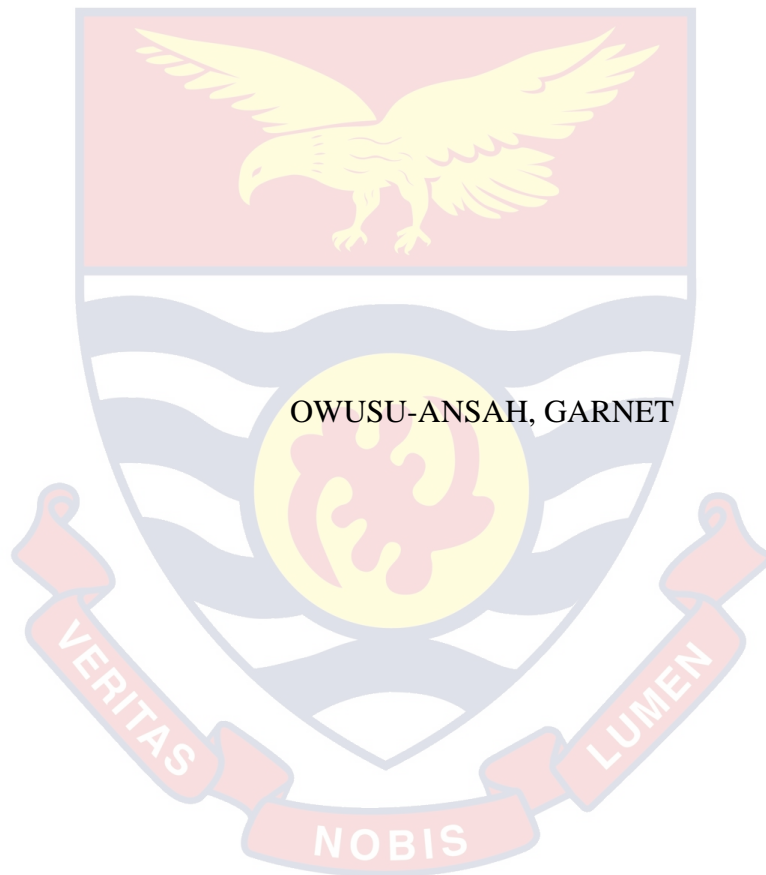


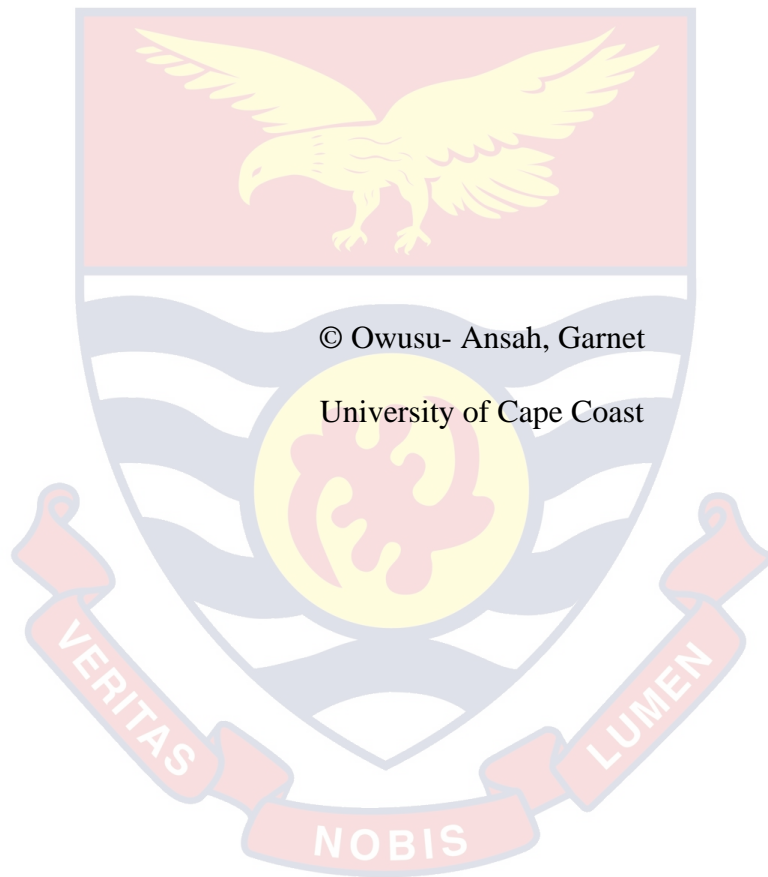
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

ROMANS 1:16-17 AND ITS APPROPRIATION IN THE SDA CHURCH IN

GHANA



2020

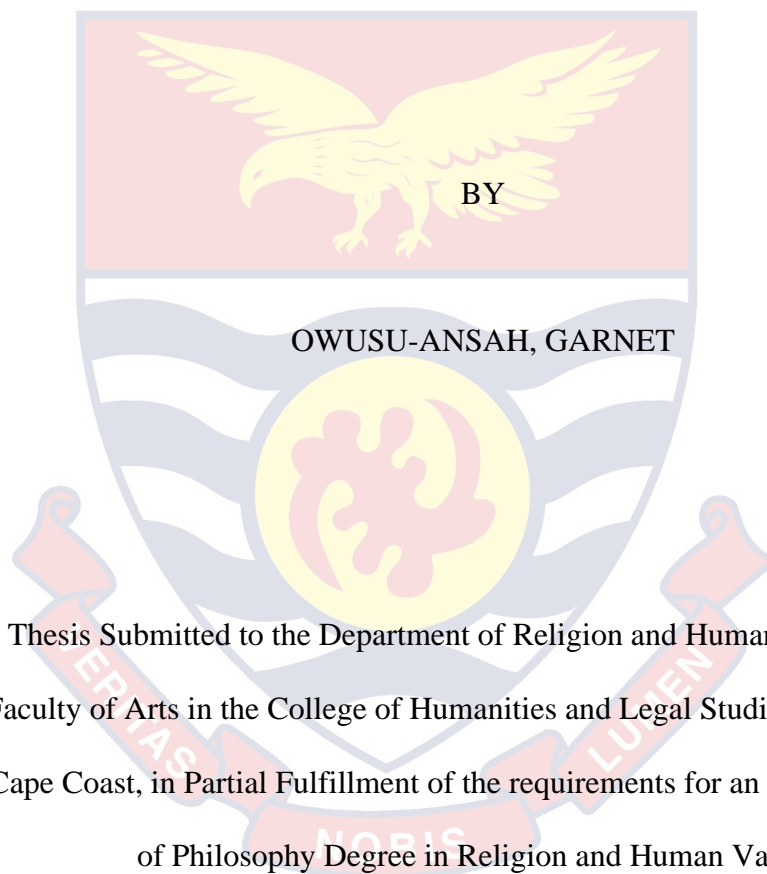


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UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

ROMANS 1:16-17 AND ITS APPROPRIATION IN THE SDA CHURCH IN
GHANA



Thesis Submitted to the Department of Religion and Human Values of the
Faculty of Arts in the College of Humanities and Legal Studies, University of
Cape Coast, in Partial Fulfillment of the requirements for an award of Master
of Philosophy Degree in Religion and Human Values.

JULY, 2020

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this is the result of my original work apart from scholarly works quoted and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature..... Date.....

Name: Garnet Owusu-Ansah

Supervisor's Declaration

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

Supervisor's Signature..... Date.....

Name: Rev. Sister Dr. Alice Matilda Nsiah

ABSTRACT

The study concerned a re-reading of Romans 1:16-17 and its appropriation in the SDA Church in Ghana. The study presented the fundamental beliefs of SDAs in the context of righteousness by faith. The study further showed that although the church members adequately understand justification by grace through faith as found in the text, the relationship between faith and works in obtaining salvation is not clear in the minds of many SDAs in Ghana. Church members perceive that the observance of doctrines constitute the basis of salvation and assurance. Data was collected and analyzed concerning the perception of members with regard to righteousness by faith and the need for integration. A brief and descriptive study of the biblical principles of righteousness by faith was presented. The methods used in this work were the combination of Rhetorical criticism of Robert Jewett and the tri-polar exegetical model of Jonathan A. Draper. The study concluded that, since the church has other resources that contain the doctrine of righteousness by faith in the English language, pastors who can contextualize the text to ease the understanding and appropriation should be empowered to handle the baptismal class of the churches as the starting point to transmit the exegetical knowledge to the church members.

