, especially from scholars who have dealt with this text in one way or the other. In dealing with the authenticity of the external evidence, one gets involved with the manuscripts themselves and considers the date, character, and geographical distribution of the witnesses.

Date

Most scholars such as Barrett (1971), Dunn (1995), Brown (1997), Freed (2001) and Lull (2007) agree that the manuscript was probably written from Ephesus sometime between 53 and 57 CE. This is based on the argument that 1 Corinthians tells us that Paul founded the assembly in Corinth perhaps during a

fairly lengthy stay, and that he wrote this letter from Ephesus, across the Aegean Sea after an absence long enough for him to have already written them one letter. Thus to them, by correlating this data with Acts of the Apostles, the letter could be dated between 53 and 57 CE. Scholars believed that around that time the apostle Paul had come to acknowledge that the church of Corinth was facing many problems such as factions emerging in the assembly, behavioral problems such as incest, law suits, sexual behavior, marriage, food and liturgy as well as response of love among others. Paul obtained this through some members. Thus 1 Corinthians was written as a pastoral corrective in response to the news Paul had received regarding the many problems and disorders in the Church which were damaging the unity of the believers and also, to provide answers to some specific questions that were asked by the leaders of the Corinthian Christian community.

According to Barrett (1968), the account that has been given to Paul's dealings with the Corinthian Church assumes both the authenticity and the integrity of 1 Corinthians. To Barrett (1968), the former calls for no defense. To manufacture a document which in every line reflects the concerns of the fifties of the first century, and the personal characteristics of Paul, is a task that would have proved far beyond the powers of any Christian at the end of the century. Moreover, according to Merrill (1924) in his book *Essays in early Christian history*, Clement of Rome, writing to the Corinthians in about AD 95, not only quotes but refers specifically to "the epistle" [I Clement xlvii. 1-3]: "Take up the epistle of the blessed apostle Paul. What did he write to you first of all, in the beginning of the Gospel? Of a truth, he charged you spiritually concerning

himself and Cephas and Apollos, because even then you had formed parties.” This affirms the authenticity of 1 Corinthians and the dating to be before the latter part of the century which is probably around 55 AD.

Character

Here, the researcher focused on the text under study, which is 1 Corinthians 14: 34-40. Although the majority of interpreters assume that the opinion which is given as Paul writing these words in verses 34-35 at its position in the Bible now that is (after verse 33) were deliberately transposed to a position after verse 40 is the original. They generally do so without asking the historical question as to how the Western text came into existence (Fee, 1987). Western text refers to a type of the Greek New Testament marked by a distinctive cluster of variant readings. It was so named because the chief witnesses to it were thought to be of Western provenance. It is now acknowledged that this type of text is not confined to the West, and the term is used as a proper name rather than a geographical term.

According to Fee (1987), the solution that is sometimes offered, that someone in the second century edited the text in this fashion to find a more appropriate location, seems to be unhistorical on two grounds: first, displacements of this kind do not occur elsewhere in the New Testament and secondly, no adequate reason can be found for such a displacement; were these words “Let your women keep silence in the Churches. For it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience as also saith the law. And

if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: For it is a shame for women to speak in the Church.” originally in the text after verse 33. Hence one could come to a conclusion that it is simply a contemporary development that someone in the early church would have been bothered by the position of the words in verses 34-35, since scholars such as Chrysostom (1958) who have commented on it so far, find the arrangement very rational. Fee (1987) opines that since the reading of the edited text by someone in the second century, seems to be a universal one from the Western Church until the influence of the Vulgate, which in this case reflects the text of the Eastern Church, the position of these verses in this tradition must go back to a very early source. Still in his opinion, Godet (A Swiss Protestant Theologian), for example, cannot be right in suggesting that “several Latin copyists” made this transposition. To him, one may with difficulty possibly account for it once, but not twice under any circumstances. This, Fee also says, discounts his suggestion that the scribes of Manuscripts ‘F’ and ‘G’ both written in the 9th century therefore, added **διατασσομαι** (command/order) at the end of verse 33 after they made the transposition. To Fee, that simply is not so but rather, these manuscripts (‘F’ and ‘G’) bear single witness to an earlier addition of this word, based on 1 Corinthians 7:17, in a manuscript that never had verses 34-35 here but edited the text in this fashion to find a more appropriate location only at the end of chapter 14. To Fee, it is most highly probable that with regards to 1 Corinthians 14: 34-35, it would perhaps have occurred to a copyist to have taken such an unprecedented step as to rearranging Paul’s argument, especially in the case where we can scarcely demonstrate that the “displacement” makes a

better meaning. Perhaps his argument might have been based on the fact that if verses 34 and 35 were already in the text after verse 33, there is no reason for a copyist to have made such a radical transposition, he would have copied the text before him without any questions being asked. To Fee (1987), this may be argued out that based on the history of Christian interpretation of the text in its Eastern position makes it clear that it would never have occurred to anyone to help Paul out in this way.

Geographical distribution of witnesses

This section examines the geographical distribution of witnesses. Information available from various geographical locations suggests that there is no ancient manuscript of 1 Corinthians that omits 14:34-35. In most of the manuscripts, they are found in their numerical order, that is, between vv. 33 and 36. The very early ϕ ⁴⁶ (Chester Beatty, AD 200 which is represented in the Alexandrian text types and contains mainly Pauline Epistles) together with \aleph (Uncials), old Syriacs read verses 34 and 35 in the King James Version after verse 33.

There are nevertheless, some manuscripts, mostly “Western” witnesses (Greek-Latin Bilinguals or Latin texts) which transposed vv. 34-35 after 14:40. This variant reading is attested by the three bilingual Western manuscripts Codex **D 06** (Claromontanus; 6th C.), Codex **F 010** (Augiensis; 9th C.), Codex **G 012** (Boernerianus; 9th C.). There is also the first hand of Codex 88(12th C. a “Western” Cursive) and two other old Latin Manuscripts; Sangermanensis (9th

C.), Armachanus (9th C. although this manuscript also omits verses 36-39, so that the text is arranged as verses 33, 40, 34-35).

According to Metzger, “in Codex Fuldensis (ca. 545 CE), verses 34 and 35 were inserted by Victor Capua in the margin after verse 33, without, however, removing them from their place further down” (1975, p. 565). In the second edition of his *Textual Commentary* (1994), Metzger adds that the evidence of the 6th century Codex Fuldensis is ambiguous. This is because they do not appear to be great; they are of narrow geographical distribution and of a later date. To Metzger (1994), the so-called “Western” witnesses are almost confined to North Africa, Gaul and Italy. “The chief characteristic of *Western* readings is fondness for paraphrase. Words, clauses, and even whole sentences are freely changed, omitted, or inserted. *Western* witnesses omit words and passages that are present in other forms of texts, including the *Alexandrian*” (p. xviii)

In general, ϕ⁴⁶ (Chester Beatty, AD 200) together with ℵ(Uncials), old Syriacs are perhaps accepted due to the fact that they are earlier manuscripts and are possibly more likely to be free from errors that arise from repeated copying and perhaps, the Alexandrian text is usually considered to be the best text and the most faithful in preserving the original. Therefore, based on external evidence the age, quality, quantity, and geographical distribution of the manuscripts which included vv 34-35 after v. 33 plead in favor of the authenticity of the verses in this sequence in the English Bible which the researcher would be using as a point of reference.

I hereby express the view that there is much agreement amongst scholars concerning the background of the text. However, it will be more prudent to deal with the text itself in order to weigh what evidence it brings out concerning the position of the text.

Internal evidence (variant readings) of 1 Cor. 14: 34-40

A variant reading is an instance in which two or more manuscripts differ regarding the form of a text, thus in the quest to determine whether the verses under study are authentic or not, there is the need to study the internal evidence found in the manuscript. Given the quantity and variety of witnesses and the complicating factors connected with the transmission of the New Testament, one can expect a fairly large number of ancient variant readings. This form of study examines the question of probability: transcriptional and intrinsic. Transcriptional probability here takes into account the habits and tendencies of scribes and how the manuscript was generated or published. It asks the question: given what we know of the scribal tradition and method, what parts of a manuscript most likely reflect the original? For example, instances where shorter readings are to be preferred, replacing unfamiliar words with familiar ones while the intrinsic probability asks the question, what would the author most likely have written? This examines, among other things, the literary habit of the author such as his use of words or literary style, the immediate context, and the harmony this work has with the author's work elsewhere in the Bible. However, 1 Corinthians 14: 34 and 35 will be analyzed using the transcriptional probability method.

It must however, be emphasized that comparing Greek texts does not provide all the information that a textual apparatus provides, but it does provide a quick way to see where text-types differ. Thus the researcher examined some of the Greek readings of 1 Corinthians 14: 34-40 in existence. There are many translations of 1 Corinthians 14: 34-40, some of which are Stephens 1550 Textus Receptus, Scrivener 1894 Textus Receptus, Byzantine Majority, Alexandrian, Hort and Westcott, Latin Vulgate. This section however, analyzed two types which are the Byzantine majority and the Alexandrian translations, this is because these two deal with the interest of the researcher and also read the text in the form of verses 34-40 after verse 33 and also read it as verses 36 -40 after verse 33 followed by 34 and 35 and, while the English translation was as a result of a combination of the New International Version (NIV), King James Version (KJV) and the Revised Standard Version (RSV) to arrive at my own interpretation of the text thus a direct translation of the Alexandrian Text.

Byzantine Majority

Verse 34. αι γυναικες **υμων** εν ταις εκκλησιαις σιγατωσαν ου γαρ επιτετραπται αυταις λαλειν αλλ υποτασσεσθαι καθως και ο νομος λεγει.

English

Verse 34. Let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak, but to be subjects as also the law says

Alexandrian

Verse 34. αι γυναικες εν ταις εκκλησιαις σιγατωσαν ου γαρ επιτρεπεται αυταις λαλειν αλλα υποτασσεσθωσαν καθως και ο νομος λεγει.

English.

Verse 34. The women in the churches must be silent for it is not permitted unto them to speak but to be under subjection as also the law says.

In this instance, Thiselton (2000) is of the view that, judgment about translation become immensely difficult because they are inextricably bound up with Paul's assumptions that the Corinthian readers would interpret and understand such words as **σιγατωσαν** (let them be silent; let them hold their peace; let them stop speaking; let them not interrupt) and **λαλειν** (to speak, to speak in a way just described, to speak in the way they do) in accordance with the context of situation known both to the author and addressees. Here, an 'abstracted' rendering on the basis of word-for-word lexicography alone could actually violate contextual understanding (Thiselton 2000). He went on to say that all this is further compounded by the fact that many scholars see this verse as a non-Pauline interpolation by a copyist while others see it as a quotation of a Corinthian view which Paul rejects; yet others perceive them as a pre-Pauline tradition which Paul accepts and adapts. However, it could also be said that the use of **υμων** (of you) might have been introduced in the Byzantine majority before the **εν ταις εκκλησιαις** (in the churches) while in the Alexandrian text it might not have been introduced. The 'of you' here represents the plural form of 'of you' singular, which indicated that the order was addressed to more than one

person. Again, Anthony Thiselton thinks that against the use of **ου γαρ επιτρεπται** (they are not permitted or there exists no permission) is not Pauline, and that several writers refer with approval to S. Aalen's argument that the key word is drawn here by the Rabbinic use in the context of biblical texts especially in the Pentateuch which expresses the principle often introduced with **'ο νομος λεγει'**, which means "as the law says|" or "as the law indicates". In another vein, where the issue of women **'γυναικες'** (women) comes to bear, Bruce Metzger, indicate that many witnesses such as the Textus Receptus read **'υμων'** (your) after **'γυναικες'** (women). This he said was regarded probably as a scribal addition and thus preferred the shorter text such as that of the Alexandrian version above.

'γυνη' here means "women of any age, whether a virgin, married or unmarried". It could also mean wives or a betrothed woman. Thus the text goes on to say that 'women' may ask their husbands at home, if there is anything they want to know. Therefore one gets confused as to whether this text is only addressing 'married women' since they are the only women with husbands, hence compromising the position of the unmarried ones. They perhaps may want to stay out of marriage in order to escape such restrictions or perhaps begin invading the marital homes of their married friends.

Byzantine Majority

Verse 35 .ει δε τι μαθειν θελουσιν εν οικω τους ιδιους ανδρας επερωταωσ
αν αισχρον γαρ εστιν **γυναιξιν** εν εκκλησια λαλειν

English Translation

If they will learn anything, let them inquire from their husbands at home for it is a shame for wives to speak in the church.

Alexandrian

Verse 35.εἰ δὲ τι μαθεῖν θελοῦσιν ἐν οἴκῳ τοὺς ἰδίους ἀνδρας ἐπερωτᾶτωσαν αἰσχρὸν γὰρ ἐστὶν **γυναικι** λαλεῖν ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ

English translation

Verse 35. And if they will learn anything, they should inquire of their own husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in the church.

In verse 35, the differences in the versions of these witnesses are the use of **γυναιξιν** ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ **λαλεῖν** by the Byzantine Majority text type and **γυναικι λαλεῖν** ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ by the Alexandrian text type.

Although these two verses are found in all known manuscripts, either after verse 33 or at the end of the chapter (after verse 40), the two text-critical criteria of transcriptional (writing) and intrinsic probability (one of the basic and essential features that make the text what it is) combine to cast considerable doubt on the authenticity of these verses. Whether they are in their actual position or should be placed somewhere else.

Another reading the researcher takes into account is the arrangement of the texts. Whether 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 is in its original place or verses 34-35 is an interpolation, hence must follow verse 40. According to Barrett this text, which is clearly an interpolation into Paul's original letter, has been used in

Church tradition to exclude women from ministries in the Church. The interpolation can be inferred from the following facts: firstly, Verses 34- 35 appear *after verse 40* in a number of important old manuscripts: the Claromontanus of Paris, the Boernerianus of Dresden, Minuscule nr 88, and versions of the Old Latin (Itala) translation (2nd - 4th cent.). It shows that the verses were a later gloss written in the margin of the original papyrus which entered the body of the text in later copies. Secondly, the rule that women should “keep silence in the churches” (vs. 34) flatly contradicts what Paul says about women prophesying in church in 1 Corinthians 11: 5. And also “Whoever prophesies speaks to people for their up building and encouragement and consolation” (*1 Corinthians 14, 3*; etc.). Again, the phrase “as even the Law says” (vs. 34) contradicts Paul's teaching that we have been liberated from the Law (*Galatians 2, 16; 5, 1.18; 3, 23-28* amongst others).

Although in 1 Timothy 2,12 the author used *didaskein* (teaching) while in 1 Corinthians 11,35 the word used is *lalein* (speaking), the parallelism of the two texts on women's/wives' restrictions is generally accepted by scholars. Probably 1 Corinthians 14, 34-35 stems from a similar origin as 1 Timothy 2, 11-14, an effort in Asia Minor of around 100 AD to counteract the influence of Gnostic teaching on women. Therefore as it reads “As in all the churches of the saints, (verse 33b) the women should keep silence in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak but should be subordinate, as even the Law says (verse 34). If there is anything they desire to know, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church” (verse 35).

The idea raised by scholars that the verses are a later interpolation does not affect their status as part of the inspired text. In both, the Old and New Testaments books grew through a succession of editions and enlargements. However, the fact of the interpolation does make a difference to the interpretation of the passage. This makes the researcher wonder if these verses teach, as part of the inspired message that women are subject to men for all time to come and may not assume a task of leadership in the Church even in the future. The answer is clearly: no, for the following reasons: The first of them is that the original prohibition obviously had *a limited scope*. It contradicted Paul allowing women to prophesy (1 Corinthians 11, 5). It argues from Mosaic Law as if that were to bind women of all time to come (verse 34). It also presumes that all women have husbands to whom they can direct questions (verse 35). It bases itself on the Jewish prejudice that considered it shameful for a woman to speak in the synagogue (verse 35). The second reason is that like 1 Timothy 2, 11-14, it expresses measures taken in some early Christian communities to counteract a specific problem. Thirdly, it goes against the “literal sense” of the text and against the intended scope of the author to make this an inspired, permanent prohibition for women to take a ministerial function in the Church!

The reading as it is from verses 34- 40 reads as follows: (34) The women should keep silence in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as even the law says. (35) If there is anything they desire to know, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church. (36) What! Did the word of God originate with you, or are you

the only ones it has reached? (37) If any one thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that what I am writing to you is a command of the Lord. (38) If any one does not recognize this, he is not recognized. (39) So, my brethren, earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues; (40) but all things should be done decently and in order.