KEYWORDS

Distantiation

Contextualization

Appropriation

Justification

Righteousness

Ashamed

Power

Faith



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DEDICATION

I specially want to dedicate this thesis to my Senior Brother, Church elder and friend, Prof Emmanuel Kofi Gyimah, Vice Dean, Faculty of Educational Foundations, University of Cape Coast. He inspired, encouraged, and sponsored me to enrol in this MPhil program. May the good Lord bless him and replenish whatever he spent on my education at the University of Cape Coast.



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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

One of the great pillars of the doctrine of the SDA Church is justification by faith in Romans 1:16-17. In the writings of Ellen White, Adventism's most widely read author, Christ is consistently presented as the only hope and the only way of salvation for sinful human beings. She wrote that, "Of all professed Christians, Seventh-day Adventists should be foremost in uplifting Christ before the world (White, 1990). "Through, all the ages the great truth of justification by faith has stood as a mighty beacon to guide repentant sinners into the way of life." (White, 1911).

The fundamental belief of the Church also states that through Christ we are justified, adopted, and made righteous for God (SDA fundamental beliefs, 2006). Another great position of the SDA is the obedience to the law of God, for instance, the observance of the Biblical Sabbath. "The Sabbath is a symbol of our redemption in Christ, a sign of sanctification, a token of allegiance, and a foretaste of our eternal future in God's kingdom" (SDA Fundamental beliefs, 2006). Seemingly, the Seventh-day Adventists church has not escaped accusations that they do not hold the biblical teaching of justification by grace alone through faith alone but also profess obedience to the law (Bammelen, 2007). Anthony Hoekema in his book *The Four Major Cults* expresses as his conviction that Adventists, "though they claim to teach salvation by grace alone," are in reality guilty of a kind of mixed legalism (Hoekema, 1969). He bases this on the Adventist doctrine of the investigative judgment and their teaching concerning the need to keep the seventh day as the Sabbath, the proper

Lord's Day especially in the eschatological setting of Rev 13:11-17) (1969). For these and several other reasons, he classifies Seventh-day Adventism as a cult.

The importance of the epistle to the Romans and other epistles of Paul for the Adventist understanding of the gospel is manifested in scholarly publications as well as general biblical and devotional reading materials (Knight, 2002). Therefore, when you put all the information above together, they appear to contradict one another which has given rise to people criticizing the SDA church and also seems to create confusion for SDA members as to what they should do. Hence, this thesis seeks to study Romans 1:16-17 which deals with justification by faith, in an attempt to understand it and see how the church understands the text and its appropriations in the Ghanaian context. In other words, this work seeks to study the Adventist understanding of the unity of the teaching of Scripture on justification by faith in Christ alone through grace alone in Romans 1:16-17 and how it is appropriated in the context of SDA Church in Ghana.

Statement of the Problem

One of the key doctrinal pillars of S.D.A Church is righteousness by faith alone (Romans 1:16-17). The church believes that salvation is purely a gift from God in Jesus Christ and that sinful humanity is unable to add anything to the perfect righteousness of God that is at work in Christ (Bemmelen, 2007). God is the only one who provided the means of atonement for human sin and those who believe in God and accept this atonement are given eternal life. This is because, this atonement condemns our sins and also provides for our forgiveness (SDA Fundamental beliefs, 2006). Bemmelen (2006) insist that this

central belief of SDA Church that salvation is from Christ alone and through grace alone had been confirmed through important SDA books and journals that have been published in history. One such important contributor is Ellen White's works of 1911, 1915, 1979, and 1990, (Acts of the Apostles, Gospels Workers, Faith and Works and Justified by faith, respectively).

However, despite these convictions, the SDA Church is accused of all kinds of legalism by various writers like Hoekema (1996). This is because there appears to be some kind of confusion and inconsistency about the practice of this doctrine of salvation by faith and grace alone in the face of the many legal dimensions of the church such as the law of the Sabbath and the other commandments which are also equally important for the SDA church.

Therefore, the same church that accepts that sinners are not justified by their obedience to God's law, also insists that God's will may be interpreted to us through His laws. These two important doctrinal principles have created a debate over the years with very deep consequences for the church. Yet the church has not been able to find lasting solutions to the contention.

This research seeks to study Romans 1:16-17 in the context of the SDA Church in Ghana. This study aims to identify how the text is understood and applied in the daily life situations of the church members in the face of their legal obligations in the church and also throw light on the appropriation or the reconciliation of the two.

Objectives

To achieve the goal, I have set to myself in the statement, the following are the step-by-step research objectives.

1. To investigate existing appropriation of the text (Rom 1:16-17).
2. To re-read the text (Rom 1:16-17).
3. To examine ways of re-appropriating the text.
4. To suggest the way forward

Research Questions:

The following research questions are carved out of the research objectives to guide the study.

1. What are some of the existing appropriations of the text by the church members in Ghana?
2. How should Romans 1:16-17 be understood?
3. What are some of the ways to re-appropriate the text among the SDA members?
4. What is the way forward?

Purpose of the Study

The work seeks to look at how the SDA Church in Ghana understands righteousness by faith in the text, and how they appropriate Romans 1: 16-17 in an attempt to reconcile the two dichotomies; law and grace.

Furthermore, the church is located within a given context; it is, therefore, appropriate to also examine other factors within that broader context and their possible effect on the church's interpretation of the doctrine of righteousness by faith alone in Romans 1:16-17

Methodology

According to Erik Hofstee (2011), methodology serves as a map that shows the processes involved and the reason(s) for the choices made to arrive at conclusions in research.

I am combining rhetorical criticism of Robert Jewett and the tri-polar exegetical model of Jonathan A. Draper. The rhetorical criticism will allow me to grasp the structure of the argument and its persuasive power to cause influence in a given situation. The Tri-Polar Exegetical model in the study has gone through modification by scholars such as Draper (1991) and West (2007). The tri-polar exegetical model by Jonathan A. Draper (1991) is used to do a contextual reading of a biblical text in three stages: Distantiation, contextualization, and appropriation.

- 1. Distantiation-** it is the process of studying the scripture by allowing the text to speak for itself. This is an important starting point for exegesis, because it relates to the questions, "why read the Bible?" "Why this text?" This stage of exegesis requires that the readers or reading community allow the text to speak for itself by creating space or critical distance between themselves and the text. This requires a further tool to read the text, so here, the research will use the rhetorical critical tool of Robert Jewett. Since Romans is a discourse, this rhetorical tool will help examine and analyse the modes and effects of argument. The distantiation is rooted in a specific historical, social, cultural and economic context.
- 2. Contextualization-** this second pole involves knowing who we are in the conversation, what our situation is, and how we relate to the communication offered by the text. It is also the process of analyzing the

situation of the reader/hearer. Here, the contextual Bible Study (CBS), as propounded by West (2015) was conducted with some Adventist Christians of Southern Ghana union Conference of SDA Church which comprises with twelve local conferences. At this stage the meaning of the text (Romans 1:16-17) was determined by the targeted study group. This helped in facilitating contextualization by way of analyzing and evaluating the SDA's context in light of the selected text.

This moment of exegesis recognizes that there is no absolute meaning for a text. Its meaning is determined by its readers or more exactly, by communities of readers and their contexts. Thus, contextualization focuses specifically on the analysis and evaluation of the context of the reader. One needs to understand who the reading community is and the questions they bring to the text.

- 3. Appropriation-** it is the third pole of reading the scripture by accepting the meaning and implications of the text for oneself and the reading community. This involves understanding that the Bible is a particular kind of text. It is a normative text of the faith community. This third pole offered a way of bringing the context to enhance understanding which led to achievable recommendation for SDAs in dealing with justification by faith in the selected text.

Scope of the Study

The scope of this study revolves around two issues namely: Re-reading of the text and appropriation of the doctrine of righteousness by faith alone. Finally, an evaluation will be made on how the interpretation of the text has impacted on the lives of the members of S.D.A.C by assessing the practical

application of this text within the religious and cultural world view of the congregants.

Significance of the Study

The motivation for this study and the reasons for choosing the topic point to the exigencies for a study that will investigate the causes of the problem to address them.

First, this work will be very useful to the SDA Church in Ghana since it seeks to clarify a very important doctrine of faith. It will serve as a resource for future researchers in SDA Church. It will also be useful for catechetical purposes in the church. The findings of this study will also serve as an entry point for further research on related issues in this field and other academic disciplines.

Delimitation of the Study

In terms of content, the study is delimited to the exegetical approach of the Text and reflections of the righteousness by faith alone and its application in the Ghanaian context. Geographically, the study will be limited to the Southern Ghana Union Conference of S.D.A Church which constitutes twelve Conferences within five regions in Ghana, namely: Greater Accra Region- Accra City Conference of S.D.A Church, Meridian Ghana Conference. Eastern Region- East Ghana conference, Diamond Field Ghana Conference, and Eastern View Ghana Conference. Central Region- Mid-South Ghana Conference and Pioneer Ghana Conference. Western Region- Western North Ghana Conference, South West Ghana Conference, and Western South Ghana Conference. Volta Region- Volta North Ghana mission and Volta South Ghana Mission. Finally, the research is limited to only Seventh-Day Adventist Church Members under the specified scope.

Limitation

My membership with the church drew my attention to the fact that there could be some biases and conflicts of interest, however, since this study will help the church and the future generation, I was very conscious and attempted to eliminate all the biases. This was done through the validation of the data gathered from the church members with the existing literature from non-Adventist scholars and due to the COVID-19 pandemic directives from the government of Ghana, the one-on-one Contextual Bible Studies (CBS) and face to face interview could not be done as planned.

Organization of the Study

The study is organized into five Chapters:

Chapter One covers the introduction of the study which centers on the background to the study, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, limitation of the study and organization of the study, methodology (tri-polar model), literature review, a summary of review and conclusion. **Chapter Two** presents Distantiation - the exegetical reading of Romans 1:16-17 while **Chapter Three** covers the background of SDA Church, **Chapter Four** deals with contextualization and appropriation of the selected text. Finally, **Chapter Five** provides a summary of the research process, key findings, conclusion, and recommendation based on the findings of the study and areas for further research.

Literature Review

The research cannot be complete without a review of scholarly works that relate to the study area. Therefore, the researcher reviewed the available literature on the text selected and the study area for the research. The review was geared towards the objective of the project under the following categories:

- A. An extensive discussion of righteousness by faith
- B. A thorough discussion of some scholarly views on Romans 1:16-17.
- C. The SDAs understanding of righteousness by faith.

The three areas stated aided the researcher to realize his goal at the end of the day.

A. **The doctrine of righteousness by faith**

This section attempts to present a general background of the doctrine of righteousness by faith. This section aims to serve as the foundation for the sections that follow. The term righteousness plays a significant role in Luther's doctrine of *righteousness by faith alone*. What does it mean? How is it used in discussions on this doctrine?

Dreyer and Weller say that "just means "get right with God" or "made right with God" (Dreyer and Weller 1960: 91). Righteousness by faith is "a statement of one's status, not of moral character before the court" (Ferguson, 1998 and Wright 1993). It is a matter of declaring a person righteous ..." In other words, justification means God regarding a person as if they had never sinned. Eveson (2004) argues, "Justification is not a human idea which the church or an individual has invented to express something of God's saving activity. It is a truth revealed to us by God Himself in the Bible. It is part of God's saving plan which has been disclosed in the gospel ..." (Eveson, 2004).

The term '*righteousness*' is of the same root with the right, righteous, just, justice, and justification (Ferguson, 1998). It means to make straight or right; that which is by the law or social norm. The verb means to do justice; to be just; to vindicate; to justify; declaring righteous or treating as just in a forensic (legal) sense (Erickson, 2000). In the Old Testament, "a righteous person is one who has been declared by a judge to be free from guilt" (Erickson 2000: 968). In the New Testament, it is used in connection with the redeeming and reconciling work of Christ whereby he imputes his righteousness to humankind by which God declares the believer as righteous (Erickson 2000: 969). Erickson (2000: 968) says to be righteous means to conform to a given requirement, or "to conform to a given norm," The weight of the meaning of the concept hinges on the facts of acceptance by and reconciliation with God.

The above discussions point to the central thrust of the doctrine of justification namely God's saving activity for humankind. It also suggests that the doctrine of justification by faith is one of the major pillars of the Christian faith and Christianity.

According to Eveson, both John the Baptist and Jesus Christ dealt with the subject of justification in their teaching in the New Testament (2004: 26-27). The apostles, later in their accounts as recorded in both the gospels and epistles, also treated the theme of justification (Parker 1986: 61-63 and Eveson 2004: 26-35). The doctrine has its origin in the statement of the Old Testament prophet Habakkuk. The statement in Habakkuk laid the foundation and gave impetus to Paul's discussion on the doctrine of justification by faith later in the New Testament. Though the two people were speaking from different contexts, Habakkuk focused on trust or confidence in God while Paul focused on faith in

God (Butterworth 1986: 19 and Parker 1986: 66). When the Christian church came into being, St. Paul's discussion on the subject of justification by faith became the reference point of almost all who ventured to treat the subject.

Paul's treatment of the topic of justification by faith as against justification by works of the law runs through all his epistles. However, his more thorough presentation on the subject is contained in three epistles namely: Romans, Galatians, and Ephesians. Out of these three epistles, he gave his most detailed presentation of the theme of justification by grace through faith in Romans.

Johnson in his discussion of Paul's treatment of the subject of justification asserts that the Epistle to the Romans was written to address two issues. The first eight chapters "were written as an exposition of *justification by faith alone*, while chapters 9-16 is a response" to questions on the gospel and election. "Galatians, on the other hand, was a polemic in defense of the doctrine of justification" (Johnson 2004: 79). (Kendall, 2001) agrees that Galatians was written to oppose a Judaic legalistic type of work righteousness.

Eveson and Parker assert that Paul understood "just as God's declaration that sinners who believe in Christ are fully pardoned, acquitted of all guilt and are in right legal standing before him, based on what God has done in Jesus Christ" (Eveson 2004: 13 and Parker 1986: 90). It is based on this understanding that Paul referred in Galatians to justification by works as another gospel (Eveson, 2004). Adventists, on this basis, believe that there is only one way of salvation from Genesis to Revelation and that way is faith in Christ and his righteousness (Bemmelen, 2007). Based on this the study seeks to unravel the problem of Adventist's belief in righteousness by faith in Christ alone which

also conflicts with the same church believing in the will of God through His laws.

Righteousness by faith alone from St Augustine and Martin Luther

This section of the thesis seeks to examine the missional journey of the doctrine of *righteousness by faith alone*. In this work, I will focus on two key church fathers: St. Augustine and Martin Luther. These personalities were chosen based on the following reasons. First, St. Augustine's position on the doctrine of righteousness by faith has played a significant role in the pre-Reformation and to some extent in the understanding of justification by Martin Luther. Second, Martin Luther's position on the doctrine is also connected to the context of my study, and finally, righteousness by faith from the perspective of SDA Church. The objective of this work is to explore the text in Romans 1:16-17 which contains the *righteousness by faith through grace alone* and its appropriations in the SDA Church in Ghana. This section also aims to see how the doctrine of righteousness by faith evolved and took root within a particular context; this is the reason why the contextualization as the second model in the Jonathan Draper's tri-polar exegetical method will be used. Since the doctrine has its foundation in the scriptures, to help me achieve this objective I have structured this work as follows: the session will begin with the doctrine of righteousness by faith; an examination of St. Augustine on the doctrine of righteousness by faith; discuss Martin Luther on the doctrine of righteousness by faith alone, a brief discussion of some scholarly views on Romans 1:16-17 and SDAs understanding on the righteousness by faith. Each one of these two personalities came to a personal conviction of salvation by grace through faith

alone. However, none of them dealt with how the doctrine to be received and appropriated.

The above discussions point to the central thrust of the doctrine of righteousness namely God's saving activity for humankind. It also suggests that the doctrine of righteousness by faith is one of the major pillars of the Christian faith and Christianity.

St. Augustine's doctrine of justification by faith

The position of St. Paul on justification has a great influence on St. Augustine's position. This section examines St. Augustine's doctrine of justification by faith. His view and his influence on both the pre- Reformation Catholic Church and post-Reformation Roman Catholic Church is discussed.

One of St Augustine's responsibilities was how to preserve correct teaching, and righteousness by faith was one of such teachings. The position of St. Augustine on justification like that of St. Paul and Luther is borne out of his personal experience in life. He was also faced with the question of how to discover the truth until when he read in the scriptures about God's love and mercy. After his dramatic encounter, St. Augustine's spiritual struggle gained a different insight into the conviction of salvation by grace through faith alone. Therefore, his treatment of justification is viewed from the perspective of love (St. Augustine, 2009).