1 Corinthians 14:36-40 followed by 34 and 35 is supported by Manuscripts D, G & 88 and reads as follows: (36) What! Did the word of God originate with you, or are you the only ones it has reached? (37) If any one thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that what I am writing to you is a command of the Lord. (38) If any one does not recognize this, he is not recognized. (39) So, my brethren, earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues; (40) but all things should be done decently and in order. (34) The women should keep silence in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as even the law says. (35) If there is anything they desire to know, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church.

Analysis and comments

Firstly, on the matter of transcriptional probability (this has to do with what a copyist is most likely to have done), Gordon Fee (1987) thinks Bengel's first principle that the form of the text that best explains the origin of all other forms is most likely the original, must rule; To Fee, that form of the text is more likely to be the original or closer to the original which best explains the emergence of all the others. Fee, in his view thinks there are three options in this

case: first, either Paul wrote these words at this place and they were deliberately transposed to a position after verse 40; or secondly, it is the reverse of the above, where verses 34 and 35 were written originally after verse 40 and someone moved them forward to a position after verse 33; or thirdly, they were not part of the original text, they were a very early marginal gloss that was subsequently placed in the text at two different places. In agreement with Fee, the third option is easily the one that best fits Bengel's first principle.

One could give good historical reasons both for the gloss itself and for its dual position in the text. It could be said that various reasons have been given for a gloss, all relating to the known situation of the church at the end of the first century or the beginning of the second (for instance the attempt to check a rising feminist movement in 1 Tim. 2:9-15; 5:11-15 to reconcile 1 Cor. 14 with 1 Tim. 2). The insertions are both explicable; one comes at the end of the guidelines on "order" and before the argument in verses 36-38, while the other simply occurs at the end.

The assumed point of view is that these two verses (34 and 35) together, have a singular concern, that women should "remain silent" in the congregational meetings, which is further defined as "not being permitted to speak" in verse 34 the reason given to it is that it is "shameful" for them to do so (verse 35). The structure of the argument bears this out. It begins with a sentence of holy law, which reads "Let your women keep silence in the assemblies" the absolute nature of which is very difficult to get around. On this score, the older interpreters seem to have the better of it. Two reasons are then given for such a prohibition, which

are intended to be two sides of the same reality. On the one hand, “it is not permitted unto them to speak.” on the other hand, “but they are commanded to be under obedience.” To this final reason, there is a further injunction added, “.as also saith the law”. This is followed by the allowance that they should learn at home by asking their own husbands questions, for which the concluding reason is that “it is shameful for them to speak in the church.” Does this however presuppose that unmarried women are exempted from this rule? Therefore there is the rule: ‘Let your women keep silence in the assemblies’ while the reasons given for that rule are:

- a) For it is not permitted for them to speak;
- b) But let them be in subjection, as the Law also says.

In this instance the New International Version (NIV) leaves out the word **γὰρ** (for) untranslated although it is translated by the Revised Standard Version (RSV) and King James Version (KJV) amongst others. Also, the author’s use of **αἱ γυναῖκες** (the wives/women); probably might have referred to ‘all women’, although the author might have assumed a culture in which most women are married. The provision made for such a rule was that “If they desire to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home, and the reason was that “for it is shameful for a woman to chatter in the assembly” (Fee, 1987). The first reason, however, comes in a form of a prohibition: “for it is not permitted for them to speak” what kind of speaking is intended, depends on one’s view, both of authorship and, if authentic, of its place in the present argument. In this instance,

the only internal implication is verse 35, that they should ask questions at home if they wish to learn.

In Fee's opinion, the author is not against women finding their "proper place," as he understands it, within the Christian community. Its implication seems to be two sided: First, the author assumes that the women will not understand what is being said in the community, probably with regard to the spiritual utterances being addressed in chapter 14. Again, it was Paul's will for women to learn, but to do so only in the home from their own husbands. In this vein, Barrett (1986) opines that it contemplates married women whose husbands are Christians, thus in other words, unmarried women and the wives of unbelievers will also not speak in the assembly. If they wish to learn, according to Barrett, they must presumably persuade married friends to put questions to their husbands, since nothing is said of any teacher or minister who may or should be consulted about the content, interpretation, or application of Christian truth.

On the other hand, another reason given for their being silent in the assembly is that speaking in church, apparently for this reasons given of verse 34, is "shameful" in the sense of being inconsistent with accepted standards of modesty in their society in general. If so, then it is certainly not binding for Christians. If not, the considerable doubts as to its authenticity ought to serve as a caution against using it as an external prohibition in a culture where such speaking by women in the assembly would not be a shameful thing.

Thiselton (2000), just like Fee (1987) also went on to say that all this is further compounded by the fact that many other scholars see this verse as a non-

Pauline interpolation by a copyist while others see it as a quotation of a Corinthian view which Paul rejects; yet others perceive them as a pre-Pauline tradition which Paul accepts and adapts. However, in my opinion, the view supported by the evidence of the textual analysis, show that the text (1 Corinthians 14: 34-40) is actually a Pauline Text and it is in its rightful position as an original writing from the Apostle Paul.

The work focused on both the external and internal evidences of 1 Corinthians 14: 34- 40 in doing the Textual Analysis. After doing the textual Analysis, the researcher took the stand that the text understudy is a Pauline text, contrary to some scholarly opinions that the text is a non- Pauline interpolation or a marginal gloss for the following reasons.

Firstly, the external evidence proves that the manuscript was written probably between 53 and 57 CE from Ephesus. This is because according to 1 Corinthians, Paul founded the Corinthian Assembly perhaps during a fairly lengthy stay across the Aegean Sea around the same time. Again, in agreement with Fee (1987) the solution that is sometimes given that someone from the second century edited the text in this fashion to find a more appropriate location has weak historical basis. This is because, in this particular instance, such displacement does not occur anywhere else and also there can not be adequate reasons for such a displacement of this particular text.

In most of the manuscripts, verses 34 and 35 are found in their normal numerical order. For instance in the very early ϕ ⁴⁶ (Chester Beatty, AD 200) represented in the Alexandrian text types and contains mainly Pauline Epistles.

Such manuscripts are perhaps accepted because they are earlier ones and are more likely to be void of errors that arise from repeated copying.

Secondly, with respect to the internal evidence of the text, the researcher made a comparison between the Byzantine text type and the Alexandrian text type. One thing could be noticed that most of the readings of the Byzantine text type had words that were found in the Alexandrian text type. For instance, the use of the Greek word υμων (of you) which appeared before the phrase εν ταῖς ἐκκλησιαῖς (in the Churches) in the Byzantine text, while in the Alexandrian text it might not have been introduced. I am therefore, more inclined to stick with or agree with scholars who subscribe to the old Alexandrian reading. The reasons are that the Alexandrian manuscripts are the older versions and perhaps are less likely to have many errors from scribes, not to say that the Alexandrian Text Types are without any fault. This analysis, leads to the translation of the Greek text that is 1 Corinthians 14: 34- 40 which reads; the women should keep silence in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as even the law says. If there is anything they desire to know, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church. What! Did the word of God originate with you, or are you the only ones it has reached? If any one thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that what I am writing to you is a command of the Lord. If any one does not recognize this, he is not recognized. So, my brethren, earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues; but all things should be done decently and in order.

Due to the above deductions from the textual analysis, the researcher is convinced that 1 Corinthians 14: 34- 40 is an authentic Pauline text. As a result, its contributions drawn to help the field work, left some questions unanswered, thus, these same questions raised, helped in the formulation of questions for the contextual Bible readings with women's groups from the selected Churches.

Conclusion

The chapter has dealt extensively with the textual analysis looking at both external and internal evidences. From this analysis an English version of what might be closest to the original text has been produced to be used further in this work. As a result of reading the text in the context of the Ghanaian woman, I will then want to examine the extent to which the problems the text poses is reflected in the Ghanaian context which has different cultural stands for women's leadership and yet read the same text in churches and Christian groups. Here one wants to read this text with respect to the problems I have raised from the text.

The questions are as follows:

1. What is the relationship between speaking in church and institutional Pastoral leadership?
2. What is the ordinary readers' interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 with regards to women in institutional pastoral leadership positions in churches?
3. What is the relationship between the text and women's participation in the church?

4. What are the implications of 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 on the selected congregations and their doctrinal standpoint in relation to women's institutional pastoral leadership status?
5. What resemblance or comparison can be made between the text and the roles women play in the church?
6. What recommendations can be made for improving women's institutional pastoral leadership in the church today?
7. What is the way forward in helping women gain higher recognition in the church?

Difficult as these questions may seem, the examination of the text with the ordinary reader through contextual reading, it is believed, would help address some of the problems that this pericope poses and how the text impinges on women's participation in higher courts of the church and also help in addressing the issue under consideration in this thesis.

In the next chapter the researcher reads the text with the ordinary readers through a focus group discussion and in-depth interviews by reading the text with the women's groups in the selected churches. This is to expose the ordinary reader's reading of the text under study.

CHAPTER THREE

CONTEXTUAL READING WITH WOMEN'S GROUPS

The previous Chapter sought to establish the authenticity of the text with which the researcher conducted the Contextual Bible Readings by textually analyzing the text (1 Corinthians 14: 34-40). This chapter represents my research with women's groups in the selected churches, that is the Christ Apostolic Church International, Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Hope Congregation and the St. Timothy Anglican Church all located in Nima, a suburb of Accra. Before the contributions of the women would be mentioned, the researcher likes to state that all reports were given in direct speeches as mentioned by respondents. The researcher's use of the word women here, does not presuppose marginalized individuals in the church, but rather, women as a marginalized group in terms of their levels of participation in Pastoral leadership and positions of higher decision making bodies in the Churches. Though this, Contextual Bible Reading mainly gives this idea that it is dealing with women in deprived areas, it is however important to also recount the histories of these churches mentioned above and also decisions of the various churches regarding women joining higher ministries in the church such as being ministers or teachers. This is intended to help readers appreciate the baggage with which the women approach the text under study.

HISTORY OF CHRIST APOSTOLIC CHURCH INTERNATIONAL, NIMA ASSEMBLY

The Christ Apostolic Church International (CACI), an apostolic and evangelical Church was founded by Apostle Peter Newman Anim in the year 1917 at Asamankese in the Eastern Region of Ghana. According to the history of the church, it is the first Pentecostal Church in Ghana and the West African sub region. The Christ Apostolic Church International currently has over two thousands assemblies throughout the ten regions of Ghana. In addition, the Church has branches in the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, Italy, Holland, Austria, South Africa, là Côte d'Ivoire, Togo and Chad. The entire membership of the CACI stands at about four hundred and fifty thousand. The Head Office of the Church is currently located at Osu, near the Ohene Gyan Sports Stadium, Accra.

During the intervening period of its establishment, the church operated under various names. It started as True Faith Prayer Group (1917–1922), Faith Tabernacle Church (1922-1930), The Apostolic Faith Church (1930-1935), The Apostolic Church (1937-1939), the current name Christ Apostolic Church International was adopted in 1939. The church was registered in 1960 under the Land Perpetual Law Cap. 137 with the name Christ Apostolic Church International. The Certificate of Incorporation Ordinance, Cap. 137 was signed on the 10th day of November, 1960.

The Christ Apostolic Church International has passed through many challenges in the course of her history from being a small prayer group to an

International Christian organization. The CACI is a founding member of the Ghana Pentecostal Council and take active part in all activities of the Council. The Church also fulfils her social responsibilities to her members and the general public by way of providing educational and social facilities. Agricultural activities to support livelihood has been put in place. The church also has youth oriented programmes that promote sound moral and character development of young people for the advancement of society.

The Christ Apostolic Church International, Nima Assembly was however established in 1962 as a result of getting the gospel across to those in Nima who could not travel all the way to other branches far away. This Assembly was established under the leadership of W. K. Asare, Abraham Asare, Anthony Ofose, Oteng and Yaw Boateng at a time Pastor Kofi Adu served as the circuit Pastor.

After some few years, the Nima Assembly was demarcated and given a residential Pastor in the person of Pastor Nartey, who served there for three (3) years. After his three years of service, the following pastors served in the Nima assembly:

Rev. Kabutey, Rev. Kabutey, Rev. Abrampa, Rev. Wiannor, Rev. Abrampa, Rev. Jackson Stephen Owusu, Rev. J. S. Owusu. Presently, the Pastor in charge is Rev. Osei Yaw who was transferred from one of the branches in the United States of America to take over the Nima Assembly. He currently resides in their mission house with his family.

Mission Statement

Christ Apostolic Church International, Nima Assembly as part of the body of Christ, exists to bring salvation in Christ to all persons in the world by preaching and teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ as in the holy scriptures, the final authority in all matters of faith and conduct; discipling believers towards Christian maturity and worshiping the triune God the Father, Son and Holy spirit.

Vision Statement

Their vision statement according to their history reads: Knowing Christ and making Christ-like disciples of all nations, tribes and peoples and constituting them into bible believing fellowships for worship, edification and further evangelization.

Tenets of the Church

The values of Christ Apostolic Church International are enshrined in the tenets of the church. These are:

- The Unity of the Godhead and the trinity of the Persons therein.
- The absolute necessity for repentance and regeneration, and the eternal doom of the finally impenitent.
- The virgin Birth, sinless Life, atoning death, triumphant resurrection, ascension and abiding intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ. his second coming and millennial reign on earth.

- Justification and sanctification of the believer through the finished work of Christ.
- The baptism of the Holy Ghost for believers with signs following.
- The nine gifts of the Holy Ghost for believers with signs following.
- The nine gifts of the Holy Ghost for the edification, exhortation and comfort of the church, which is the body of Christ.
- The sacraments of baptism by immersion, and of the Lord's Supper.
- Divine inspiration and authority of the Holy Scriptures.
- Church government by Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers, Elders and Deacons.
- The possibility of falling from grace.

Decisions of the Christ Apostolic Church International on women in ministry

The Christ Apostolic Church International has various categories of governing ministries embedded in the constitution of the Church. These are Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers. Other ministries are General Deacons, Regional Deacons, District Deacons, Local Deacons, Deaconesses and Elders (CACI Constitution pp. 37 and 38).

Qualifications/requirements for eligible candidates

1. He should be born again (John 3: 3)
2. He should be examined in the light of 1 Timothy 3:1-12 and Titus 1: 6-9
3. He must have attained at least middle form four education.
4. He should have a clear and distinctive voice.
5. He should be willing to learn.

6. He should have a sound body and mind
7. He should be obedient to the church councils.
8. He should not be above forty (40) years.
9. He should be punctual, good – tempered, self controlled, and sympathetic.
10. He should be recommended by an Apostle or senior Pastor in writing in consultation with the Regional management council concerned. (CACI Constitution. pp 36)

The above requirements or qualifications, seem not create any space to accommodate women. This observation was made because numbers 1 to 10 seem to be absolutely directed to men, due to the use of “He”.

Appointment of a leader for the Good Women’s Fellowship

Good women’s fellowship is the women’s wing of the Christ Apostolic Church International. The leader of this wing irrespective of the assembly shall be appointed by the executive council acting on consultation with the women and the Christian education board of the church. A reverend minister shall be appointed to oversee and regulate the women’s fellowship activities.

Duties:

1. She shall foster fellowship among the ladies and provide inspiration and guidance and encouragement the local bonds, facilitate in their labours of love for God and His church.
2. She shall exhibit general leadership and willingness to serve towards the objectives of the ladies as they relate to their education (Vocational).

3. She shall work with the Christian Board in arranging and promoting National or Regional conventions etc.
4. She shall hold office for two years and shall be eligible for re- election (CACI constitution. pp. 34).

Decisions of the General Council of Christ Apostolic Church International

At a General council meeting of the Christ Apostolic Church International, held on Wednesday, 24th March 2010 at the Trade fare, La, Accra, there was an issue raised by the three prophetesses; prophetess Mary Kankam, prophetess Patience Agyemang and prophetess Agnes Manu concerning the ordination of women into clerical ministry. On behalf of the three women, Prophetess Mary Kankam made a presentation, arguing that the three of them do perform almost all functions as their male counterparts apart from officiating at funerals and marriage ceremonies but are addressed as prophetesses while their male colleagues are addressed as Pastors or Reverends. For this reason, their request for the General council was that the issue of their ordination into clerical ministry, be given a critical attention and consideration, so they can also bear the titles of Pastor or Reverend. As this issue was presented to the council, there were some discussions made on the issue at the General council meeting among their male colleagues. Since there were no objections from the house after the discussions, the issue was approved by the Council under the leadership of Apostle Dr. S. K. Amoani, chairman of the Christ Apostolic Church International. Till now, the decision is yet to be implemented.