The Council of Trent made known its stand on the doctrine of justification in the following words, "After this Catholic doctrine on justification, which whosoever does not faithfully and firmly accepts cannot be justified, it seemed good to the holy Council to add these canons, that all may

know not only what they must hold and follow, but also what to avoid and shun” (Sproul 2006:127).

The essence of these Canons is to refute the Protestants' exclusive emphasis on faith as the sole means of justification and the idea of imputation without a change in state visible in works and formal justification. In other words, it rejects the idea of *Simul Justus et Peccator* (justified yet sinner). However, even the Roman Catholic Church agrees that no one is without sin, which in essence confirms the idea of *Simul Justus et peccator*.

Commenting on this Kendall (2001) says, "The official Roman Catholic teaching of Trent is Semipelagian" (Kendall, 2001: 37). It is semi-pelagian in that it emphasizes cooperative justification; that is justification by grace through faith and works, while the pelagian position is justification by works of merit through a human free will (Kendall, 2001: 36 and Celsor 2002: 211). The Roman Catholic Church advocates for a contextual approach to the Christian faith, but what informed their decision at Trent? Is it the drive to be contextual in approach? The Roman Catholic Church strongly believes in the power of councils, which is why from time-to-time councils were convened to take decisions on Church-wide matters.

On the issue of faith and works in justification, St. Augustine opposed the form of work righteousness taught and propagated by Pelagius. He states that "even the best works of sinners are tainted by sin and are therefore splendid vices" (St. Augustine on the merit of Sins and Rebuke and Grace in Sproul 2006: 148). To this end, St. Augustine declares that "Having therefore considered and discussed these matters according to the ability that the Lord saw fit to grant us, we conclude that a man [sic] is not justified by the precepts

of a good life, but through faith in Jesus Christ" (St. Augustine 13: 22 in Tappert 1959: 120).

From what has been discussed on St. Augustine's view on the doctrine of Justification, it is clear that justification by God's grace appropriated through faith was what he believed and taught. St. Augustine was against ascribing justification to works of merit, but he praised works of love as good virtue that is part of one's responsibility as Christians, rather than as the means of justification.

To sum up, here, the above discussion of the position of St Augustine on the doctrine of righteousness by faith has revealed that contrary to the notion that the Roman Catholic Church advocates for a justification that is based on merit, it accepts that justification is by God's grace and love without dealing with its ways of appropriations which this work seeks to identify to help S.D. As to better understand the doctrine and how to live by it.

Luther's doctrine of *Righteousness by faith alone*

Martin Luther's doctrine of *righteousness by faith alone* is linked to both St. Paul through the reading of his Epistles especially Romans on one hand, and St. Augustine as an Augustinian monk on the other. Concerning the Mosaic Law, Luther relied heavily on St. Paul's Epistles to the Romans and Galatians, though he used some portions of the Old Testament and New Testament as well. The doctrine of *righteousness by faith alone*, therefore, became the capstone of Luther's theology.

Martin Luther's treatment of the doctrine of *righteousness by faith alone* is found in almost all of his writings. The other document where the doctrine of *righteousness by faith alone* is discussed that deserves mention is Luther's

lectures on Galatians in volumes 26 and 27. In these two works, Luther argues that the thrust of Paul's discussion on justification was to challenge any presumption or confidence of justification through the law, not an outright condemnation of the law. In volume 26 Luther argues that "to want to be justified by the works of the law is to nullify the grace of God" (Luther, 1963). Luther went on to further explain what he means by nullifying the grace of God thus; "Nullifying the grace of God is, therefore, a very great and common sin, and one that all the self-righteous commit; for as long as they seek to be justified through the merit of congruity or the law, they nullify the grace of God and Christ" (Luther, 1963). In volume 27 Luther continues the discussion stating that the desire to be justified through the law presents a picture that suggests that "Christ has not yet come", or as though, while present, He was not able to justify by Himself" (Luther, 1964). According to Luther, to ignore the sufficiency of Christ with regards to justification means, "being separated from Christ and for Him to become utterly useless to us." The argument in Galatians is that justification is by faith in what Christ has done not in any works of merit for that amounts to a denial of what Christ has accomplished for the atonement of humankind. However, his most elaborate discussion on the subject is found in two of his major writings titled: "Disputation concerning Justification" (in Luther's Works Vol. 34) and "Two Kinds of Righteousness" (in Luther's Works Vol. 31). Even in these two documents, Luther's presentation is not sequential, as he goes back and forth from time to time. Other key Lutheran documents where the doctrine of righteousness by faith is discussed are Luther's Smalcald Articles; the Augsburg Confession and the Apology of the Augsburg Confession. Though Luther treated the doctrine of *righteousness by faith alone*

and the two kinds of righteousness separately, the two doctrines center on the same issue, the state of humankind before God on account of Christ's work of redemption. My discussion of Luther's doctrine of *righteousness by faith alone* will rely heavily on the disputation concerning justification.

Disputation concerning Justification

In this disputation, Luther used the terms justification and righteousness interchangeably. His argument centers on the distinction between faith and the law or works and their place in God's scheme of salvation. According to Luther (1960), to be justified means "to be considered righteous on account of Christ." In line with this, he sees justification as a "healing for sin which slays the whole world externally and brings it to destruction with its infinite evils" (Luther, 1960). Luther considers the subject of justification from two angles, namely: justification before God and before human beings. He then posits that the method of justifying humankind before God must be distinguished from the method of justifying one before human beings (Luther, 1960). On one hand, when it comes to the issue of salvation, *righteousness is by faith alone*, while on the other, before humankind, works are the proof of a justified life. According to Luther, the human nature only understands righteousness by works, because that is how far it can go. He argues that because of the effect of "original sin, (human nature) is not able to imagine or conceive of any justification above and beyond works" (Luther, 1960). He says "works only reveal faith just as fruits only show the tree, whether it is a good tree." On this ground he states:

I say, therefore, that works justify, that is they show that we have been justified. For the works indicate whether I have faith. I conclude, therefore, that he [sic] is righteous, when I see that he

[sic] does good works. In God's eyes, that distinction is not necessary, for He is not deceived by hypocrisy. But it is necessary among men, [sic] so that they may correctly understand where faith is and where it is not (Luther, 1960).

This distinction of God's verdict and human judgment is very important whenever one is discussing the subject of justification. Since this will help differentiate between necessity and cause with regards to salvation, just as Luther argues that works are necessary to salvation but they do not cause salvation (Luther, 1960). Luther argues further that,

It is ridiculous to boast of good works and the righteousness of the law in such a serious matter and still show no example of it... there has not been nor is there now an example of any saint who has fulfilled the law. That is why all the saints and the whole church confess that „if we say we have no sin, the truth is not in us (Luther, 1960).

This means that there is no place for work righteousness or active righteousness in the sight of God especially as it relates to the issue of salvation.

Furthermore, Luther says "to elevate works amounts to throwing the roof to the ground; upsetting the foundation; building salvation on mere water; hurling Christ from the throne completely, and putting up our works in His place" (Luther, 1956). Luther's argument is based on his Christ-centred approach to the subject; because, if one says Christ died for the salvation of humankind, but then turn to say, I can do something to save myself, this is contradictory. However, Luther was quick to mention that the story of redemption is incomplete without the presence of good works. For the philosophers, good works make one righteous, but Luther says that in the Christian scheme of things, we must first be good or righteous to do good works. Without being justified first one's works will not be performed with the

right attitude and intent, for works follow justification as the sign or fruits of God's blessing (Luther, 1979). Therefore, he says, "It is not working that we must eliminate, but false presumptions about their usefulness for salvation" (Luther, 1979).

Turning to *justification by faith alone*, Luther states that this doctrine shifts the focus on human merits to what God has done for humankind in Christ. Compared to the former, justification by faith is a positive reality, unlike justification by the law which is fictitious (Luther, 1960).

The faith which justifies is poured into one from knowing Christ through the Holy Spirit and comprehending Christ and his work that justifies. According to Luther "Christ's righteousness is without defect and serves us like an umbrella against the heat of God's wrath, [and] does not allow our beginning righteousness to be condemned" (Luther, 1960). From the perspective of God's justice, human beings deserve God's punishment because of their sin, but Christ paid the price and was punished on our behalf, and sets us aside from God's condemnation. No further payment is required from us except to accept this payment as ours by faith. Therefore, Luther (1960) argues that "Faith purifies through the remission of sins, the Holy Spirit cleanses through the effect." Therefore, justification is by faith, and through the help of the Holy Spirit, the justified person lives a sanctified life. This implies that faith and works have a role in the life of someone that is justified, one to believe its efficacy and the other to express its presence in one's life.

To conclude on Martin Luther, without dealing and expounding anything on how to live and appropriate the doctrine, he draws attention to how faith and works are related. Luther (1960) explains, "Justification is effective

without works, not that faith is not without works. For that faith which lacks fruit is not an efficacious but a feigned faith.” This means that works are the physical manifestations of faith. From this one could say Luther is not against good works; rather, he contends that faith must always be ascertained and recognized by its fruits of good works.

Since justification is not a change in the state but status, Luther emphasized that the justified are at the same time sinners (*Simul Justus et Peccator*). This is because the righteousness they have is not personal, it is acquired externally. Therefore, if this external righteousness that covers them is removed; their real state of being as sinners is revealed.

Hence, he argues,

Original sin remains up to the time of death, as far as the substance is concerned. But we have to cleanse it away from day to day and yet know that we live under the mercy of God where we have peace of conscience. ... Accordingly, original sin remains as far as the substance is concerned; it is removed as far as imputation is concerned (Luther, 1979: p. 180).

Luther’s argument here is in line with what Paul says about the Christian life as a war between the old person and the new person, each fighting for dominance over one’s life.

As regards the contextualization of the doctrine, Paul was contextual in his presentation of this doctrine. He also employed intercultural communication in transmitting the message of justification to his audience. Paul and Luther used the language of the people, using expressions the people are familiar with in interpreting the doctrine of justification by faith. They were not dismissive of the

culture of their audience. Likewise, any interpretation of this (or indeed any other) doctrine that does not address itself to its context will be less effective.

These church fathers agreed that justification is by faith in the redemptive death of Christ for humankind, rather than by works of merit. They all also agreed that good works are the fruits of a justified life, but not means of justification.

B. A scholarly view on Romans 1:16-17

This part of the study reviews various literature on the chosen text for the study. Although the review deals with the literature on the selected text, it is expedient to consider Romans 1:16-32 as my periscope of the entire structure of the book of Romans.

The book of Romans is the most intriguing epistles of Paul. The authorship of this epistle is ascribed to Paul (Dunn, 1988). Here, Paul explains the “righteousness of God” from positive and negative aspects (Wrath of God as a contrasting theme). Romans 1: 16-32 is an introductory passage that has a cluster of themes that will be explained by Paul in the epistle. Christ has inaugurated new humanity and it is an act of God’s righteousness (Dunn, 1988). To have a comprehensive understanding of how Paul explained “the righteousness of God” in the following text, we must understand its setting, form, structure, keyword, and its theology. Later the meaning of the text is applied to different Perspectives to address different pertinent Issues.

Although this thesis will cover Romans 1:16-32 as my periscope of the entire structure of the book of Romans, this essay seeks to emphasize more on the exegesis of Romans 1:16-17 by looking at the Greek text and grammar. By examining what Scripture is telling us here and the various ways people have understood it, we will be able to come to a greater appreciation for what Paul

was telling the Roman church. Particularly with the more obscure sections in v17 regarding δικαιοσυνη γαρ Θεου and Εκ πιστεως εις πιστιν. Through looking at Scripture in such depth we can learn a lot. We should not be ashamed of the gospel as it is the proclamation of the saving work of God achieved through Jesus Christ on the cross. It is the power of God for salvation, not just present physical healing but also eschatologically for those who believe it and is offered to all regardless of ethnicity or class. Gods' attribute of righteousness is displayed in the gospel. This righteousness is the reason for the cross so that God can be revealed to be both just about sin and justifier of His people. Righteousness displayed in the faith from the likes of Abraham to Rahab (Dunn, 1988). This faith, through the grace and power of God, gives those who believe position righteousness before God and thus will live with a present and eschatological hope. Because of all of this, we should not be ashamed of the gospel in witness within the secular spheres that we operate or in our preaching at church. Stunts and gimmicks to 'make believers' are not necessary, for they do not contain the power of God for salvation. Finally, this work is guided by Jeremy Hollyer's work on the analysis of Romans chapters 1 & 2.

C. The SDAs understanding of righteousness by faith

Adventists have always perceived themselves as heirs of the great truths recovered and proclaimed by the Protestant Reformers. “Adventists have a high appreciation for the Reformation. They see themselves as heirs of Luther and other Reformers, especially in their adherence to the great principles of *sola scriptura, sola gratia, sola fide, solo Christo*” (Lutheran and Adventist conversation... 2000). This places Adventists in harmony with the traditional Evangelical understanding of justification by faith and also with the patristic

tradition, for, according to Thomas Oden, “The major Reformers’ appeals to *sola scriptura*, *sola gratia*, and *sola fide* are found abundantly in the patristic interpreters of scripture (Oden, 2002). In this paper, we intend to present the Adventist understanding of the unity of the teaching of Scripture on justification by faith in Christ alone through grace alone. Next an alleged conflict between some specific Adventist teachings, such as their emphasis on Sabbath observance, and the traditional Protestant understanding of justification by faith will be considered.

Seventh-day Adventists firmly and wholeheartedly believe that salvation is purely a gift from God in Jesus Christ. Sinful as we are, we can add nothing to the perfect righteousness of Christ, which he wrought out in his incarnation by his perfect obedience to the law of God and by his death on the cross for our sins. In the words of one of the Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists:

In Christ’s life of perfect obedience to God’s will, His suffering, death, and resurrection, God provided the only means of atonement for human sin, so that those who by faith accept this atonement may have eternal life, and the whole creation may better understand the infinite and holy love of the Creator. This perfect atonement vindicates the righteousness of God’s law and the graciousness of His character; for it, both condemn our sin and provides for our forgiveness (SDA Fundamental Beliefs...2006)

“Salvation through Christ alone” is central to the Adventist understanding and experience of salvation (Bemmelen, 2007). In the writings of Ellen White, Adventism’s most widely read author, Christ is consistently presented as the only hope and the only way of salvation for sinful human beings. She wrote in 1891, “Of all professed Christians, Seventh-day

Adventists should be foremost in uplifting Christ before the world (White, 1990). She did just that as her writings bear witness. Concerning justification by faith, she was very explicit. Notice her strong emphasis:

There is not a point that needs to be dwelt upon more earnestly, repeated more frequently, or established more firmly in the minds of all than the impossibility of fallen man meriting anything by his own best good works. Salvation is through faith in Jesus Christ alone. The blood of Christ was shed to atone for sin and to cleanse the sinner, and we must take hold of the merits of Christ's blood, and believe that we have life through his name. Let not the fallacies of Satan deceive you; you are justified by faith alone (White, 1890).

As stated earlier, Adventists believe that there is only one way of salvation from Genesis to Revelation and that way is faith in Christ and his righteousness. This central belief can be and has been expressed in different words, just as the Scriptures are not monotonous but present the truth of the everlasting gospel in diverse ways. While Adventist scholars may differ of opinion regarding certain aspects of the gospel, just as differences can be found among scholars of other denominations, there is significant unity concerning the doctrine of justification through grace alone by faith alone. In the words of Adventist theologian Hans LaRondelle:

Basic to Adventism is the gospel principle that human salvation is not through the law or by human works but solely through the saving grace of God.... Adventist belief accepts Christ as man's substitute and example, in this irreversible order. Faith in Christ as our substitute before God provides our justification as God's act of *declaring* (emphasis his) the repentant believer righteous. Justification is seen as the opposite of condemnation (see Rom. 5:16; 8:1, 33, 34). The basis for the believer's justification is not

their law observance, but Christ's sinless obedience (Rom. 5:18, 19) (LaRondelle, 1997).

Conclusion on Literature Review

In summing up the review of literature, it is obvious that many scholars have massaged the doctrine of righteousness by faith in Romans 1:16-17. Upon careful reading and evaluations of these scholarly works, it looks as if many scholars read the text from the historical-critical perspective of righteousness by faith. In so doing, these readings seem to lack some understanding of the SDA church. Besides, the methodological review revealed that, for the text (Romans 1:16-17) to be properly examined, there is the need to critically examine the text from the perspective of Jonathan Draper's tri-polar model.