**A READING WITH THE WOMEN'S GROUP OF THE CHRIST
APOSTOLIC CHURCH OF GHANA, NIMA ASSEMBLY.**

BIBLE STUDY 1

Date: 13th January 2009.

Time: 6:00 pm

Passage: 1 Cor. 14: 34- 40

People Present: Mrs. Agnes Peprah, Madam Gladys Mensah, Madam Veronica Nsaana, Madam Hagar Dennie, Madam Georgina Agyapong, Madam Ruth Acheampong, Madam Lydia Opoku, Madam Christiana Mensah, Madam Hannah Asare, Madam Mary Antwi, Madam Konadu Yiadom.

The sitting arrangement was in a semi- circle form, to allow better interaction. Some members were quite late due to transportation from their places of residence to the church premises. As a result, the meeting started at 6: 20pm with a prayer by the president, Mrs. Agnes Peprah, after which Madam Hagar Dennie led the group through a prayer and worship session, inviting God to be present with the group. The president then introduced the researcher and a colleague who accompanied her to help her with the recordings. The total number of attendants by the time the meeting ended was eleven (11). Due to a problem the researcher faced in terms of language barrier, the minister in charge Rev Osei Yaw of the church, offered to translate the questions to the members.

The researcher gave an introduction to the text, after which she asked one member to read the text 1 Cor. 14: 34- 40 from the Twi Bible, reasons being that the researcher was dealing with people with either little or no education at all and

the Twi Bible was more comfortable for them all. The researcher then asked that the reading be done in two different versions of the Bible in the English language.

This is how the reading went:

Concept of leadership in the Church

Moderator: What is your idea about leadership in the early church?

Mrs. Agnes Peprah: From the Bible reading it is obvious that in the early days, women were not allowed to speak and were to be observers only. Thus they were asked to remain silent and perhaps might have even sat behind the male congregation during church services.

Madam Gladys Mensah: I think women in the early church were to be submissive and were not allowed to speak.

Madam Veronica Nsaana: I believe women in the early church were suppressed and therefore, could not freely express themselves and share their visions and prophecies.

Mrs. Agnes Peprah: I still believe that women were not given any chance at all to say anything, because anything they said was rendered shameful, thus they were to hide behind the men.

Madam Hagar Dennie: I see the situation where women were to shut their mouths and not make any contributions at all in the church.

Moderator: How do you relate this to leadership in the church today?

Mrs. Agnes Peprah: They are slightly different. This is because in the early church, the congregation was divided, and women were not allowed to do some of the things they do now such as singing, prophesying, and speaking in tongues

amongst others. Mrs. Peprah said that this suppressed the abilities of the women. She quoted a verse from the Bible, Matthew 28: 18-20 which says “go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age” (RSV). Mrs. Peprah then said that the text did not say men should go and make disciples but the task is to all humankind, therefore women are now doing the evangelism work in most places. Therefore she said she does not know why women are restricted in their activities at church.

Madam Hagar Dennie: Situations in the church today are a bit different now. Since Christ died to liberate us, women have been given the chance to do God’s work, such as reading the Bible at services, cleaning the altar, ushering etc. but not in higher decision making bodies of the church.

Madam Georgina Agyapong: In recent times, both men and women do the ministerial work together, though there is still a limit as to what they are allowed to do. Thus I believe there is not much difference between the early and present church.

Madam Veronica Nsaana: Initially, only men were Deacons and Elders of the churches, but now women can also be Deaconesses and Elders, so there is not much difference between men and women in comparing both the early church and that of the church today..

Moderator: Is your leadership style in line with 1 cor. 14: 34-40? give reasons for your answer.

Madam Ruth Acheampong: I believe in a way trends have not changed much in the church's leadership styles because in the days of Paul, women were not allowed to talk, usher, lead or do anything during services but in present times the only difference is that women are seen doing all these at both Sunday and weekday services except being placed in higher positions in the church hierarchy.

Mrs. Lydia Opoku: I believe to an extent that both leadership styles are in line reasons being that there are some positions in the church that cannot be contested by women. There are however two groups of people in the churches which are women and men. Thus there should be a balance in the leadership trends in the church. This I believe is a good thing because in understanding women better there is the need to communicate with a fellow woman who will understand their petitions and problems and male leaders also understanding the plight of the male members better due to similar experiences perhaps in previous years.

Madam Hagar Dennie: The leadership style of CAC is not in line with the text. This is because women were then to keep silent, but now there are prophetesses in this church and therefore I think there has been a change.

Madam Veronica Nsaana: They are not similar, because unlike the way women's gifts were suppressed in the early church, now they are able to freely express themselves in the church to an extent, though some positions are restricted.

Madam Gladys Mensah: I believe there has been a change because women outnumber men in the churches now; besides, they are able to evangelize and win more souls to Christ than their male counterparts with the little chance they are given.

The interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 with regards to women's leadership positions in Churches

Moderator: What is the text (1 cor. 14: 34-40) about?

Madam Hagar Dennie: The text is about women. It is asking them to remain silent in the churches, for it is very disgraceful or shameful for them to express themselves.

Madam Lydia Opoku: In this text, women are being ordered to remain silent in the churches, because it is seen as shameful for a woman to speak in the church, therefore they must just sit and watch in silence.

Madam Mary Antwi: The text is telling women how to behave during services. That is, they should remain silent and not contribute in anything, for it is seen disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church.

Mrs. Agnes Peprah: Women, in this text, are being commanded to keep quiet in the churches, and should ask their husbands at home if they needed to know anything. It says that it is a shame for a woman to contribute or speak in the church.

Moderator: If it is about women, what is it saying about their leadership roles?

Mrs. Lydia Opoku: Taking a look at the text, it seems Paul was very angry because perhaps women in that time were very arrogant and were using Christianity in their favour because even in recent times when women are given positions, some of them become disrespectful and rude to their husbands who do not have such positions or as it were have not seen Christ. Thus, Paul ordered women to be quiet as a result of their pride and arrogance.

Madam Christiana Mensah: I understand it as women being asked to keep silence but thank God it did not continue till now because if it had continued, women's gifts would have been totally shattered and therefore in recent times, women are being given some chance to lead services and also they are being placed in some leadership positions.

Madam Veronica Nsaana: In my view, I understand it as women being asked not to speak, hence their inability to actively participate in Church activities. Women were the first people to see the risen Christ and sent the news around. This made the men see some sort of glory in women which they were not comfortable with, since they believe they are the head of the house and as such should have been the first to see the risen Christ. This perhaps was one of the reasons why Paul silenced women in the church.

Mrs. Lydia Opoku: In the Christ Apostolic Church of Ghana, it is quite impossible for women to occupy some top leadership positions in the church. Leaders are beginning to realize the need for women and their works in the Church and therefore, they have been given a little opportunity to go for women's conventions, to evangelize and win souls unto Christ.

Moderator: What correlation does it have with women's leadership roles in your church?

Madam Hagar Dennie: I believe there are some diverging situations when considering both churches that are the early church and the church today. This is because unlike the early church women are now contributing their quota and doing their best with regard to ministerial work. The only difference here is that women do not have access to higher hierarchies of the church, hence limiting them to only hospitality and some few roles during services such as song ministration, Bible reading etc.

Madam Konadu Yiadom: I think the role of women in the church is not the same as that of the early church, but have more similarities especially regarding women's exemption from decision making bodies and other higher leadership roles. But I believe women are to be humble when in leadership in order to enjoy the glory of God.

Madam Veronica Nsaana: In my opinion, there has been a change in trends in leadership roles in the churches. Women have now gained the opportunity to do different things during services; however women are still not given the chance to fill higher positions in the church. In all, I think women's leadership is such that they must lead in consultation with their husbands so that everything will be in harmony.

Moderator: Do you think women should be able to hold higher leadership positions in your church?

Madam Georgina Agyapong: I think women should be able to hold higher leadership positions in this church, but it must all be dependent on their attitudes or character.

Madam Hannah Asare: yes I think so. But before a woman is taken as a leader in the church, her contributions in terms of Sunday services and other occasions must be looked at, as well as her commitment to duties of the church and members. This will enable the church council attest to the person's ability to hold a higher position in the church.

The meeting for the first session ended with a praise and offertory session after which a closing prayer was said by Madam Lydia Opoku and the benediction by the Pastor, Rev. Osei Yaw, who came around to see how the discussion was going. There was an exchange of greetings after which we all departed.

**A READING WITH THE WOMEN'S GROUP OF THE CHRIST
APOSTOLIC CHURCH OF GHANA, NIMA ASSEMBLY.**

BIBLE STUDY 2

Date: 20th January 2009

Time: 6:00 pm

Passage: 1 Cor. 14: 34- 40

People Present: Mrs. Agnes Peprah, Madam Gladys Mensah, Madam Veronica Nsaawa, Madam Hagar Dennie, Madam Georgina Agyapong, Madam Ruth Acheampong, Madam Lydia Opoku, Madam Christiana Mensah, Madam Hannah Asare, Madam Mary Antwi, Madam Konadu Yiadom.

The meeting began with a few songs followed with a prayer by Madam Georgina Agyapong. The researcher gave a recap of what transpired the previous week and followed with the discussion below.

The implications of the text on the particular Churches and their doctrinal standpoint in relation to women's leadership status

Moderator: With respect to your church's doctrines, how is this text interpreted?

Mrs. Agnes Peprah: The interpretation given to this text with regards to the doctrines is that women are not to occupy some top positions in the church. But in present times, women are gradually being recognized and being encouraged to participate in church activities such as lay reading, praise and worship amongst others.

Madam Hagar Dennie: The text is interpreted as women not being permitted to hold positions in the church, but in recent times, unlike that of the early church, women are gradually being factored into regular church activities and being encouraged to take part in active positions in the church. For instance, presently there are Deaconesses and women elders in the church but there has not been any woman director or chairman so far.

Madam Lydia Opoku: Just like the Jewish position of women in the early church, the Christ Apostolic Church of Ghana in previous times never allowed women access to the altar but recent trends in society are beginning to affect the way things are done in the church, therefore in spite of the fact that formerly, women in this church were not allowed at the altar, they are now allowed to freely worship and lead services sometimes.

Madam Hannah Asare: This church was not used to seeing women take leadership positions and have women speak their minds, but for some time now, women are being encouraged to take part in the active worship of the church both on Sunday and weekday services.

Moderator: How do you relate your church's doctrines on leadership to women's leadership status?

Madam Gladys Mensah: The church as it were, has no difficulty now appointing women to lead services and to read the Bible during services, to sing and perform other duties though there are still strings attached unlike previously when it was just impossible to see a woman lead any aspect of church service. This I believe is because there has been a change in societal perception about the role of women,

and I believe the church is beginning to revise its opinions too though there is still much room for improvement.

Madam Veronica Nsaana: I believe that unlike previous times, when women did not have any chance or space for leading any part of service, the church is beginning to revise its perception with regards to how much space women are given to operate though there is much more to be done. Women are now recognized in the church and are given the opportunity to participate in the day to day worship in the church.

Madam Ruth Acheampong: The Christ Apostolic Church of Ghana, until some time now never had women leaders, perhaps due to Paul's directives which might have been interpreted as a prohibition of women to lead events. As societal perception is beginning to change towards women, I believe the church is changing its position towards the duties of women, thus giving them a little opportunity to feel a part of God's property.

Madam Konadu Yiadom: Women in the present day Christ Apostolic Church of Ghana have seen some changes with regards to their position in God's kingdom. They are given the chance to exercise their faith freely, through prayer, prophesy, preaching and other duties, thus being a part of the Christianization process.

Recommendations for improving on women's leadership in the Church

Moderator: If you have the power to make some contributions, what changes will you make in tune with 1 cor. 14: 34-40 and women's leadership?

Madam Christiana Mensah: If given the chance, I will put more women into higher leadership positions in the church. In achieving this, I would evaluate the person's strengths and weaknesses then assign various duties to them in their area of weakness in order to encourage them into standing up to all tasks.

Madam Mary Antwi: when given the opportunity, I will lay aside whatever negative perceptions there are about women in leadership, and set aside a day in the week, in which I will visit my members in their homes and discuss issues of worry with them, since when they face problems in their homes it will go a long way to affect their work in the church too rather than stereotyping women or using a text from an older generation or era to subjugate a present day generation.

Madam Hagar Dennie: If given the chance, I will make women elders in this church, since all the elders in the Church are men and also encourage more women to attend the theological seminary to become pastors rather than suppressing their talents.

Madam Ruth Acheampong: When given the power, I would try to involve women in most church activities and also select about five women to attend the pastoral school after each batch complete their course.

Moderator: In your view, what can be done to get women into active leadership in the church?

Madam Mary Antwi: I believe women can be educated as to how able they are to handle higher seats of affairs in the church. This will go a long way to help them build their morale with respect to leadership in the churches rather than making them hide their God given gifts in silence.

Madam Konadu Yiadom: I think the women leaders should organize vocational training sessions to help the women get some vocation to earn a living.

Mrs. Lydia Opoku: I suggest that there should be occasional leadership training seminars for women in the church, to help them gain more confidence when given roles in the church.

Madam Hannah Asare: There is the need for women's empowerment in any form possible, to help women get over their timidity which they live with as a result of having to grow through patriarchal doctrines when it comes to playing leadership roles in the church.

The meeting for the second session ended with a praise and offertory session after which a closing prayer was said by Madam Hannah Asare and the benediction by the Pastor, Rev. Osei Yaw, who came around to help with the interpretation. The researcher thanked the members for the time and patience they had for her throughout the two sessions. There was an exchange of greetings after which we all departed.

HISTORY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GHANA, NIMA

CONGREGATION

The Presbyterian Church of Ghana represents the harmonious blending of several traditions, primarily through the Basel Mission and the Scottish Mission. The Basel Mission started the work in 1828. After difficult beginnings the mission was firmly established by 1854, with the help of Christians from the West Indies. A seminary was founded and the Twi language put in writing. By the end

of the century the mission achieved its long-cherished goal of working among the Asante people. In 1917 the Basel missionaries had to leave because of the war situation in Europe. The Church of Scotland responded to a call for help. This explains why the Reformed Church in Ghana adopted the Presbyterian organizational model. In the 1940s the church extended its work to the northern parts of the country. In the year 2000 the church adopted the general assembly system for its governance.

The Presbyterian Church of Ghana has six departments. Church life and nurture deals with various ministries: children and youth, women, men, ministry of the aged, worship, Christian education, training, scholarships and counselling. Mission and evangelism is responsible for global mission and specialized ministries. The department of development and social services is in charge of development and environment, general education, agriculture and small-scale technology, and publications. Ecumenical relations looks after the involvement of the church in ecumenism, in the society and with people of other faiths. Two other departments take care of finance, human resources, information, and planning.

The church runs 487 nursery schools, 984 primary schools, 399 junior high schools and 27 senior high schools, 40 private schools, 6 vocational institutions, 5 training colleges, a research centre and a university college. In the area of health care, the Presbyterian Church of Ghana is the third largest provider in the country, with 5 hospitals, 11 primary health care programmes, 8 health centres, 13 clinics, 2 nurses' training colleges and a technical unit. Agricultural services are offered in 9 stations throughout the country. Media work is done

through 2 printing and publishing houses, 3 newspapers and eight bookshops. For lay training the PCG has three centres. It also runs four guest houses and three conference halls.

The Nima Presbyterian Church according to their history, was established between the years 1941 and 1942 in the house of one Mad. Ellen Ayongo Gorleku by a few devoted Christians dedicated to worshipping God. The idea was to evangelize the people and win more souls for Christ. The founding members were Mr. D. M. Okai, Madam Elizabeth Afua Cobblah, Madam Ellen Ayongo Gorleku, Madam Ruth Yomley Doku and a few others.

The first official church service which was held on 12th November, 1944 was well attended by many Gas, Ewes and Adangmes living in the community. Preachers at that service were Mrs. D. M. Okai and Mr. Clement B. Long-Mantey and the service was conducted in Ga and Ewe languages. Later, Rev. Owuo, the then pastor in charge of the Adabraka Presbyterian Church was informed of the establishment of a branch of the Church in Nima. He expressed his profound appreciation and promised to give his full support, after which a few Twi-speaking enthusiasts led by Mr. S. N. O. Asare became interested and joined the group.

Another minister, Rev. S. S. Odonkor, the then minister in charge of the Ga Central Church, on hearing of the formation of the church at Nima, dispatched two of his elders to continually visit the Nima Church every Sunday to help conduct worship. As the membership grew, Madam Gorleku's house could no more accommodate them. They then moved to one Mr. Quartey's house on the 7th

of January 1945 as their new place of worship. The Nima Church was placed under the Accra District until the Adabraka Church gained a district status where the Nima church was put under the supervision of the Adabraka Church in Accra. Nima main has gained a district status since 1985 till now.