From the fundamental beliefs of the SDA church, Adventists indeed believe that the law of the Ten Commandments, including the seventh-day Sabbath, is still binding upon the human race. But this does not mean that they believe in any sense that sinners can be justified by obedience to God's commandments (2006). As stated before, they emphatically reject the idea that sinners are justified through their obedience to God's law. In this respect Adventist belief agrees with the position of the Protestant Reformers as stated, for instance, in the Second Helvetic Confession of 1566, which says in Chapter 12, entitled, "Of the Law of God":

We teach that this law [the Law of God] was not given to men that they might be justified by keeping it, but that rather from what it teaches we may know (our) weakness, sin and condemnation, and, despairing of our strength, might be converted to Christ in faith. For the apostle openly declares: "The law

brings wrath,” and, “Through the law comes knowledge of sin” (Rom. 4:15; 3:20), and, “If a law had been given which could justify or make alive, then righteousness would indeed be by the law. But the Scripture (that is, the law) has concluded all under sin, that the promise which was of the faith of Jesus might be given to those who believe. . . . Therefore, the law was our schoolmaster unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith” (Gal. 3:21 ff.).

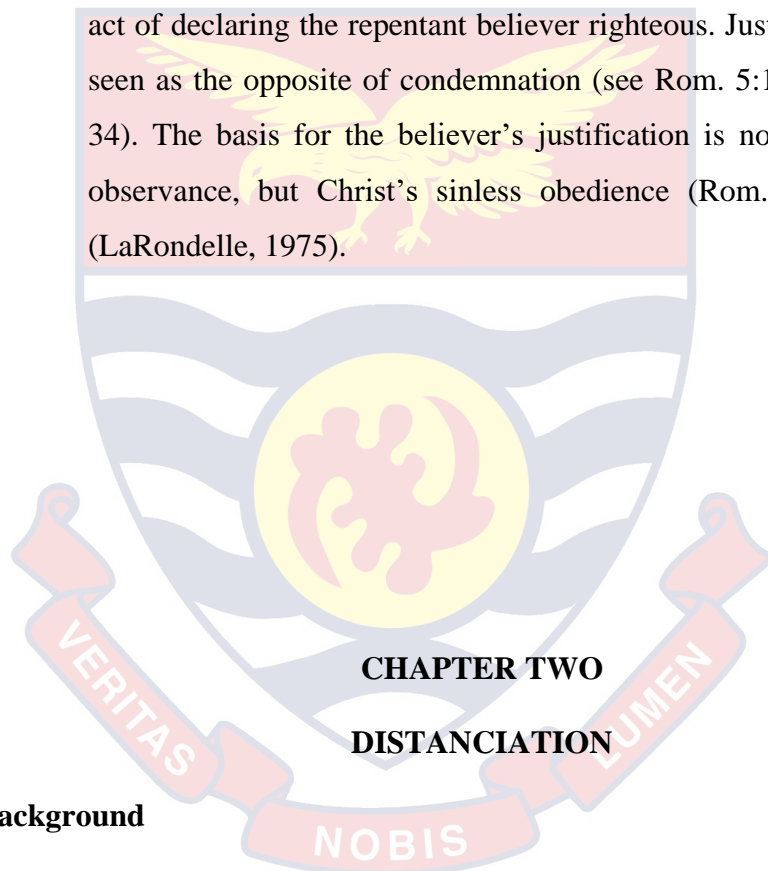
It is not surprising that Ellen White had a very high regard for Paul's epistle to the Romans. “With great clearness and power, the apostle presented the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ.” She comments on the fact that Paul could but dimly foresee the far-reaching influence his words would have. “Through all the ages the great truth of justification by faith has stood as a mighty beacon to guide repentant sinners into the way of life.” She mentions Martin Luther's experience and then concludes that for “the epistle to the church at Rome every

Christian has reason to thank God (White, 1911). The importance of the epistle to the Romans and other epistles of Paul for the Adventist understanding of the gospel is manifested in scholarly publications as well as general biblical and devotional reading materials (Knight, 2002).

As stated earlier, Adventists believe that there is only one way of salvation from Genesis to Revelation and that way is faith in Christ and his righteousness. This central belief can be and has been expressed in different words, just as the Scriptures are not monotonous but present the truth of the everlasting gospel in diverse ways. While Adventist scholars may differ of opinion regarding certain aspects of the gospel, just as differences can be found among scholars of other

denominations, there is significant unity concerning the doctrine of justification through grace alone by faith alone. In the words of Adventist theologian Hans LaRondelle:

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Background

This chapter undertakes a critical examination of Romans 1:16-17 which is the distantiation and the first pole of Draper's exegetical model, using the rhetorical critical tool. This is according to Robert Jewett, 1986 argumentative structure of Romans, that Romans is a situational letter rather than a doctrinal treatise, and since it analyses a discourse, it is apparent that the researcher needs an impartial method of following Paul's argument. The rhetorical method is my most promising resource. Romans conform to demonstrative rhetoric whose aim

is to strengthen the ethos of an audience in a particular direction. Chetia (2015), also explains a rhetorical device as a tool which uses words in a certain way to convey meaning or to persuade. It can also be a technique to evoke an emotion on the part of the reader or audience.

It is also structural since it looks at the structure of the text and it is also an independent literary genre beyond the linguistic structure of any language (Stamps, 1993). Added to these, it is a literary-critical in nature since it deals with a literary analysis of the text (Keegan, 1985). As aforementioned, the chosen method would be an effective tool to massage the text under study to achieve its purpose.

Again, unlike the historical-critical method that investigates the origin of the ancient text to understand the world behind the text, the rhetoric device aims to present the exegesis of the text to convince the reader/audience to accept the researcher's position. Besides, with the help of the aforementioned tool, the exegesis cannot be properly dealt with without knowing what influenced the discourse of the book of Romans. Therefore, as evident in the introduction and conclusion of the letter to the Romans, Paul aims to provide a theological argument that will unify the competing house churches in Rome so that they will cooperate in the Spanish mission. Conflicts between the “weak” and “strong” (Rom14:1-15:7), involving tensions between Jewish Christians and gentile Christians, conservatives, and liberals, jeopardize this mission.

Purpose of the book of Romans

The most casual reading of Romans betrays the fact that the church in Rome was a mixed community consisting of both Jews and Gentiles, with Gentiles in the majority (1:5f, 13; 11:13), and that there was considerable

conflict between these groups. It is further recognized that this conflict was primarily not ethnic (different races and cultures), but theological (different convictions about the status of God's covenant and law, and so about salvation). Some of scholars like Barret (1971) and Dunn (1988) suggest that the house churches in the city (see 16:5, and also verses 14 and 15 which refer to the Christians with them') may have represented these different doctrinal positions. It may also be that the 'disturbances' made by the Jews in Rome 'at the instigation of Chrestus' (probably meaning Christ), which were mentioned by Suetonius, and which led to their expulsion from Rome in AD 49 by Emperor Claudius, were due to this same conflict between Jewish and Gentile *Christians*.

Paul is writing to a church made up of both Jews and Gentiles, yet he seems primary to address the Gentile side as he makes plans to visit (Schreiner, 1998). Paul wants to visit the Roman church as part of his ministry of the Gospel to the Gentiles (1:1-14), yet God has thus far not allowed him (1:10, 13). Paul has been prevented by the necessity to preach the gospel to those who have yet to hear it (15:20-22), but with that ministry rounding down, he desires to strengthen the church in Rome, to impart some spiritual gift, and to be mutually encouraged by them (1:11, 16:25-26, 1:12-13). The reason he desires to visit, and indeed for writing this letter, is to "bring about the obedience of faith for 'Jesus' name" that is, righteousness by faith in Jesus Christ alone (Romans 1:17). This is a key theme throughout the letter (6:16, 15:18, 16:19, and 16:25-26): from all these appearances, it is best to understand the phrase as obedience produced by faith (Seifrid, 1992.). In my view, Paul has not written his letter to save the Roman church, nor to show off his theological chops; instead, his

primary purpose or what directly influenced his writing was the dichotomy between the Jews and Gentiles, in that, to see the Romans respond in the appropriate way to the gospel: to be united, Jew and Gentile together, and to walk in a way consistent with their new life.

What then was the theological issue which lay beneath the ethnic and cultural tensions between Jews and Gentiles in Rome? Wedderburn (1991), refers to the Jewish Christians in Rome as representatives of ‘Judaizing Christianity’, since they regarded Christianity ‘as simply part of Judaism’ and required their followers to ‘observe the Jewish law’, while the Gentile Christians he calls ‘supporters of a law-free gospel’. The Jewish Christians were proud of their favored status, and the Gentile Christians of their freedom, so that Paul saw the need to humble them and to bring unity through the assurance of salvation through grace in Christ Jesus.

Echoes of this controversy, in both, its theological and practical implications may be heard rumbling throughout Romans. And Paul is seen from beginning to end as an authentic peacemaker, pouring oil on troubled waters, anxious to preserve both truth and peace without sacrificing either to the other. He had, of course, a foot in both camps. On the one hand, he was a patriotic Jew (‘I could wish that I were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers ... the people of Israel’, 9:3). On the other hand, he had been specially commissioned as the apostle to the Gentiles (‘I am talking to you Gentiles ... as I am the apostle to the Gentiles ...’, 11:13; 15:15). So, he was in a unique position to be an agent of reconciliation. He was determined to make a full and fresh statement of the apostolic gospel, which would not compromise any of its revealed truths, but which would at the same time

resolve the conflict between Jews and Gentiles over the covenant and the law, and so promote the unity of the church.

In his ministry of reconciliation, therefore, Paul develops two paramount themes and interweaves them beautifully. The first is the justification of guilty sinners by God's grace alone in Christ alone through faith alone, irrespective of either status or works. This is the most humbling and leveling of all Christian truths and experiences, and so is the fundamental basis of Christian unity (Cranfield, 1975). Indeed, 'the single most important theme of Romans is the equality of Jews and Gentiles'.

From historical sources we can learn that already back in 63 BC, after the capture of Jerusalem, Pompey brought back a large number of Jewish prisoners to Rome to be sold as slaves. But, not too surprisingly, Jews did not make very good slaves; their obstinate adherence to the Jewish religion and customs contributed to their liberation. Julius Caesar, and subsequently Augustus, soon gave them privileges as well: liberty to worship, freedom from military service, exemption from certain taxes, the recognition of the Sabbath as a day of rest, the right to live according to the customs of their forefathers. It all meant a growing body of Jews in Rome, just as there was in Alexandria; one scholar estimates that there were about 10,000 Jews in Rome in 5 B.C. already; at some points, they even seem to have had control over a whole section of the city (Edmundson, 1913).

In 41 A.D. Caligula incited a storm of opposition among the Jews when he attempted to set up a statue of himself in the Temple at Jerusalem; it would surely have led to much bloodletting if it were not for the fact that Caligula was assassinated around this time, for our purpose, it should especially be noted that

in 49 A.D., there seems to have been so much unrest among the Jews in Rome that Emperor Claudius banished all the Jews from the city of Rome.

We have at least two sources that speak about this:

From Edmundson (1991), he asserts that a Roman historian by the name Suetonius wrote in his biography of Claudius that Claudius “*banished from Rome the Jews who were constantly in unrest as a result of the instigation of Chrestus*”. Chrestus seems to have been a common but somewhat ill-informed reference to the Lord Jesus Christ. So, the uprising in Rome seems to have had something to do with the interaction between Jews and Christians.

The other source on this event is the Scriptures, namely Acts 18: 2, where we read about Paul coming to Corinth and meeting up with Aquila and Priscilla “*who had recently come from Italy...because Claudius had ordered all the Jews to leave Rome.*”

Jew and Gentile

When we take note of the discussed above, then we understand why all kinds of Jew-Gentile questions are front and center in this letter to the Romans. Paul is dealing here not just with the effect of a change in redemptive history, wherein the God who for centuries has extended his grace and love to the Jews now extends it to Gentiles as well. In addition to that, Paul is dealing with some of the concrete kinds of problems that surfaced due to this population shift specific to the city of Rome.

It means that in that first century all kinds of Jew-Gentile questions necessarily become front and center.

The Christian church in its infancy was commonly lumped together with Judaism, and it was under that umbrella that it has permission to assemble

(Hermann, 1979). But all of a sudden, the Gentile Christians could no longer meet together under the protection of special Jewish religious and legal privileges as a “synagogue,” but they have to form their assemblies and seek permission to do so (ibid). But there are even deeper difficulties besides that. Consider the kind of conclusions that Gentile Christians just might have drawn. The Romans were proud people, their whole society built on the principle of deference to those who were higher, those whose blood was purer. “Snobbery begins in Rome (Barclay, 1990). And if the Romans were at the top of the social rung, the Jews were at the bottom. “No pagan writer, Greek or Roman, had any great sympathy with the Jews (Barclay,1990). They were regarded as a superstitious people, with strange customs: a recurring Sabbath, circumcision, dietary taboos, an exclusivist religion which refused to acknowledge even the gods of the Romans. And it is precisely from within the context of this dichotomy discussed above that necessitated the writing of the letter to the Romans.

Finally, to have a comprehensive understanding of how Paul explained "the righteousness of God" and the "justification by faith through Christ alone" in the text, we must understand the structure and the textual notes before the analysis. The meaning of the text will be used to address the pertinent issue of the text and its appropriation in the SDA Church in Ghana.

Structure of the Letter

To demonstrate Romans 1:16-17 of a rhetorical unit, it is necessary to examine the structure of the whole letter and see where and how Romans 1:16-17 fits into it. Various structures have been suggested by writers like; George A Kennedy (1984), Reid, M (1995), Robert Jewett, (2009), S. E. Porter (1997).

For this study, the researcher will follow roughly the structure division of Robert Jewett.

Rhetorical Criticism Approach

One of the methods used to read the text is rhetorical criticism. This method helped the researcher to understand how argument works in the Romans' narration. You must first understand the major appeals associated with rhetoric (Jewett, 2009). In that, in the reading of the text, four major rhetorical appeals were identified: ethos (credibility), logos (logic), pathos (emotion), and Kairos(time) (Jewett, 2009).

- **Ethos** – an appeal to credibility. This is the way Paul presented himself to the audience.
- **Logos** – an appeal to logic. This was how Paul appealed to the audience through practicality and evidence of his visit to Roman church.
- **Pathos** – an appeal to emotion. This is the way the speaker (Paul) appeals to the audience through emotion, pity, or passions. The idea is usually to evoke and strengthen feelings already present within the audience. This can be achieved through story-telling, and an impassioned voice and finally,
- **Kairos** – an appeal made through the adept use of time. This is the way the speaker appeals to the audience through notions of time.

Textual Notes

Textual variants in Romans 1:16-17 are minor at best. There is an alternate reading in v16 of Ου γαρ επαυχνομαι το ευγγελιον του χριστου which has the witness of the manuscripts and the majority text

(Hultgren, 2011, 70; Moo, 1996, 63). While the reading excluding του χριστου is preferred based on the witness of Papyri and others (Hultgren, 2011,).

There is also another textual variant in v16 with the omission of πρωτον from some manuscripts. Namely B, G, itg, copsa, and Tertullian Ephraem (Morcom, 2016, Moo, 1996). All other based on his own bias (Morcom, 2016, Moo, 1996).

The Habakkuk quote in v17 is interesting. While not technically a textual variant in the Greek manuscripts for Romans it has some interesting features. Habakkuk 2:4 is also quoted by Paul in Gal 3:11 in the same form here: Ο δε δικαιος εκ πιστεως ζησεται. While the author of Hebrews quotes it in 10:38 with the form: Ο δε δικαιος μου εκ πιστεως ζησεται. Neither of these is a direct quotation from the LXX which reads Ο δε δικαιοζ εκ πιστεωζ μου ζησεται (Schreiner, 1998). When quoting this verse Paul seems to drop the personal pronoun completely, while the author of Hebrews moves it. Both of these give a slightly different understanding of this verse. Also, the LXX differs from the Masoretic Text (MT) at Hab 2:4. Where the Greek has the 1st person pronoun the Hebrew text has the 3rd person pronoun. This changes the meaning of the MT version of this verse to “But the righteous by his faith/faithfulness shall live”. The LXX version reads “But the righteous shall live by my faithfulness” (Hultgren, 2011, Schreiner, 1998). Paul avoids this by leaving out any personal pronoun.

Sketching the Argument

This is the rhetorical structure of the text under study. The structure helps the researcher to explain and analyze the coherent of Romans 1:16-17. And because this analysis will help provides a motivated account of why each

element of the text has been included by the author, it aids the account of textual coherence that is independent of the lexical and grammatical forms of the text. And finally, this structure provides a basis for statements about the objectivity and subjectivity of the analysis of the text (Mann, 1988). The following are the argumentative structure by Robert Jewett (1986).



Part One: Exordium- Introduction, 1:1-12 (Jewett, 1986).