In 1947, it again became necessary that the church be moved to another more spacious premise, this time, in the heart of the town and in the house of one Madam Densuah Dedaa and the first Catechist to be appointed in 1949 was one Mr. Antonio. Due to the largeness of the house, a school was established on 2nd February 1948 to train and educate the children of the church members. Eleven pupils were initially enrolled but later on expanded to be a big school. The school was later taken over by the government in 1951. Rev. Kofi, then in charge of the Accra Central congregation and one Mr. Hugh Buckman were temporarily appointed to help the Church and School in Nima. In 1952, Rev. Max Doodoo succeeded Rev. Kofi at the Accra Central Church and also assisted in the expansion of the church at Nima.

Building of Chapel

By the grace of God, the church expanded rapidly and this motivated the elders of the church to look for a plot of land for a permanent church building. The elders therefore fought relentlessly to acquire the land where the present church is situated. Mr. D. M. Okai, Mr. J. K Antwi and Justice Nii Amaa Ollenu were highly commended for the noble part they played in the acquisition of the land at a cost of £ 20. As fate would have it, a temporary shed was put up and the

church together with the school moved into it. Unfortunately, a rain storm in 1966 ripped off the roof, which caused the collapse of the structure. The congregation was left with no choice but to worship under a shed erected by the Accra City Council.

After many vicissitudes and a long period of wail and woe, the idea of putting up a permanent structure was given serious consideration. Out of determination and much effort, it became necessary that the present Manse was built under the direct supervision of Mr. A. A. Awuah the then Catechist in charge. Funds for the building were mobilized through proceeds from Annual Harvests, Church collections and donations collected over the years. Some of the gallant members who helped in diverse ways in the funding and building of the church were the late Mr. Quartey popularly known as “Odoi Kwao”, Ataa Neequaye, Madam Josephine Karley, Mr. and Mrs. J. G. Atkins and their daughter Agnes, to mention but a few. The new chapel was dedicated on the 24th September 1978.

FORMATION OF GROUPS IN THE CHURCH

Women’s Class (Fellowship):

The Women’s class (Fellowship) was the first group to be formed on the 11th November 1945. Spontaneous support and assistance came from Osu Central Church and from the Adabraka women’s fellowship as well as wives of almost all the Pastors of the various branches. The first anniversary of the group was

celebrated on the 11th November 1946 with greater support from almost all the fellowships of the Presbyterian churches in the Accra District.

Singing Band:

The Singing Band was the second group founded in the same year, 1945 under the baton of Mr. D. M. Okai, assisted by Mr. Yaw Frimpong and Mr. Aboah. The founding members who through devotion and hard work were able to hold aloft the banner of the Singing Band of which the church is so proud today.

The Church Choir:

The Church was formed in 1958 and was led by Mr. G. Odai assisted by Mr. Ebenezer Boba Bekrah with a few young men and women. The choir was short-lived because of lack of leadership and other problems like inadequate accommodation and other necessary facilities.

In 1957, Mr. Alex E. Mensah, who devotedly offered to revive the choir, provided his own organ and re-organized the few interested young men and women through persuasion and encouragement. Today, the Church can boast of a well organized choir with an encouraging membership of over 60 people under the leadership of an indefatigable choirmaster in the person of one Mr. Joshua Anim, through whose hard work and devotion has brought the choir to its present standard. New Choir robes were dedicated on 16th July 1983 by Rev. I. T. Sackey.

Children's Service:

The Children's Service was established in 1956 by Mr. Ebenezer Boba Bekrah supported and assisted by the then Catechist - in - Charge Mr. S. K. Bekoe. The main aim was to train the children in the way of the Lord and to grow up as matured Christians. Sunday morning Children's Service as well as Sunday afternoon classes were conducted for the children. The Children were devotedly handled by Madam Janet Quarcoe, Madam Sarah Quarcoe and Madam Elizabeth Norley Tetteh. By the mark of hard work, the Church now has groups like The Young People's Guild (YPG), Young Adult's Fellowship (YAF), Hopeful Singers, Men's Fellowship, the Youth Council and The Young Women's fellowship.

Session of Ewe Group:

In 1958, the Ewe group unilaterally broke away to form the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (E. P. Church) as a result of a misunderstanding arising from preaching methods and language barriers. This secession nearly landed the Church on rocks but for the timely intervention of Mr. J. K. Antwi the Church was saved from total collapse.

Conclusion:

Special thanks go to all outstanding personalities both living and dead, who played very significant roles in the upliftment of the Church and whose names have not appeared in this short history, it was not intentional. May all

leaders, groups and benefactors alike know that their deeds are recognized in heaven. Truly, it would be said that the congregation at Nima has seen hard times coupled with hard work and immense developments.

Ordained pastors who served in the Nima Presbyterian Church

We recall with profound gratitude, to the glory of God, the following pastors who ministered in the Nima Presbyterian Church.

- Rev. N. A. K. Ollenu 1973-1976
- Rev. C. C. P. Mohenu 1976-1978
- Rev. N. G. A. Okraku 1978-1979
- Rev. O. K. Darko 1979-1981
- Rev. R. P. Nyarko February - September 1981
- Rev. I. T. Sackey 1981- 1983
- Rev. D. K. Amon 1983-1985

District Pastors

- Rev. A. L. A. Hammond 1985-1986
- Rev. T. S. Akunor 1986-1988
- Rev. Kwasi Asiedu- Asare 1988- 1992
- Rev. E. Y. A. Doku 1992-1995
- Rev. S. K. Somuah 1995- 2000
- Rev. A. Atiemo 2000- 2001
- Rev. J. A Mensah 2001- 2004
- Rev. A. S. Brenya – Abbey 2004- Present

Decisions of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana on women in ministry

The issue of women being a part of the higher decision making bodies of the church with specific mention to clerical ministry became a bone of contention among the leadership of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana.

In Appendix 'P', Decision Number 2 of the minutes taken at the 66th Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG), held in Takoradi (Western Presbytery) on 19th – 24th August 1995, has it that “Synod Decision that the admission of women into ordained ministry of PCG, be remitted to the presbyteries for their views”.

In the year 2001, at the first General Assembly meeting held at St. John Bosco's Training College in Navrongo under the Northern Presbytery, Remission number 3 had it that “General assembly should review the decision that prevents spouses of ministers of PCG from entering the ordained ministry of the church. This issue attracted a long and lively discussion from which two motions were tabled. Mr. R. H. Akrong moved that the old decision be revoked and was seconded by Rev. K. A. Ampadu – Daadua. The counter motion moved by Mr. E. O. Acheampong called for the retention of the old decision. His motion was seconded by Rev. Asiama Bekoe.” Due to the two motions, a vote was casted and the results were as follows: First Motion – 38 votes and Second Motion – 147 votes. General assembly therefore concluded that the decision that the spouses of ministers could not enter the ordained ministry of the church be retained.

The issue appeared again at the 5th General Assembly held at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology under the Ashanti Presbytery on

29th July- 4th August 2005. The issue was again remitted to the presbyteries but at the 6th General Assembly meeting at the Presbyterian Boy's Secondary School at Legon under the Ga Presbytery on 18th – 24th August 2006 it resurfaced. Item 'C' of Constitutional Matters (Remission of Presbyteries) stated that "after the issue of debarring spouses of ministers from entering the ministry had been discussed, the Moderator opened the floor for motions and the first motion was moved by Reverend Sam Odjelua, that: "The discussion preventing spouses of ministers from entering into the ministry should be reviewed. A technical committee should be set up to present a well informed paper to the General Assembly before a final decision is taken". The motion was seconded by Reverend E. W. Nagba. The second motion was made by Reverend Yaw Danso that: "in view of the fact that allowing spouses of ministers to enter the ministry is problematic, minister's spouses should be debarred from entering the ministry". He was seconded by Rev. E. Agyem – Frempong. A vote was casted and the results are as follows: Motion 1 - 89 votes and Motion 2 – 126 votes. At this meeting the final decision on this issue was made. The Assembly therefore decided that minister's spouses should be debarred from entering the ministry. The Moderator therefore said that a committee would be appointed to prepare a study material on the issue.

A READING WITH THE WOMEN'S GROUP OF THE PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF HOPE, NIMA DISTRICT

BIBLE STUDY 1

Date: 21st January 2009

Time: 4:00 pm

Passage: 1 Cor. 14: 34-36

People Present: Mrs. Regina Quist- Therson, Madam Grace Perry, Mrs. Elizabeth Quartey, Mrs. Juliet Kpentey, Mrs. Grace Asamany, Mrs. Grace Okai-Nabblah, Madam Salomey Afadi, Madam Martha Daitey, Madam Diana Afadi, Madam Doreen Dawson, Madam Ellen Nyanteh, Madam Christiana Allotey, Madam Felicia Gyimah- Offei, Madam Agnes Tekpeki, Madam Mercy Aku Fosu, Mrs. Lucy Abbey, Mrs. Ohene - Ampofo, Madam Susana Ohenewaa, Madam Margaret Awo Tei.

The meeting started with 23 participants at 4:30pm with a hymn from the Presbyterian hymnal GA 324, TWI 280, after which a prayer was said by Mrs. Ohene-Ampofo. The meeting continued with the group's usual routine of Bible verse recital by every member which was done in different languages, while others converted their recitals into songs. This was done to test how well members had studied the Bible and also as a form of encouragement. By the end of this session 7 more members joined the group.

The Bible study eventually started at 4: 55pm. The researcher and her colleague who helped her with the recordings were introduced to the group. The researcher told the group the purpose of meeting which was to discuss the text

together and asked Mrs. Quist-Therson to read the text in the Ga language, while Mrs. Ohene-Ampofo read the text in the Twi language. The research questions were discussed after the readings and the responses are provided below. With the Presbyterian women, the group agreed that we used the Ga language in communicating. This is because majority of the women were Ga or Ga- Adamgbe while the very few Akan speaking members could understand and speak the Ga language.

Concept of leadership in the church

Moderator: What is your idea about leadership in the early church?

Mrs. Juliet Kpentey: In the days of the early church, women were overlooked and were not given the chance to speak and express themselves.

Mrs. Grace Asamany: In the early church, only men were allowed to do everything in the Church that is women had no place.

Mrs. Grace Nabblah: In the early church, it was shameful for women to speak in the church thus they were not respected.

Madam Salomey Afadi: In the early days, when baby girls were born, they were not regarded, therefore, while growing that disregard became a stigma on women.

Moderator: How do you relate this to leadership in the church today?

Madam Grace Perry: I think presently, trends have changed to some extent. There are now women priests, catechists, among others unlike in the early church where women were ordered to be silent.

Madam Martha Daitey: The leadership in both the early and present day churches are quite different. Christ has come to liberate us and now women have got the chance to work in the house of God.

Mrs. Elizabeth Quartey: In present times, I think women are holding power in the churches. This is because women do most of the work in the churches although they still have boundaries they cannot cross.

Mrs. Grace Asamany: I have realized that women do so many things in the churches, but due to their subjection, they are not able to go to the extreme and always hold back when they have to give their all.

Madam Diana Affadey: Occasionally when men are given tasks to take care of, they find things very difficult as compared to the women.

Madam Doreen Dawson: Taking the story of 'the capable woman' in the book of Proverbs into consideration, women were seen to be cut out purposely for housekeeping and since God's work is quite difficult, it was not easy for the two to be done simultaneously. As a result, women were to do their house chores while the men do the evangelism. But now things have changed and women have realized they have to make use of their God - given talents in the church besides they can do the work the men are doing when given the total freedom or liberation.

Mrs. Grace Nabblah: Presently, women are still being discriminated against in some churches, especially during their menstrual periods. They are quarantined in some corner of the church hall, while in other churches, women sit on one side, while men sit on the other.

Madam Ellen Nyanteh: Previously, in the Presbyterian Church, women always used scarf to cover their hair before entering the chapel, but now some do and others do not, and it seems nobody is really bothered. So I think things have really changed.

Moderator: Is your leadership style in line with 1 cor. 14: 34-40? Give reasons for your answer.

Madam Christiana Allotey: Yes they are. In the olden days, women had no right to preach, or witness to anyone both within and outside the church, but I feel those ideas have changed and women are now doing things they never had the chance to do.

Madam Felicia Gyimah- Ofei: Yes I think they are. Women never had the chance to be elected or voted as moderators of the Presbyterian Church, but on the other hand, these days we find most senior presbyters being women. An example is this church (PCG, Nima District) , this is the second time consecutively, that a woman has become a senior presbyter.

Mrs. Elizabeth Quartey: Yes, because the position of the Presbytery Chairmanship was only occupied by men, but so far there has been only one woman who has ever had the opportunity to fill that position too. Women are always nominated but are never voted into that position.

Madam Agnes Tekpeki: Definitely, because previously, a woman had no right to get closer to the higher leaderships, just as it is now where women are always sidelined when it comes to the higher leadership roles in the church.

The interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 with regards to women's leadership positions in churches

Moderator: What is the text (1 cor. 14: 34-40) about?

Mrs. Juliet Kpentey: In this text, the women are being ordered to remain silent in the churches. This might be as a result of their culture at that time.

Mrs. Regina Quist- Therson: These women in the early church might have been market women who came for church services and never concentrated, but rather discussing their market issues to disturb the services.

Mrs. Grace Asamany: Women in the early church might have been full of pride, and as such were not respecting their husbands, so Paul asked them to keep quiet.

Madam Salomey Afadi: Women in the early church might have been very noisy due to the practicing of their spiritual gifts. And therefore did not practice decorum.

Moderator: If it is about women, what is it saying about their leadership roles?

Mrs. Grace Asamany: This text is asking women to be silent, hence should ask their husbands of anything they wanted to know.

Mrs. Elizabeth Quartey: Women in the church were being asked to be silent, thus stopping them from exercising their God given talents in the worship of God.

Madam Martha Daitey: The text means that women had no right to exercise their spiritual gifts in the church. If they needed to know anything, they should ask their husbands at home. Therefore they were supposed to be the silent part of the church.

Madam Grace Perry: This text means that women in the early church were once vibrant and as such were trying to overshadow the men in the church. Therefore, they were asked to remain silent in order to maintain the respect of the men as the heads of the home.

Moderator: What correlation does it have with women's leadership roles in your church?

Mrs. Regina Quist-Therson: I think there has been a very big change in the trend of affairs. For instance, until present, women had no hand in the leadership affairs of even an ordinary Sunday service, but now, there are women who are Bible study leaders, liturgists, ushers, and praise and worship leaders and so on.

Madam Agnes Tekpeki: Mostly when women are absent on Sunday services, the men find it very difficult to handle church services, and that depicts that women are very able to handle church affairs.

Mrs. Ohene Ampofo: I have observed that there is a difference in time that is between the early church and now. Therefore, women are now given some space to operate in the church. I believe there is still much room for improvement in terms of holding higher leadership positions in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana.

Moderator: Do you think women should be able to hold higher leadership positions in your church?

Madam Doreen Dawson: I think women should hold higher positions in the church, but it should all depend on the person's dedication and commitment in the church.

Madam Salomey Affadi: In support of Mad. Doreen Dawson, the women who are to be selected for various positions are to be screened before being put in position to avoid any misconduct.

Madam Mercy Aku Fosu: With the change in recent trends, I think women should be given more positions in the church.

Madam Margaret Awo Tei: In support of Mad. Mercy Aku Fosu, I am of the view that women should be lifted into higher positions in the church, to enable women's empowerment move ahead much swiftly and for them to gain more courage in all they do.

Mrs. Lucy Abbey: There are so many high positions in the Presbyterian Church, and I think women should be encouraged to take up such positions since they are mostly the ones in charge of training the children and the youth in the church and at home.

The meeting had to come to a close, as a result of bad weather and was re-scheduled to a week after. The secretary gave a few announcements which were followed by a hymn from the Presbyterian hymnal Ga: 231, Twi: 193. Madam Mercy Aku Fosu gave the closing prayer. The group sang one of their songs and dispersed.

**A READING WITH THE WOMEN'S GROUP OF THE PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF HOPE, NIMA DISTRICT**

BIBLE STUDY 2

Date: 28th January 2009

Time: 4:00 pm

Passage: 1 Cor. 14: 34- 40

Present: Mrs. Regina Quist- Therson, Madam Grace Perry, Mrs. Elizabeth Quartey, Mrs. Juliet Kpentey, Mrs. Grace Asamany, Mrs. Grace Okai- Nabblah, Madam Salomey Afadi, Madam Martha Daitey, Madam Diana Afadi, Madam Doreen Dawson, Madam Ellen Nyanteh, Madam Christiana Allotey, Madam Felicia Gyimah- Offei, Madam Agnes Tekpeki, Madam Mercy Aku Fosu, Mrs. Lucy Abbey, Mrs. Ohene Ampofo, Madam Susana Ohenewaa, Madam Margaret Awo Tei.

The meeting started with 20 participants at 4:25pm with a hymn from the Presbyterian hymnal GA 146, TWI 300, after which a prayer was said by Mrs. Grace Asamany. The meeting continued with the usual routine of Bible verse recital. By the end of this session 10 more members joined the group.

The meeting eventually started at 4: 55pm. The researcher and her colleague who helped her with the recordings were again introduced to the group. The researcher gave the purpose of gathering being a moment of reading the text together with them and asked Mrs. Grace Nabblah to read the text in the Ga language, while Madam Mercy Ama Fosu read the text in the Twi language. The research questions were discussed after the readings and the responses are as follows.

The implications of 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 on the particular Church and their doctrinal standpoint in relation to women's leadership status

Moderator: With respect to your church's doctrines, how is this text interpreted?

Madam Salomay Affadi: Both the text and the doctrines of the church do not correlate. In the early church, women were asked to be silent, but with the church's doctrines in today's churches, women have been liberated to an extent.

Mrs. Grace Nabblah: Taking a look at verse 39, I think there is some kind of similarity with the issue of Prophecy and speaking in tongues. Therefore, I think the church of today have found some kind of link with the early church.

Mrs. Regina Quist-Therson: I think we are talking about difference in era, therefore, women now speak freely. But I believe they might have not done what was expected of them as a result they were not respected.

Mrs. Ohene Ampofo: I think this whole issue is all about diverging periods of time, tribe, situation and culture. Paul dealt with problems as they came up with specific situations. As a result, I think the situations of the early church are being taken out of proportion on the present church.

Madam Susana Kumiwaa: Previously, women were considered unclean, but Christ's death has given women their freedom.

Moderator: How do you relate your church's doctrines on leadership to women's leadership status?

Madam Ellen Nyanteh: I believe there has been a tremendous change in terms of the way women are perceived in the church to a larger extent. Those in the highest hierarchy are beginning to realize the need for a feminine touch with respect to

decision making in the church but on the other hand, those occupying these higher positions have taken decisions that continue to cease the women from their total liberation.

Madam Christiana Allotey: I think in the present day churches, the need for women to take part in the Lord's vineyard is eventually coming to bear.

Madam Felicia Gyimah-Offei: Upon the realization of the importance of women in the church, women are beginning to come out of their silence, but sometimes, still hold back due to the silent idea of patriarchy.

Madam Agnes Tekpeki: Due to the increase in awareness creation on women's empowerment, the church is becoming quite flexible in terms of women rising to high positions though with some limitations. Thus there is a growth in the women's ministry in the church.

Madam Margaret Awo Tei: In recent times, women are being elected into higher courts of the Presbyterian Church though with some limitations. As a result, there is the proof of a past woman presbytery chairperson, women ministers, lay readers, liturgists, catechists, senior presbyters among others but not a moderator.

Recommendations for improving on women's leadership in the Church

Moderator: If you have the power to make some contributions, what changes will you make in tune with 1 cor. 14: 34-40 and women's leadership?

Madam Margaret Awo Tei: I believe the days of the early church are over, and now with Christ there have been a change in the way things are done, therefore everything must change for the better.

Madam Agnes Tekpeki: I think if my husband, who has the free will to evangelize and win souls is doing that freely, I don't see why I should sit at home, I will also go with him to support the work of God.

Mrs. Ohene Ampofo: When given the power to make any change in the church, in line with women's leadership, I will try to get more women ministers, and leaders/ presbyters to take charge of the church.

Madam Salomey Affadi: When given the opportunity, I will make sure that there are more women nominated for the position of District ministers, moderators and presbytery chairmanship. When these are put in place I believe it will help check the affairs of the Presbyterian church of Ghana. This when done, I believe will change so many things in the church.

Moderator: In your view, what can be done to get women into active leadership in the church?

Mrs. Lucy Abbey: Women should be trained to take up positions in the church irrespective of their status in life.

Mrs. Quist-Therson: Women in the church should be encouraged to pursue further education, both formal and informal and that will go a long way to help women come out of their shells.

Mrs. Ohene-Ampofo: Women in the church should be given more roles to perform both on Sunday services and weekday services. Again, all limitations put

on women in decisions at General Assembly should be lifted to give equal opportunities to both genders in church leadership.

Mrs. Grace Nabblah: Resource persons should be invited occasionally to speak with the women in the Church on various topics, to help them gain more knowledge in areas such as health, cooking, sewing amongst many.

The meeting came to a close at 5: 45pm. The secretary gave a few announcements which were followed by a hymn from the Presbyterian hymnal Ga: 164, Twi: 134. Mrs. Elizabeth Quartey gave the closing prayer. After that the researcher thanked the group for their co-operation and contributions. The group sang one of their songs after which they exchanged pleasantries and dispersed.

HISTORY OF THE ST. TIMOTHY ANGLICAN CHURCH, NIMA

Introduction

The Anglican Church of Ghana is recognized as part of the Church of the province of West Africa. On 17th April 1951, with the consent of the Archbishop of Canterbury and according to articles submitted by him after consultation with the diocese concerned ,the Diocesan Bishops of five West African Dioceses holding mission from the sea of Canterbury solemnly declared that their dioceses were by their act and determination united in the Province of West Africa with the intention that its organization should be developed in accordance with the Articles hereinafter contained as a province of Catholic Church in full communion with the Anglican Churches.

The Archbishop of Canterbury relinquished his metro political jurisdiction under the articles, retained certain powers during an interim period until a full provincial synod with three houses of Bishops, Clergy and Laity be brought into being and the constitution and Canons be completed and approved. The Synod of the three houses met for the first time in November 1957, following the Crowther centenary celebrations of the Niger Mission. The Synod then made arrangements to prepare its Constitution and Canons. At its second meeting in Lagos in August 1962 the Constitution was finally passed and met with the approval of the Archbishop of Canterbury on 1 March 1963.

Nigeria eventually, was carved into an autonomous province in February 1979, the new Province of Nigeria was inaugurated , comprising the Diocese of Aba, Asaba, Benin, Egba-Egbado, Ekiti, Enugu, Ibadan, Ijebu, Kwara, Lagos, the Diocese of Niger, the Niger Delta, Northern Nigeria, Ondo and Owerri.

The Dioceses of Accra, Kumasi, Liberia, Gambia and Sierra Leone continued in the Province of West Africa. In the year 1981 the four new Dioceses of Cape Coast, Koforidua, Sekondi and Sunyani / Tamale were formed from parts of Accra and Kumasi Dioceses. The current Archbishop is the Most. Rev'd Dr. Justice Ofei Akrofi who was enthroned on the 21st of October 2004 at the cathedral church of the most Holy Trinity in Accra. There are 14 Dioceses and 1 Missionary Area with the six countries that make up the Church in this Province. The Province has seventeen Bishops (4 Retired), 900 other clergy and 700 parishes minister to the needs of about 1,000,000 Anglicans.

St. Timothy Anglican Church, Nima is a parish under the Anglican Diocese of Accra. The history of this parish, its establishment, growth and development would not be complete without the mention of the singular and personal contribution of the late Jacob Tettey A. Glover-Addy who constructed an earlier chapel in 1979 and donated the landed properties to the church in his will.

The Genesis: Vision and Mission

The late Mr. Jacob Tettey A. Glover-Addy's Christian life started at the All Saints Anglican Church in Adabraka, a suburb of Accra from 1939 -1979. During this period, he occupied the positions of sidesman, councilor and also provided free plumbing services for the church for which he received a medal and certificate of appreciation. He had to revoke his membership at the All Saints Anglican church, Adabraka on account of unbrotherly reaction of some members of the church to a perceived ailment.

This unfortunate incident, however, turned out to be a divine diversion of his faculties, efforts and services towards the growth of the Lord's church in an area urgently needed- Nima. This was a vision fulfilled. He had his own building and workshop at Nima. Mr. Jacob Glover-Addy decided to use part of his workshop for morning and evening devotional services. It was not easy undertaking, attracting and sustaining membership support but he still persevered and triumphed.

The Divine Mission

The divine mission was logically followed by the genesis of actual mission. God continued to work this purpose out, using His vessel Jacob. A cousin of Jacob's, Randolph Kitson-Mills an auctioneer when on a visit saw the developments, pledged to support Jacob by assisting him in the procurement of doors, panels and many more from an auction sale of items at the former Ambassador Hotel. These pieces of furniture were turned into doors, pulpit and some things at the altar of the church.

At this stage, quite a few of the Reverend Fathers, now of fairly high ranks were naturally attracted by the chapel under commission- Rev. Fr. Ampah, then in charge of the Nima area, Rev. Fr. Ocquaye then at Tamale but on a visit, Rt. Rev. Bishop Dadson, also then at Tamale but on a visit, the Late Rt. Rev. Bishop Lamaire and others variously advised him. Eventually, the chapel was completed, furnished and consecrated on 24th December 1979 by Rt. Rev. Bishop L. S. M Lamaire of blessed memory, under the chairmanship of the Late Randolph Kitson-Mills.

With the growth of the church, it was decided to make extensions which would also provide residence for the priest in charge. In this connection it is relevant to mention incidentally the significant roles played by Rev. Canon S. M. Torto, Rev. Canon Dr. H. Orland-Mensah, and Rev. Ampim Tetteh among others when St. Timothy was under the supervision of St. Barnabas, Osu. This Church had its first Priest Warden, Ms. Noelle Anan and lay reader (Ga and Akan); People's Warden who is now Rev. Fr. Kingspride Ayitey Jones-Okine as its first

priest coming from the parish to be followed by Rev. Fr. Nat Okai who was also a former People's Warden. After Rev. Fr. Jones-Okine, the church's first resident priest was Rev. Fr. (DSP) Selwyn Okai who started the expansion of the Church Building Project during which Mr. Harry Asamoah and Ms. Naomi Cofie were the Wardens.

Other priests who have served here include Rev. Fr. Lokko, Rev. Fr. Samuel Nunoo and Rev. Fr. Armah. After Rev. Fr. Selwyn Okai left, Rev. Fr. Samuel Nii Kwatei Quartey took over the Administration of the church as its current Parish priest, with Mr. Matthew Afful and Ms. Naomi Cofie as Wardens. They have together worked to help the church membership and brought the development and growth currently to a membership of 145 adults and 60 children. Currently, the wardens are Mr. Emmanuel Otoo and the longest serving Warden, Ms. Naomi Cofie. Other prominent members, including the late S. H. Anany (Chancellor), the late Benjamin Quartey-Papafio, the late Mr. Rex Oku, and the late Mad. Mary Mensah. Others still alive are Mad. Eileen Robertson, Mr. D. S. Borquaye, Mrs. Cecilia Aryee, Mr. S. B. Nyantekyi, and Mr. Adjei Gyamfi just to mention a few who have been very supportive to the church.

The expanded church was rededicated on Saturday 10th March 2007 by the Most Rev. Dr. Justice Ofei Akrofi, Archbishop of the Church of the Province of West Africa (CPWA) and Bishop of Accra. The expansion project is still ongoing. St. Timothy Anglican Church, Nima is one of the Parishes in the Accra East Archdeaconry of the Diocese of Accra. The church has an out station at 'Medie' a suburb of Accra, being managed by a team of committed members led by Mr.

Daniel Owiredu. The church follows the Liturgy as by constitution and by Synod prescribed according to the corporate plan of the Anglican Diocese of Accra.

Decisions of the Anglican Church of Ghana on women in ministry

At a provincial Synod of the Church of the Province of West Africa (CPWA) in 1987, held at Green Hill Achimota, the Accra Diocese of the Anglican Church of Ghana, received a resolution purported to have come from the 1978 Lambeth Conference of Diocesan Bishops which stated categorically that “. . . there are no theological objections to the ordination of women into the priesthood, but left it to Bishops to discern when the time was right to Ordain women in their dioceses” (Emphasis, Task – Force). Since then this issue had gained currency within the Anglican community of West Africa. The Diocese of Gambia began to ordain women into clerical ministry, followed by Liberia. In Ghana, various sessions of Synods were held to discuss this matter before a systematic move was made towards the issue of women’s ordination.

At a Synod of the Anglican Diocese of Accra at Legon on 4th – 6th July 2008, a twenty five (25) member committee was appointed with representatives from all the dioceses. This committee regrouped itself into smaller teams of two or four to visit and interact with congregational members of each Parish in the Accra Diocese and find their responses on the issue and the following were the concerns raised by the stakeholders that is the congregational members.

1. **Age Limit:**

- a. The limit for admission of Male counterparts as enshrined in the constitution should equally apply to females. Or
- b. A candidate must not be less than 28 years on entry and not above 60 years at the time of ordination.

2. **Title:**

How are they going to be addressed after ordination? Rev. Mothers or Rev. Pastors? Since their ministers are referred to as Rev. Fathers

3. **Status:**

- a. Are they going to be non- stipendiary (Worker Priest) or full time, or perpetual Deacons?
- b. Female priests are to be engaged only on activities other than the Mass such as: Visiting the prisons, hospitals and other pastoral services.

4. **Training:**

- a. Ordinands must receive proper training in the Anglican worship Tradition.
- b. In exceptional cases, basic qualification set out in the eligibility criteria, should be waved for certain category of women (especially those with exceptional qualities) to enter the training.

5. **Marital Status:**

Open to all females under item (1) of age limit. Sponsored parishes and Archdeacons must scrutinize candidate's suitability.

6. Women of Childbearing age and its challenges:

Concerned about the biological condition of a woman at certain times of the month, was raised.

7. Note of Caution:

It was suggested that caution should be taken in its implementation to avoid a possible split in the church as experienced in the Episcopal Church of the U. S. A. and the Church of England.

In light of the above discussions the synod of the Accra Diocese also related the general work of a priest to the original mandate from Jesus Christ to His Apostles, immediately after his resurrection. To wit: “Go into the entire world and preach the Gospel to the whole world . . . And they went forth and preached everywhere” (Matthew 16: 15 & 20). For this reason, the committee outlined the following Eligibility Criteria for the selection of suitable candidates for training and ordination into ministry. Eligible candidates are as follows:

1. Be between the ages of 35 and 60 years.
- 2a. Possess basic qualifications of at least GCE ‘O’ or ‘A’ Level with passes in four (4) subjects including English or the SHS certificate or Teacher’s Certificate ‘A’ or Diploma in Theology or any relevant Diploma from a recognized Institution or a University Degree.
- b. Candidate must in addition, pass an entrance examination which is held by the college.

3. Be within the following Marital Status. Marriage must be in accordance with the provisions on marriage as enshrined under chapter seven of the CPWA constitution and canons, that is:

a. Married under the ordinance – Solemnized Wedding in the Church. Or

b. Married under Customary Laws and solemnized in the church and still consummating the marriage. Or

c. Widowed but has decided not to remarry. Or

d. Widowed and intends to remarry at a later date possibly after ordination. In which case, the marriage process must strictly follow the provisions of the canons on marriage under chapter seven of the CPWA constitution and Canons. Or

e. A single parent through separation. In which case, the separation will be thoroughly investigated by local Parochial Church Committee in the first instance; then by the commission on Ministry of the Diocese. Or

f. A Divorcee – in which case, candidates must produce evidence for the divorce

g. A spinster who by desire would want to stay single throughout life. Candidate must however, swear an affidavit to that effect.

4. Candidates must show qualities of total commitment and dedication for pastoral work and evidence that she has indeed received the call and she is a fit and proper person to enter the Sacred Ministry, with the following attributes:

a. Leadership (managerial skills) – ability to serve in the propagation of the gospel.

b. Teaching- ability as a teacher, with some academic credentials.

c. Animators- organizing ability, motivating the faithful

d. Celebrant.

5. Candidates must also satisfy the virtues espoused in (1st Timothy 3:6,7 and 9). That is, she must not be a novice in the faith but experienced and mature Believers, Bold, Confident etc.
6. Candidate shall be thoroughly screened overtly and covertly by the local Parochial Church Committee to clear any possible doubts of eligibility.
7. In all cases, candidates must be certified by the appropriate Archdeaconry after vetting and recommendation by local Parochial Church Committee of the Parish concerned, and finally approved by the Commission on Ministry after overall assessment of candidate's suitability for training as a priest.

**A READING WITH THE WOMEN'S GROUP OF THE ST. TIMOTHY
ANGLICAN CHURCH, NIMA**

BIBLE STUDY 1

Date: 4TH February 2009

Time: 5:30 pm

Passage: 1 Cor. 14: 34- 40

Present: Madam Theodora Korang, Madam Mary Lamptey, Mrs. Grace Aryee, Madam Sophia Malm, Madam Grace Mabell, Madam Mary Bannes, Madam Naomi Coffie, Madam Edna Quansah, Madam Miranda Attoh, Mrs. Salomey Quartey, Madam Helen Dowuona, Madam Elizabeth Boadi and Mrs. Mary Mingle.

The meeting started at 5: 55 pm with only seven (7) people, while other members were late for the meeting. They sang from the Anglican Hymnal number 674 after which a prayer was said by Mrs. Grace Aryee. After the prayer, each member gave a Bible verse before sitting down. After that, the previous minutes were read and some members moved for its acceptance. The researcher and her colleague who helped her with the recording were introduced to the group. The researcher then told the members the purpose of gathering, to discuss the text, after which the text was read in Twi by Madam Theodora Korang, Ga by Madam Mary Lamptey and English by Mrs. Grace Aryee. This was followed by the actual Bible discussion.

Concept of leadership in the church

Moderator: What is your idea about leadership in the early church?

Madam Sophia Malm: Unlike in the early church when women were not given the chance to talk in the church, today things are different and women can speak in the church.

Madam Theodora Korang: In the early church, women were suppressed and could not come out to express their opinions, thus had to ask their husbands. As a result they were left behind in so many things, but in the present church, women can pray than in the days of the early church.

Madam Mary Lamptey: In Paul's time, women were silenced, but we need to ask ourselves; if relating this to our time, one will be asking whether these men

we are to inquire from them are the type that will come home early or the drunken type? How then can he say anything meaningful?

Mrs. Salomey Quartey: Women in the early church were relegated to the background and were not given any chance at all to express their spiritual gifts.

Moderator: How do you relate this to leadership in the church today?

Mrs. Grace Aryee: In comparison with the early church, women have now had some chance to do so many things in the church. They are being put in positions such as Chalice assistants, Lay readers, and servers, but not in positions like Arch Deacons, Arch Bishops or Bishops.

Madam Grace Mabell: It is obvious that women are more than men in this church, and they can participate in so many things. On the other hand, in the early church, prophets were mostly elderly men but now women are trying to change trends in the world.

Madam Mary Bannes: I believe in the early church, inadequate education was a reason for women being relegated to the background, but these days women are pursuing further education which makes them able to match their male counterparts.

Mrs. Salomey Quartey: Women have come a long way through their struggles to attain high levels in the church today unlike when women were to keep silent in the churches.

Moderator: Is your leadership style in line with 1 cor. 14: 34-40? Give reasons for your answer.

Madam Naomi Coffie: Women are working very hard and are trying to match with their male colleagues and are being forceful enough to become ministers of the gospel. Mostly at Synod meetings, women outnumber the men; but when it comes to the issue of holding very important positions, the women are downplayed. Therefore I believe women should be given some space to maneuver.

Madam Helen Dowuona: I believe there has been a change because women can no longer keep silence. This is because for all you know your husband was sleeping during the church service, so how can you go asking him questions concerning things you want to know? Therefore if it was not good for Adam to be alone, why should it be good for women to keep silence while the men do all the work? They sure need helpers.

Madam Sophia Malm: I see a vast difference in terms of the leadership styles of both the early and present churches. This is due to the fact that women are beginning to occupy positions which hitherto they would not have even dreamt of, due to the order for them to keep silence in the churches.

Madam Christiana Lamptey: There is a great difference between the text and our church today to some extent. I say this because women in some time past were not allowed on the altar, but now there are women servers, which I think is a good step in a right direction. Nevertheless, I believe much more can be done regarding women being put in higher leadership in the Anglican Church.

The interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 with regards to women's leadership positions in churches

Moderator: What is the text (1 cor. 14: 34-40) about?

Madam Grace Mabell: This text is about women being ordered to keep silence in the church, and inquire from their husbands if they needed to know anything.

Madam Miranda Attoh: This text deals with women and they are being ordered to be silent in the churches. According to the text, it is shameful for the women to express themselves.

Madam Edna Quansah: The text makes it clear how shameful it is for any woman to speak, for their position is the silent or dormant membership of the congregation, which means they would only have to listen and not pass any comments.

Madam Elizabeth Boadi: This text deals with women's participation in the churches, which were kind of not welcomed, for they are to be silent during services since it is shameful for them to speak in public.

Moderator: If it is about women, what is it saying about their leadership roles?

Madam Helen Dowuona: Women in the early church were relegated to the background, not allowing them to participate in church activities, but having to sit back and watch the men do all the work.

Madam Naomi Coffle: Women were to keep silence in the churches. Paul made it emphatically clear to the Corinthian women that it was such a shameful thing to talk in church.

Madam Mary Bannes: It seems women in the early church were very vibrant and thus were asked to keep silence in order to allow the men do the work all by themselves.

Mrs. Grace Aryee: The women in the Corinthian church were made the silent congregation of the church, where they only had to sit and watch all things happen. This I believe went a long way to suppress their spiritual gifts.

Moderator: What correlation does it have with women's leadership roles in your church?

Madam Sophia Malm: There is a great difference between the two groups in question, which are the early church and the church now. Women in this church have got their own programmes, manuals, hymns for weekly lessons. Therefore we are more liberated in the church than those of the early church.

Madam Elizabeth Boadi: Women should be able to attend seminars just as the men always do to take decisions for the church. Therefore women should be given the chance to exercise their freedom in worshipping God.

Madam Theodora Korang: Women should be given the chance to enroll in the theological seminaries to encourage the other women. This is because mostly the women are scared of addressing the men in the higher courts of the church like the Bishop, Arch Bishops, and Arch Deacons etc.

Mrs. Salomey Quartey: Women have been subjected for long when it comes to leadership positions in higher places of the church hierarchy. This to some extent have changed a bit from the leadership of the early church and conforming to that of the present church where women are being given some space to operate

thought there are still traits of the leadership in the early church manifesting in the church today.

Moderator: Do you think women should be able to hold higher leadership positions in your church?

Madam Theodora Korang: I believe women should be given positions in higher courts of the church so that it can encourage all other women, in order not to be scared of the men in the higher positions.

Madam Mary Lamptey: Women should be able to hold higher leadership positions in the church, since they would be able to understand women's plights better perhaps through past experiences.

Madam Helen Dowuona: Yes. This is because women, when put into leadership positions, go all out to do their part, and sometimes go out of their way to do things especially when it has to do with the spread of the Gospel.

Madam Miranda Attoh: I believe when women are given the chance they are going to do exploits. Women always give their entire commitment to whatever they do; therefore I think women will do better in such positions.

The meeting had to come to a close, because time was far spent and the women had to go home to cater for their families. The meeting was re - scheduled to a week after. The secretary gave a few announcements which were followed by a hymn from the Anglican hymnal number 436 After that Madam Sophia Malm gave the closing prayer. The group sang one of their songs, shared the grace and dispersed.

A READING WITH THE WOMEN'S GROUP OF THE ST. TIMOTHY

ANGLICAN CHURCH, NIMA

BIBLE STUDY 2

Date: 11th February 2009

Time: 5: 30pm

Passage: 1 Cor. 14: 34-40

Present: Madam Theodora Korang, Madam Mary Lamptey, Mrs. Grace Aryee, Madam Sophia Malm, Madam Grace Mabell, Madam Mary Bannes, Madam Naomi Cofie, Madam Edna Quansah, Madam Miranda Attoh, Mrs. Salomey Quartey, Madam Helen Dowuona, Madam Elizabeth Boadi and Mrs. Mary Mingle.

The meeting started at 5: 30 pm. The group sang from the Anglican Hymnal number 334 after which a prayer by Mrs. Mary Mingle. After the prayer, each member gave a Bible verse before sitting down as it is usually done on meeting days. After that, the previous minutes were read and some members moved for its acceptance. In continuation of the discussion from the previous week, the text was read in Twi by Madam Elizabeth Boadi, Ga by Madam Naomi Cofie and English by Madam Sophia Malm. This was followed by the actual discussion.

The implications of 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 on the particular church and their doctrinal standpoint in relation to women's leadership status

Moderator: With respect to your church's doctrines, how is this text interpreted?

Madam Christiana Lamptey: With the present standing of the Anglican Church, there have been so many changes. As a result, women are given some space to lead on Sunday services, unlike the early churches but I am still waiting to see a woman Bishop, Arch Bishop or Arch Deacon.

Mrs. Salomey Quartey: I was a Methodist before getting married to Rev. Father Quartey. On my 1st communion in the Anglican Church, I got a bit uncomfortable because I had promised not to take in alcohol, but the communion wine was very strong, but these days the wine is diluted a bit, therefore there have been changes in many things and so are the little roles women are made to play during services.

Madam Naomi Coffie: Previously, the Anglican system of service was a call and response service, where mere prayers were said after the pastor had read the line, but now, it is very different. We now do our own intercession and pray on our own.

Madam Elizabeth Boadi: Previously the Anglican Church did not use a set of drums for service, it was all solemn, but now the drums and tambourines are used and are mostly played by some females in the church.

Moderator: How do you relate your church's doctrines on leadership to women's leadership status?

Madam Sophia Malm: Unlike previously when patriarchy was very obvious in the Anglican Church, there is some space in recent times given to women in the

Parochial Church Committee (PCC), women are given the chance as readers, women servers, amongst other positions in the church.

Mrs. Grace Aryee: Presently, the church has got Chalice Assistants who help the priests in giving out communion, Peoples' warden, Priest warden, and there so many women in the guilds and groups. Therefore women are currently recognized in the Anglican Church more than they were in previous times.

Madam Mary Lamprey: In this church, there are also women ushers who usher people to available pews in the church during services, which was a position only occupied by men in the church some time back.

Recommendations for improving on women's leadership in the church

Moderator: If you have the power to make some contributions, what changes will you make in tune with 1 cor. 14: 34-40 and women's leadership?

Madam Sophia Malm: When given the power, I would encourage more women to take part in ministerial positions in the church, to help encourage the young ones amongst us.

Mrs. Grace Aryee: There are lay pastors in this church who are women, therefore, when given the opportunity, I would encourage more women to attend the training programmes to be able to speak or preach regularly in the church.

Madam Mary Bannes: The church has got an outreach programme for the villages where they go to witness to the people. This is mostly done by the women in the church on scheduled basis. Therefore when given the opportunity, I would encourage most women to take part, in order to help spread the gospel.

Madam Edina Quansah: I don't really see the need in bothering our heads over women's leadership or women being priests. Since I was born into Anglicanism, there has never been this argument over women's leadership roles so I do not see why it is now. Besides, when a woman is made a priest, her work will be interrupted by family issues, which is the more reason why they should stay at home and concentrate on family issues.

Madam Theodora Korang: I believe I would want more women to be priests, but there is a criterion for being in that position, therefore if you do not fit in then you are surely out. I believe it should be someone very matured and one who has entered her menopause stages or is a widow.

Madam Mary Bannes: If I should put women in pastoral positions, my criterion would be one with patience and one who is very well educated.

Madam Miranda Attah: I would want to know why Mad. Theresa after all her kind gestures was never a priest.

Madam Naomi Coffie: In response, I would say that she was a Catholic besides in the early days, there was no portion of the Anglican constitution which gave reverence to women, which made them always hold back when called into leadership positions, but it is different now, women are being given the chance to do so many things in the church.

Mrs. Salomey Quartey: In my opinion, there should be a criterion. Reasons being that though it is good for a woman to become a priest, there might be so many obstacles and implications. Being that most occasions, both the male and female priests would be moving together to give sick communion or general

assembly or perhaps diocesan missions, but knowing our Ghanaian society too well, there is going to be rumours about the two having an affair. But when the women priests have passed their menopausal stage, the issue will be better than a very young woman pastor always in the car of the male pastor or vice versa.

Moderator: In your view, what can be done to get women into active leadership in the church?

Mrs. Salomey Quartey: I would like to bring women together as a unifying force to study the Gospel together.

Madam Naomi Coffie: I would like to change the elderly women servers and put the young people at the altar to serve. This is because looking at the buxom nature of some of these women, I think the pastors get tempted to look at their stature, thus very young girls who are not well developed can do that work. This is in a way to encourage them right from their very tender ages to hold positions in the church.

Madam Helen Dowuona: I would love to work for oneness amongst the women so that in unity and love, we can go out and win souls for God.

Mrs. Grace Aryee: I would want to organize women for training programmes, where resource persons would come and give talks on educative topics and also engage them in practical programmes, such as catering, sewing, weaving etc. this could help them set up their own small scale jobs.

Madam Mary Lamptey: Initially there were lay pastors or catechists who worked in the absence of the pastors, to some extent. In my opinion I wish women

could perform more of the duties such as officiating weddings and funerals and also performing duties as Bishops as well.

Madam Hellen Dowuona: I earnestly wish that the young girls or women would be given piano lessons so we could have a female organist, because as a woman, I get so emotional and sentimental when the keyboard is being played and if possible there should be a choir mistress for a change.

The meeting came to a close, after all contributions were given. The secretary gave a few announcements which were followed by a hymn from the Anglican hymnal number 290. The researcher thanked the entire group for their contributions and co-operation, after which Mrs. Grace Aryee gave the closing prayer. The group sang one of their songs, shared the grace and dispersed.

INTERVIEWS

Two women elders from each Church were used for the interviews. These women were at the time of interview in leadership positions in their various Churches. The women ranged between the ages of fifty two and seventy three years of age and had been in various leadership positions between two and thirty eight years. The contributions of the interviewees are as follows.

Topic:

Contextual bible readings of 1 Corinthians 14: 34-40 and women's ministry.

A case study of some selected churches in Accra.

INTERVIEW 1

A. Biographical Data

NAME: Madam Agnes Peprah

AGE: 58 years

NAME OF CHURCH: Christ Apostolic Church International, Nima

POSITION: Leader of the Good Women's Fellowship

NUMBER OF YEARS IN SERVICE: 38 years

B. Interviewer: What is your idea about the concept of leadership in the early church?

Respondent: The concept of leadership in the early church is too partial and discriminatory. This does not allow the free operation of the Holy Spirit in the church because once the Holy Spirit comes upon someone, he or she will have the power and enablement to perform, so it should not matter one's gender hence preventing women from leadership positions in the church which is rather unfortunate.

C. Interviewer: What is your interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 with regards to women's leadership positions in churches?

Respondent: My interpretation of 1 Cor. 14: 34-40 is that, women cannot hold any leadership position in the church and that they should be dormant regardless of their capabilities.

D. Interviewer: What are the implications of 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 on your church and its doctrinal standpoint in relation to women's leadership status?

Respondent: The Christ Apostolic Church International in some time past suffered from this concept but upon strict adherence to our doctrines and beliefs which are based on the Holy Spirit, the church is trying to overcome such restrictions. Most of our women now can hold leadership positions and can talk and perform various duties freely in public. For example, we have a woman as a director of finance in the church and many other auxiliary positions.

E. Interviewer: what are your recommendations for improving on women's leadership in the Church?

Respondent: I think our women should not be barred from any leadership positions. This is because the church is the body of Christ and as long as they are part and a greater proportion by numbers, they equally have some charisma which is needed for the building of the body of Christ.

Finally, to improve on women's leadership in the church, I will recommend to those in the position of decision making, to appoint more women, considering their capabilities and spiritual gifts and commitments. This I think will help eliminate discrimination against women in the church to a large extent.

INTERVIEW 2

A. Biographical Data

NAME: Madam Gladys Mensah

AGE: 52 years

NAME OF CHURCH: Christ Apostolic Church International, Nima

POSITION: Executive member of the Good women's fellowship

NUMBER OF YEARS IN SERVICE: 12 years.

B. Interviewer: What is your idea about the concept of leadership in the early church?

Respondent: The leadership in the early church was under strict restrictions and there was a great discrimination against women. The women were not given the chance to speak in the church. They were to remain silent and they must be in submission. The women were not given the chance to hold any position in the church and also they were not given much attention as it is given women in present day churches.

C. interviewer: What is your interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 with regards to women's leadership positions in churches?

Respondent: In 1 Cor. 14: 34- 40, it appears that the churches in the early days had problems. Perhaps the noisy nature of women was not allowed in such sacred assemblies. Hence Paul forbade them from speaking in the church, either for the purposes of teaching or prophecies.

I believe Paul was not against women being given positions in the churches, but was trying to touch on some characters of women. Women as we mostly know, when given the chance to talk on issues sometimes exceed their limits. That I believe was why Paul told the church of Corinthians that women should remain silent and submissive in the church.

D. Interviewer: What are the implications of 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 on the your church and its doctrinal standpoint in relation to women's leadership status

Respondent: I think this can have a serious implication on the churches because the world today has taken a great turn. I believe we no more live in a world where only men dictate the pace. Besides, if the liberation of women is not allowed, I think:

- i. It will reduce the growth of the church.
- ii. The visions and ideas of women will not be seen.
- iii. God's purpose for women will not be seen because women will not have the freedom to prophesy.

E. Interviewer: what are your recommendations for improving on women's leadership in the Church?

Respondent: In my own view, I will recommend that the positions in the church should be shared equally. Women should be allowed to occupy higher positions as well as men, such as the positions of Elders and Deacons. It would also be very welcoming if women were also allowed in this church to attend the theological seminary and be ordained as Pastors.

I also will recommend that women will be empowered into special leadership training programmes which could be organized for them periodically.

INTERVIEW 3

A. Biographical Data

NAME: Miss Helen E. Dowuona

AGE: 54years

NAME OF CHURCH: St. Timothy Anglican Church, Nima

POSITION: President of the women's fellowship

NUMBER OF YEARS IN SERVICE: 2years

B. Interviewer: What is your idea about the concept of leadership in the early church?

Respondent: Leadership in the early church was male dominated. Women virtually had no place in worship. They were a sort of the silent part of the congregation who were not permitted to take part in activities such as prophesy, and speaking in tongues, but were to be silent and submissive.

C. Interviewer: What is your interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 with regards to women's leadership positions in churches?

Respondent: I believe women are being suppressed and denied the freedom God gave to all Christians irrespective of gender. Besides, I believe women have much to contribute to the work of God and can participate freely in worship.

D. Interviewer: What are the implications of 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 on your church and its doctrinal stand point in relation to women's leadership status?

Respondent: In the Corinthian culture, Jewish women were to attend to their families and as such were not exposed to studies in religious education. Meanwhile there were hardworking women like Mary Magdalene, Mary- mother of Jesus amongst others.

The situation in our present day churches until some time ago was similar to the early church but recent trends show that there have been changes and women are being given the chance to study the Bible; therefore they have the right to lead in all aspects of worship. I therefore believe that when women are given the chance to perform duties, they do it well if not better, and for this reason, I believe the church is realizing women's commitment to church activities and hence assigning them to some duties in the church.

E. interviewer: what are your recommendations for improving on women's leadership in the Church?

Respondent: I will recommend that women are given the chance to exercise their God- given gifts in the church to the fullest. Higher positions in the church should be open for both men and women, and by so doing I believe women can also express and contribute to the fullest when it comes to exercising their Christian beliefs and gifts.

INTERVIEW 4

A. Biographical Data

NAME: Madam Naomi Cofie

AGE: 64 years

NAME OF CHURCH: St. Timothy Anglican Church, Nima

POSITION: Priest Warden, Archdeaconry President of the women's fellowship,
Lay Pastor.

NUMBER OF YEARS IN SERVICE: Priest Warden- 6 years

Archdeaconry President of the women's fellowship- 2 years

Lay Pastor- 2 years

B. Interviewer: What is your Idea about the concept of leadership in the early church?

Respondent: My idea of a good leader must be a good servant. Now the concept of leadership in the early church proclaims someone;

- i. Who knows the way of God
- ii. Who goes the way of God
- iii. Who shows the way of God

Therefore these are leaders who have learnt to serve, listen respectfully, admit their mistakes, show willingness to change when they are wrong, and must mix gentleness with firmness. They must really show leadership by example, because those who want to lead and help others must first of all lead good examples.

C. Interviewer: What is your interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 with regards to women's leadership positions in churches?

Respondent: The assumption here is that where men who are in authority preside, women are regarded as incompetent when it comes to contributions. Sometimes they are even regarded as 'unclean'. Thank God that today the situation is different. It has now become a shoulder to shoulder affair between men and women.

D. Interviewer: What are the implications of 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 on your church and its doctrinal standpoint in relation to women's leadership status?

Respondent: In my church (St. Timothy Anglican Church) presently, the women as well as the men are seen participating in almost all the leadership positions. Unlike previous years, women's leadership positions in the Anglican Church are rather increasing which is encouraging.

E. Interviewer: what are your recommendations for improving on women's leadership in the Church?

Respondent: I believe the women must be encouraged to be self assertive or somewhat aggressive towards succeeding in the competitive duties.

Whatever positions in leadership, they must be encouraged not to leave it to the men, rather move on to excel in the service with spiritual qualities such as love, joy, peace, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control.

Women must learn to exercise integrity in their daily given duties, anywhere, anytime. Hence those who do well in one area must be promoted to the next level or hierarchy to enhance better work.

Women must be strong and courageous in their day to day duties, obey all God's laws for living their lives. They should be made to lead in such a way that the word 'HONESTY' will continually sound right whenever it is attached to their names. They must be seen as leaders who are open and honest about their own lives, so that others will be helped and encouraged by their deeds.

INTERVIEW 5

A. Biographical Data

NAME: Mrs. Regina Quist-Therson

AGE: 57

NAME OF CHURCH: Presbyterian Church of Hope, Nima

POSITION: Senior Presbyter/ Children Service Teacher

NUMBER OF YEARS IN SERVICE: Senior Presbyter: 2 years

Children Service Teacher: 30 years

B. Interviewer: What is your idea about the concept of leadership in the early church?

Respondent: My concept of leadership in the early church was mainly one which was totally controlled by men. They were in absolute control over both administrative and spiritual issues.

C. Interviewer: What is your interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 with regards to women's leadership positions in churches?

Respondent: In the Jewish settings women were relegated to the background. They sat separate from men. Perhaps when grouped together, women were always

talking about their market prices or their children so Paul said they should keep quiet.

But now, in Christ, men and women are one, as joint heirs with Christ and if anyone draws near to God, God has promised to draw near to the person irrespective of gender.

If women avail themselves and they are ready to learn, God can use women through various leadership positions in the church to reach out to others. Therefore women need to be humble and realize that it is only by grace that God has shown them favour and has lifted women up.

D. Interviewer: What are the implications of 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 on your church and its doctrinal standpoint in relation to women's leadership status?

Respondent: In the Presbyterian Church, if the calling of God comes to you, nobody despises you. The men also do encourage anyone who has got potentials. In this vein, there are women who are catechist, some ministers of the gospel, elders and so on. Presently, for the first time, the secretary of the Ga Presbytery is a woman unlike previous years when the secretaries were men. The only position left for women to occupy in the Presbyterian Church is that of the Moderatorship.

E. Interviewer: what are your recommendations for improving on women's leadership in the Church?

Respondent: Women should be encouraged at an early age, to seek the Lord and his righteousness. They should be taught that God loves everyone and if we draw closer to him, he will draw closer to us. For instance God used women like Deborah the Judge, Hannah, Priscilla and others and thus this should be a source

of encouragement to all young girls in the church to draw closer to the work of God.

INTERVIEW 6

A. Biographical Data

NAME: Mrs. Gladys Ohene-Ampofo

AGE: 73 years

NAME OF CHURCH: Presbyterian Church of hope, Nima

POSITION: Elder

NUMBER OF YEARS IN SERVICE: 23 years

B. Interviewer: What is your idea about the concept of leadership in the early church?

Respondent: It was the culture of the Corinthians at that time that women should be submissive to the men. Anything contrary to their system would have broken up the church. I do not think they were allowed any form of education that would have helped them to administer the church.

C. interviewer: What is your interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 with regards to women's leadership positions in churches?

Respondent: At that time, they were not allowed to speak let alone take any leadership positions in the church. They had to rely on the men for every form of education they needed. Women were relegated to the background. This attitude

was present in the early times of the present church, but with the changing trends in time women are now given the opportunity to hold positions in the church.

D. Interviewer: What are the implications of 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 on your church and its doctrinal standpoint in relation to women's leadership status?

Respondent: Times have changed as more and more women are being educated or have been educated. Presently there seem to be more women than men in the church and are taking more active roles. Christ has made us to understand that we are all equal before him so there is no problem now with women taking positions in the church.

For instance, in the women's fellowship, there is a programme that should always take them away from the church but the minister makes sure that only a limited number of women attend the programme and report back to the rest of the members. This is because the minister will need the services of some women to partake in worship activities. If it comes to the election of members for leadership positions, the men rather push the women forward, because they feel the women are much more up to the task than they are. I strongly believe that the church of God will surely flop without the active participation of women. For this reason, women should be given equal rites to the position of the highest hierarchy; the moderatorship.

E. Interviewer: what are your recommendations for improving on women's leadership in the Church?

Respondent: Women need to be educated to higher levels to be able to compete favorably with the men. Women need not be satisfied with the levels they have achieved, but strive higher. They ought to be bold and push forward.

CHAPTER FOUR
ANALYSIS ON DATA COLLECTED FROM WOMEN'S GROUPS
THROUGH A CONTEXTUAL BIBLE STUDY

Women in these groups range within the ages of thirty (30) to seventy five (75) years and have served in the church for between ten (10) to thirty eight years (38). They are mostly market women or house wives who have either an average, little or no formal education at all. Others are also retired educationists and retired nurses who are running their own private schools or small businesses. The following are ideas deduced from their contributions:

Christ Apostolic Church International (Nima Assembly)

Concerning the concept of leadership in the church, the women in the Christ Apostolic church international were of the view that the text depicted women in the early church being relegated to the background. To them, the gifts of women were suppressed by asking women to remain silent. The reason being that it was a shameful act for them to speak publicly.

In relating the text to leadership in the Christ Apostolic Church International, the women opined that there is a slight difference regarding the treatment meted to women in their church. In their view, though there are some similarities, women are given a little chance to partake in some leadership roles in

the church, such as being deaconesses, Bible readers, praise and worship leaders and so on. They however, went on to say that the leadership style of the church today is somehow in line with the leadership style of the early church as depicted in the Corinthian Church. The women believe that trends have not changed much and as a result, some positions are still restricted, only to be held by the men in the Church.

The perception of the women, with respect to their position on women holding higher positions in the church was very positive. They were of the view that God gave both men and women talents and because of that women can also do well in higher positions when given the chance. In attesting to the credibility of the person to hold that higher position, they think there is the need to vet the person's contributions and commitments to both weekday and Sunday services, including other church activities. With regard to the issue of how the church interprets the text in the light of her values, the text is interpreted in the Christ Apostolic Church International, as women not being able to hold higher positions in the church, but can keep to the hospitality business

When given the power, to make some changes with regard to women's leadership in the Christ Apostolic Church International, the women said they will put more women than men into higher positions, since women are more committed to tasks assigned to them. They also expressed the desire to see more women being enrolled into clerical ministry, rather than just being in the hospitality positions. According to these women, one thing that can get women to

know what they are really capable of doing is through education and also through women's empowerment in any form possible in order to realize their potentials.

Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Hope Congregation, Nima

The idea of the women in the Presbyterian Church about leadership in the early church depicted a male dominated population where women were not allowed to speak. Women were sidelined and restricted from speaking owing to the fact that it was a shameful act for a woman to be seen speaking. To these women, when comparing the early Church to the Church of today, there is some sort of difference, though not absolute. For some reasons, women have been given the opportunity to hold some positions in the Church or presbyteries but other positions have been restricted to the men.

These women opine that there is not much difference between the text and the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. This is because, the positions of moderator, presbytery chairmanship, District ministers among other very important positions have been restricted. To the women, even if most of these positions are opened, the proportion of males to females is very appalling.

In correlating the roles of women in the early church with women's leadership in the Presbyterian Church, the women are of the view that there has been a change as to how women are being treated in the Church today as compared to the early church. Women now are given the chance to stand before the congregation to speak, sing, and perform so many other duties. In this light, the women were of the view that women should be allowed to hold higher

positions in the church, where they could be a part of the higher decision making bodies of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana.

The Church's interpretation of 1 Cor. 14: 34-40, indirectly has an effect on its decisions. Until quite recently, prophesy and speaking in tongues was very unusual in the Presbyterian environment, but that idea is beginning to change at a very slow pace. Again, with the sudden emergence of women's empowerment in the society, the Presbyterian Church is trying to adjust its rules though to a larger extent, there are restrictions as to women being in higher leadership and decision making bodies in the Lord's vineyard.

The women have the wish of seeing women abound in the higher decision making bodies of the church such as a Moderator, Reverend Minister, Presbytery chairpersons, and also see the wives of the ministers in active positions. The only way through which they feel this hope they have can be realized is through women being trained to take up positions in the church irrespective of their status in life. Again, women in the church should be encouraged to pursue further education, both formal and informal and that will go a long way to help women come out of their shells and also all limitations put on women in decisions at General Assembly meetings, should be revisited to give equal opportunities to both genders in church leadership.

St. Timothy Anglican Church (Nima)

Deducing from the responses of women from the St. Timothy Anglican Church, the leadership of the early Church was the rigid type, where women were

forbidden to speak, because it was seen as shameful. Previously, the leadership of the church was just as the early church where women had no chance to participate in any activity but now leadership trends are beginning to take a brighter side. Women are given the opportunity as Chalice assistants, Alter servers and so on.

In trying to link the roles of women in the early church to women in the Anglican Church, it came to bear that there has been some change in the way things are done in the church today. The women in the Anglican Church have been given the chance to draw their own programmes on yearly basis, use their own manuals for meetings among others. In as much as they are given the chance to do all these things, they think it is not enough. They express that women should be given the chance to occupy higher positions because women, when put into leadership positions, go all out to do their part, and sometimes go out of their way to do things especially when it has to do with the spread of the Gospel.

The Anglican Church's interpretation of the text does not necessarily underestimate women, but the church itself runs its leadership on much more patriarchal lines. Presently, the church has got Chalice Assistants who help the priests in giving out communion, Peoples' warden, Priest warden, and there so many women in the guilds and groups. Therefore, women are currently recognized in the Anglican Church more than they were in previous times.

Most of these women except one, when given the chance will want to see more women as Reverend Ministers, Deacons, Arch Deacons and even a female Bishop. To one of the women, Madam Edina Quansah, she doesn't really see the need in bothering ourselves over this issue of women's leadership or women

being priests. In her opinion, since she was born into Anglicanism, there has never been this argument over women's leadership roles so she really does not see why it should be an issue now. Besides, when a woman is made a priest, her work will be interrupted by family issues, which is the more reason why they should stay at home and concentrate on family issues. Her idea was counteracted by the other women, who suggested that there are rules or some criteria for choosing people, therefore those issues will be taken care of. On the count of incidents about sexual immorality between a male and female minister under the cover of ministerial work, the women suggested that it should be a woman in her menopausal stages, which might be better than a young female minister. Women of the Anglican Church are of the view that when women are encouraged or given the chance, they will do much better or just the same as their male colleagues.

ANALYSIS ON DATA COLLECTED THROUGH INTERVIEWS

In this case the researcher used the purposive sampling method to choose her respondents. The respondents are either currently in positions of leadership or have been in the church for so many years. The respondents were women ranging from the ages of fifty two (52) years to seventy three (73) years, most of whom are on retirement. They are members of the churches understudy and have been in positions between two years and thirty-eight years.

Christ Apostolic Church International (Nima Assembly)

The opinions of the women from Christ Apostolic Church International about the concept of leadership in the early church were much of the negative. To them, women were discriminated against, asking them to remain silent, hence not allow the free operation of the Holy Spirit in the church because once the Holy Spirit comes upon someone, he or she will have the power and enablement to perform, one's gender is not important here. It therefore prevents women from leadership positions in the church which is rather unfortunate.

In line with their interpretation of the text with regards to women's leadership in their church, Madam Agnes Peparah opines that women cannot hold any leadership position in the church and that they should be inactive irrespective of their capabilities while Madam Gladys Mensah, was of the view that the injunction was placed on women to remain silent, as a result of their noisy nature. Taking a look at the implications of the text on the CACI and her doctrinal point in terms of women's leadership, the Christ Apostolic Church International in some time past according to Madam Agnes Peparah, has suffered from this concept of women being silent, but upon strict adherence to our doctrines and beliefs which are based on the Holy Spirit, the church is trying to overcome such restrictions. Most of our women now can hold leadership positions and can talk and perform various duties freely in public. In addition, Madam Gladys Mensah said that the refusal of women to lead the church will reduce the growth of the church spiritually and also hide the vision or purpose of God for women.

In their recommendations for improving on women's leadership in the Church, it came out that women should not be barred from any leadership positions. They said that to improve on women's leadership in the church, it will be helpful if those in the position of decision making, will appoint more women, considering their capabilities and spiritual gifts and commitments and also will recommend that women will be empowered into special leadership training programmes which could be organized for them periodically.

Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Hope Congregation (Nima)

Their concept of the early church was mainly one which was totally controlled by men. Men were in absolute control over both administrative and spiritual issues. They continually expressed that it was the culture of the Corinthians at that time that women should be submissive to the men. Anything contrary to their system would have broken up the church besides women were not allowed any form of education that would have helped them to administer the church

The Presbyterian women interpreted the text with regard to women's leadership position in the church as women being relegated to the background in the early church, which was also evident in the early days of the present church. Mrs. Regina Quist-Therson added that perhaps when grouped together, women were always talking about their market prices or their children so Paul said they should keep quiet. But now, in Christ, men and women are one, as joint heirs with

Christ and if anyone draws near to God, God has promised to draw near to the person irrespective of gender.

In the implication of the text to the church and its doctrinal stands, there has been some flexibility with regards to how the Presbyterian Church of Ghana sees the idea of women in leadership. Women are beginning to occupy some of the important positions in the church, though there are still decisions of the church limiting them. Their recommendation was that women need to be educated to higher levels to be able to compete favorably with the men. To them, women need not be satisfied with the levels they have achieved, but strive higher. They ought to be bold and push forward. For instance God used women like Deborah the Judge, Hannah, Priscilla and others and thus this should be a source of encouragement to all young girls in the church to draw closer to the work of God.

St. Timothy Anglican Church (Nima)

Leadership in the early church as seen by the respondents was absolutely male dominated, thus women were not allowed to perform any roles as a result, being the silent part of the congregation. Their interpretation of the text in the light of women's leadership positions is that where men who are in authority preside, women are regarded as incompetent when it comes to contributions. Sometimes they are even regarded as 'unclean' and as a result are deprived of their privileges.

The implication of the text in the church regarding its doctrinal status with women's leadership is that Jewish women in the Corinthian culture, were to

attend to their families and as such were not exposed to studies in religious education. Meanwhile there were hardworking women like Mary Magdalene, Mary- mother of Jesus amongst others. The situation in our present day churches until some time ago was similar to the early church but recent trends show that there have been changes and women are being given the chance to study the Bible and being allowed into some leadership positions in the church, which is quite encouraging.

In their recommendations, they mentioned that women must be encouraged to be self assertive or rather aggressive towards succeeding in the competitive duties. Whatever positions in leadership, they must be optimistic not to leave it to the men, rather move on to excel in the service with spiritual qualities such as love, joy, peace, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control.

Women must learn to exercise integrity in their daily given duties, they must be strong and courageous in their day to day duties anywhere, anytime. Hence those who do well in one area must be promoted to the next level or hierarchy to enhance better work.

Reflections on the contextual bible study and interviews

With regards to the above analysis of the readings with women's groups, it is obvious that these women agree to the position that women in the early church were relegated to the background and were overlooked and suppressed therefore, could not freely express themselves and share their visions and

prophesies, thus had no place in the church. Women were asked to remain silent and perhaps might have even sat behind the male congregation during church services. They see leadership styles of both the early and present churches very different. This is because in the early Church, the congregation was divided, and women were not allowed to do some of the things they do now.

On the contrary, New Testament traditions do not totally support this idea. Contrary to what Paul said, that women should be silent, there were indications of women's participation in the early Church. In Jensen's article '*Women in the christianization of the west*' in *the Origins of Christendom in the West* (Kreider, 2001) at most, Mary, may have been seen alongside the Apostles in depictions of the Pentecost, while others such as Mary Magdalene, Prisca and Junia were seen from the outset as second- class apostles, like many of their male counterparts. Another example could be found in Romans 16: 1-27 where these women mentioned above including phoebe, Aquila and others were said to have held churches in their homes. Thus it becomes very evident that the issue about the women's leadership becomes a contextual issue, where at a point, women are allowed to be pastors or teachers and at another instance other women are not allowed.

In my deduction from the readings, women are of the opinion that they have been suppressed for far too long with regards to the leadership positions or roles in the Church, using 1 Corinthians 14: 34 -40 as a reference point. However, they are beginning to fight for liberation with respect to roles in the church. These

women attest to the fact that in some churches today, women sit separately from men; that is the men in front and women behind.

To them, the solution to all these problems they face concerning gender roles in the church is good education, encouragement and motivation. The women think that the men downplay on their intelligence and therefore they do not have enough information or enlightenment to counteract them, therefore always giving the men power over them. They opine that girl child education should be taken more seriously because when the education starts from the fundamental stages, it goes a long way to help the child stand tall to tackle situations just as their male counterparts. Also it would be appropriate for resource persons to be invited to their meetings to give them talks on important issues that can help them get out of their shells and speak out.

In my deductions, I saw that though there is some difference between the Corinthian era and now, some roles and positions in the church are being restricted. However, I think it would be much appropriate if all the roles and positions were made open for all in order to give equal opportunities to both men and women in carrying out the work of God.

Further more, in accessing the decisions of the various churches with regard to women being placed in ministerial positions, it is very clear that although the churches are somehow giving women the chance to hold some positions, they still use some sort of barricades to stop them from absolute leadership. When the Christ Apostolic International is taken into consideration, it is evident that there are prophetesses who perform quite the same duties as the

pastors or apostles in clerical, but these women have not been ordained. Again, I don't believe that the Christ Apostolic Church International is ever thinking of a female chairperson of the Church, since they are now considering the appointment of women into pastoral ministry. Similarly, in the Presbyterian church of Ghana, it has been categorically stated that once the spouse is in the ministry, it is just impossible for the other spouse of that minister to be ordained. Meanwhile there are just few women ministers who are district ministers, they are either made assistants or made to just oversee a local congregation and also, the position of a moderator has never been occupied by a woman. With respect to the Anglican Church of Ghana, women ministers are now being ordained into clerical ministry, but with barriers. There are no women Arch Deacons, Deacons, Arch Bishops or Bishops.

In all these three churches, it is important to note that though they have given recognition to women playing roles in the church, they just place women in some minor positions in the church and not placing them in leadership positions such as Pastoral ministry and decision making bodies. And really, the Church leaderships are still underpinning women with some decisions they take in their General Council and General Assembly meetings.

I believe that these churches must come out and clearly to state their mission and purpose for women in their Churches, rather than hiding behind the pretence of placing them in figurative positions, where they only hold the titles but the main work is virtually done by their male counterparts.

Other outstanding issues that came up which varied from each denomination were mainly not doctrinal, but rather, decisions taken at general assembly and general council meetings of the various churches concerning women. In the Christ Apostolic Church International, there are women who are made to perform all duties such as their male counterparts except officiating weddings and funerals yet these women are called prophetesses not Pastors or Reverends, thus these women seek that their ordination into clerical priesthood be given consideration.

Again, in the Anglican Churches, ordained female priests with the same rank as their male colleagues are to be engaged only on activities other than the Mass, such as prison and hospital visitation, and other pastoral services. Finally, in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, though they have many female ordained ministers, only few of them get the chance to rise through the ranks, for example the position of a district minister. Meanwhile they are yet to see a female moderator, since there have been only one woman who has ever occupied the position of a Presbytery Chairperson.

Issues of social and personal transformation

The final stage in the Contextual Bible Reading is the social and personal transformation of the people. After reading with the women, they found the need to take major steps in making changes in terms of finding some solutions to the problems they face daily in the Church.

Firstly, the women of the Christ Apostolic Church International felt that with their type of leadership which is mostly masculine, theirs will have to go through a process that is to start reorienting the females from the Sunday School level so that by the time they get to the youth or adult positions, they would be very much prepared to take up leadership positions.

Secondly, with regard to the Presbyterian and Anglican women, they felt the need to start right away, by holding leadership training sessions for the youth of the church, in order to give them the needed skills to take up positions in the church.

Again, the women were also of the view that adult women who might already have the skills needed to take up leadership positions and are either reserved or hesitant, must be given the needed support and encouragement, by deliberately making policies to engage them in higher decision making bodies, campaigning for them, and even advocating for them to take up Priesthood and more higher positions in the Church.

Lastly, the women in all three groups, had the impression that there is a need to create an awareness in the Christian communities about the potentials women have, so that, the community at large will also begin to appreciate the skills and abilities of their women counterparts.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter deals with the summary of the work, conclusion drawn from analysis and recommendations for improving women's leadership in the church.

The objectives of this study were to

- Find out what readings there are to 1 Cor. 14: 34-40
- Explore the concept of leadership in the church from the perspective of the ordinary reader;
- Analyse the ordinary readers' interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 with regards to women's leadership positions in churches;
- Establish the implications of 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 on the selected congregations and their doctrinal standpoint in relation to women's leadership status;
- Make recommendations for improving women's leadership in the church.

From the Textual Analysis of 1 Cor. 14:34-40 with special focus on verses 34 and 35, the researcher found out that scholars are divided on the basis of whether Paul really wrote the words: "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: For it is a shame for women to speak in the church,"

in its place as we read in the Bible today (that is after verse 33), or was moved from its original position after verse 40 to follow verse 33. The third argument is that they were not part of the original text; they were a very early marginal gloss that was subsequently placed in the text at two different places.

In most of the manuscripts, such as the very early ξ^p ⁴⁶ (Chester Beatty, AD 200 which is represented in the Alexandrian text types and contains mainly Pauline Epistles) together with \aleph (Uncials), old Syriacs verses 34 and 35 are found in their numerical order, that is, between vv. 33 and 36 thus read verses 34 and 35 in the King James Version after verse 33. However, there were differences in terms of wording. There were some words omitted for instance, when comparing the Byzantine and Alexandrian text types, with regard to verse 34, there had been the use of $\upsilon\mu\omega\nu$ (of you) in only the Byzantine text. Again, in verse 35, the use of $\gamma\upsilon\nu\eta$ (woman) differs from one another. For instance the Byzantine text type uses $\gamma\upsilon\nu\alpha\iota\zeta\iota\nu$ (wives) while the Alexandrian text types use $\gamma\upsilon\nu\alpha\iota\kappa\iota$ (a woman). These two examples cited above clearly states that there are variations among the witnesses. As a result poses a question as to who exactly is being addressed, thus the need to read with the ordinary reader to find out what their perceptions and ideas on these issues are.

In the researcher's attempt to explore the concept of leadership in the early church from the perspective of the ordinary reader, the women who were involved in the reading of the text saw the leadership styles of the early church as suppressive. They stressed that women were not allowed to express their God given talents since they were commanded to keep silent. In effect they felt that,

women in the early church were not given the liberty to experience the total liberation of God. All the same, the women's groups attested to the fact that, to an extent, the position of women in the church today is an improvement on that of women in the early church. If for nothing at all, women are now allowed to lead services, sing a solo, become altar servers, Bible study leaders amongst others. Despite these opportunities, these women think there is more room for improvement with regards to making all positions in the church available to both men and women.

The research realized that in these three denominations, there have been decisions taken concerning women in higher pastoral leaderships positions of the church. Some of the women expressed that due to the patriarchal nature of both the Bible and our culture, women are not able to occupy some top positions in the church or in society. With the emphasis on gender equality in Ghana, some churches are beginning to amend their constitutions and systems of belief, thus gradually appreciating the impact that women in the church's decision making bodies can make; but to the women, the sky is their limit. They would want to attain higher heights in their churches.

The women said that all women should be encouraged to take active roles by assigning duties to them and making positions available to all, since they have been subdued with the ideology that only the men are to hold higher leadership roles in the church as a result making the men dominate the leadership traditions in the church. Again, they raised concerns of paying particular attention to girl child education. They opined that lack of formal education has resulted in their

inability to stand tall in competing with their male counterparts sometimes, when it comes to holding positions in the churches. They also expressed the need for motivational talks from resource person on leadership and also in the area of vocational skills, since this will go a long way to help them. They believe that Jesus came on earth to liberate all; therefore both men and women should be beneficiaries of that freedom and blessings.

Their final concerns were with the issue of the church placing injunctions on some positions in the church, using women's biological nature for instance menstruation to underpin them. They believe that before one becomes ready to take up a position, he or she should be ready and prepared for it. Therefore that decision should not be made for them; they should be left to decide for themselves.

Conclusions

In view of the foregoing, it is evident that though there are some traces of church leadership styles of the early church in our present day churches, there is some kind of improvement, making women feel a bit welcomed in the churches. In as much as they are allowed to lead "praise and worship" sessions, become mass servers, members of the choir, or occupy certain prescribed leadership positions, there seem to be more vacuum, where women would be given the chance to occupy more Pastoral leadership positions and positions in higher decision making bodies in the church's hierarchical body such as church councils,

executive bodies, and so on and also be a significant part of the church's decision making bodies.

As more churches get interested in making their leadership reflect the population of their congregations, more women are able to answer their call into ministry. There is the need to uphold the concept of women in higher leadership that value including all persons redeemed by God's grace and called to serve in the missions and ministries of this body. We need to encourage women who sense a call to ministry and also encourage churches and other ministries to consider recognizing that call by empowering women to serve wherever they feel called. Therefore we look forward to a time when we would see women Bishops, Moderators and General overseers or chairpersons in the church since the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and the Anglican Church of Ghana among others have taken the initiative of ordaining women ministers, who one day will be eligible for such high offices in Ghana.

Recommendations

1. The churches should encourage more proactive interactions with scholarly readers, where both the ordinary and scholarly readers can learn from each other by organizing discussions and programmes with scholarly facilitators.
2. Resource persons such as motivational speakers and women who have attained higher heights should be invited by the church, to speak with the women on regular basis, to help boost their courage in stepping forward to take challenges

and positions in the church and not leave it to the men alone with the mentality that “the man is the head”.

3. Women’s groups should lobby and put forward more women for theological training and for ordination as Pastors so as to take part in decisions at higher levels.

4. Women leaders should organize special leadership training programmes which could be organized for young women to enhance their capacity or capabilities.

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APPENDIX 1

Questions for Contextual Bible Reading (focused group discussion)

Topic:

Contextual bible readings of 1 Corinthians 14: 34-40 and women's ministry. A case study of some selected churches in Accra.

A. BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

NAME:

AGE:

NAME OF CHURCH:

POSITION:

NUMBER OF YEARS IN SERVICE:

B. CONCEPT OF LEADERSHIP IN THE CHURCH

- What is your idea about leadership in the early church?
- How do you relate this to leadership in the church today?
- Is your leadership style in line with 1 Cor. 14: 34-40? Give reasons for your answer.

C. THE INTERPRETATION OF 1 CORINTHIANS 14:34-40 WITH REGARDS TO WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN CHURCHES

- What is the text (1 Cor. 14: 34-40) about?
- If it is about women, what is it saying about their leadership roles?
- What correlation does it have with women's leadership roles in your church?

- Do you think women should be able to hold higher leadership positions in your church?

D. THE IMPLICATIONS OF 1 CORINTHIANS 14:34-40 ON THE PARTICULAR CHURCH AND THEIR DOCTRINAL STANDPOINT IN RELATION TO WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP STATUS

- With respect to your church's doctrines, how is this text interpreted?
- How do you relate your church's doctrines on leadership to women's leadership status?

E. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING ON WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN THE CHURCH.

- If you have the power to make some contributions, what changes will you make in tune with 1 Cor. 14: 34-40 and women's leadership?
- In your view, what can be done to get women into active leadership in the church?

APPENDIX 2

Interview Questions

Topic:

Contextual bible readings of 1 Corinthians 14: 34-40 and women's ministry. A case study of some selected churches in Accra.

A. BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

NAME:

AGE:

NAME OF CHURCH:

POSITION:

NUMBER OF YEARS IN SERVICE:

B. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is your Idea about the concept of leadership in the early church?
2. What is your interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 with regards to women's leadership positions in churches?
3. What are the implications of 1 Corinthians 14:34-40 on your church and its doctrinal standpoint in relation to women's leadership status?
4. Recommendations for improving on women's leadership in the Church.

PLATES



PLATE 1: WOMEN OF THE CHRIST APOSTOLIC CHURCH OF GHANA (NIMA)



PLATE 2: WOMEN OF THE CHRIST APOSTOLIC CHURCH OF GHANA (NIMA)



PLATE 3: WOMEN OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GHANA, HOPE CONGREGATION (NIMA)



PLATE 4: WOMEN OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GHANA, HOPE CONGREGATION (NIMA)



PLATE 5: WOMEN OF THE ST. TIMOTHY ANGLICAN CHURCH (NIMA)



PLATE 6: WOMEN OF THE ST. TIMOTHY ANGLICAN CHURCH (NIMA)

ACCRA METROPOLITAN MAP SHOWING THE STUDY AREA