Here Paul makes an introduction to the whole discourse. It is the opening part of the letter to the Romans. Jewett (1986) goes further to suggest that rhetorical discourse usually begins at this section to attract the attention of the audience towards the speaker and sets the stage for the dialogue. Paul introduced himself to the divided Roman audience, stressing his apostolic authority, preliminarily defining his gospel, and thanking God for their faith. He did all these to seek for their sympathy and goodwill. He concludes with the main purpose of his letter, recognized that his readers also are Christians, and he expects to be benefited by the sharing of mutual faith.

Part Two: Narratio -Narration, 1:13-15 (Jewett, 1986).

This is described as the statement of facts. It is also considered to be the background information to the theme of the text under study. Paul describes the background of his missionary project to come to Rome, which has thus far been frustrated. He further gives evidence of the sincerity of his desire to visit the church in Rome. This has not been only his wish but often his definite purpose to see them but in one way or another, he has been prevented from making the journey. He hoped to reap some harvest among them of men brought to the knowledge of Christ or an increase of faith. This narration gives him the impetus to feel that, necessity has been laid upon him to preach the gospel to the Jews and Gentiles.

Part Three: Propositio-1:16-17 (Jewett, 1986).

This is where the author draws his argument or the thesis statement to support his argument. Paul states the major contention of the letter concerning the gospel as the powerful embodiment of the righteousness of God. In this

narration, the Jews considered Paul an apostate. He has been despised and persecuted among the gentiles. He has been driven out and regarded him as filthy. Nevertheless, he is aware that the preaching of the cross is foolishness to the Greeks and a stumbling block to the Jews. But because Paul is so thoroughly convinced of the truth of the gospel and it is the power of God, he is therefore not ashamed of any part of it. Paul further expresses that; it is only the righteousness of God and faith in Christ alone that give salvation but not law or personal effort. He identifies himself as a peacemaker to curb the dichotomy between the Jews and Gentiles with salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone.

This section is divided into two divisions:

V 16-----Paul not ashamed of the gospel

V17----- the justification by faith in Christ alone.

Part Four: Probatio- Proof, 1:18-15:13 (Jewett, 1986).

Paul proves that the righteousness of God, rightly understood, has transformed and unifying implications for the Roman house churches and their participation in world mission. This section gives a series of arguments to support the proposition of the author. There are four elaborate proofs in Romans: an extensive confirmation of the thesis followed by three wide-ranging amplifications. Though couched in the generalities typical for demonstrative discourse, each proof had an important bearing on the situation in the Roman house churches and the issue of the mission to Spain.

Part Five: Peroratio (Peroration, or conclusion, 15:14-16:27).

This consists of an appeal for the cooperation of the Roman house churches in missionary activities in Jerusalem, Rome, and Spain. With the

elimination of two interpolations identified by several contemporary exegetes (the warning against heretics in 16: 17-20a and the concluding doxology in 16:25-27), this peroration is organized in five distinct sections: (A) The recapitulation of Paul's missionary calling and strategy (15:14-21); (B) An appeal to participate in Paul's present and future missionary plans (15:22-33); (C) A recommendation of Phoebe as the patron of the Spanish mission (16:1-2); (D) Greetings and commendations between potentially cooperating missionary leaders (16:3-16, 21-23); and (E) The epistolary benediction (16:20b).

In this study, it is clear that the topic under study falls under proposition in that, the research seeks to deal with the Thesis statement of the main text, justification by faith in Christ alone in Romans 1:6-17.

Romans 1:16-17 is seen as a bridging passage (Hultgren, 2011, 71). Paul links the lengthy opening of the letter with the arguments outlined in the letter. It starts with the credentials of Paul (Rom 1:1-6), where it is established that he is called by God to be an apostle. The centrality of the gospel to his calling is also established. Then in verses 8-15 the faithful example of the Roman church is expressed along with Paul's obligation to Greek and Jew in preaching the gospel (Rom 1:14-15). Straight after the bridge of v16-17, Paul explains why the gospel is needed (Rom 1:18-3:20) and how it is efficacious for Gentile and Jew alike and also presenting that, the world is guilty (Rom 3:9-20). However, Romans 1:16-17 is not merely linking the opening with the argument, but it is also a *propositio* (Kruse, 2012, Hultgren, 2011,). This is a *propositio* or thesis statement for the arguments of the study of the text. As such it should contain the main thrust and themes for Romans (Keener, 2009, Kruse, 2012, Hultgren,

2011). Romans 1:16-17 is thus take away point for the whole letter, the summation or conclusion drawn from the arguments. While the arguments of the letter are the meat to this propositio's bones. It thus positions the reader or listener to be ready to learn more about το εὐαγγέλιον, σωτηριαν παντι τω πιστευοντις, and δικαιοσυνη Θεου i.e. the gospel, salvation to everyone believing and righteousness of God.

This work seeks to emphasize more on the exegesis of Romans 1:16-17 by looking at the Greek text and grammar. By examining what text is meant for and the various ways SDA Church has understood it, the SDA Church will be able to come to a greater appreciation for what Paul was exactly telling the Roman church. Particularly with the more obscure sections in v17 regarding δικαιοσυνη γαρ Θεου and Εκ πιστεως εις πιστιν. Through looking at the text in such depth we can learn a lot. However, the analysis of the text cannot be dealt with without knowing what influenced Paul to write the letter to the Roman Church.

Analysis of the Text

Exegesis of 1:16

Paul is not ashamed to identify with the good news. (Ro.

1:16a

Οὐ γὰρ ἐπαισχύνομαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον οὐ γὰρ

ἐπαισχύνομαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον

“for I am not ashamed of the gospel.” For “shame” as the consequence of being shown to have acted on a false assumption or misplaced confidence, see particularly the Psalms (35:26; 40:14–15; 69:19; 71:13; 119:6; etc.);

From the first clause of the text “ashamed of the gospel” (ἐπαισχύνομαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον), This interprets that, there is/ was a shameful or disgraceful kind of stigma attached to the spreading and accepting the gospel due to how the Romans looked down upon the belief system of the Jews, in other words, “the foolishness of the word of the cross” (1 Cor. 1:18) would make some degree of embarrassment about the gospel natural particularly in the capital of the Gentile world. It may also be that accusations to the effect that Paul’s gospel was antinomian or anti-Jewish lie behind this denial (cf. 3:8; 9:1–5).

Additionally, οὐ γὰρ ἐπαισχύνομαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον. For I am not ashamed. Can also be referred from; Ps 40:9,10; 71:15,16; 119:46; Mark 8:38 Lk 9:26 1Co 2:2 2Ti 1:8,12,16 1Pe 4:16).

For (γάρ) is subordinating conjunction expressing cause or explanation and thus introduces an explanation. Here Paul is explaining why he is eager to preach the Gospel to the saints in Rome.

The “for” links this verse to the last thought. At Rome, if anywhere, he might be “ashamed” (Mark 8:38) of the message of a crucified Saviour; a message, too, which pronounced “the whole world guilty before God.” But he was not ashamed of his message, and so was ready to “see Rome.”

Not (οὐ) indicates absolute negation and strongly denies the possibility that Paul might ever be ashamed of the glorious Gospel. The verb ashamed is also in the present tense indicating this was Paul's continual attitude.

Ashamed – ἐπαισχυθῆναι from ἐπι upon or used to intensify the meaning of the following word + αἰσχυθῆναι from αἰσχυρός disfigurement & then disgrace which is used two times in Romans, means to experience a painful

feeling or sense of loss of status because of some particular event or activity (Kay, 2017). It describes one's consciousness of guilt or of exposure or the fear of embarrassment that one's expectations may prove false. *Επαισχηνομοι* is associated with being afraid, feeling shame which prevents one from doing something, a reluctance to say or do something because of fear of humiliation, experiencing a lack of courage to stand up for something, or feeling shame because of what has been done.

Επαισχηνομοι - Ref - Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26; Ro 1:16; 6:21; 2Ti 1:8, 12, 16; Heb 2:11; 11:16.

Writing to the Corinthian saint Paul explained that we preach (*κερυσσο* = herald as a public crier) Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block (Greek = *σκανδαλον* gives us our English “scandal” = circumstance or action that offends propriety or established moral conceptions), and to Gentiles foolishness (considered intellectually weak and irrational) (1Cor 1:23)

We can thus see why the Gospel might bring about situations in which one would be tempted to feel a sense of shame.

Paul was indubitably unashamed and the Gospel had indeed created many "scandals" for Paul - he had been imprisoned in Philippi (Acts 16:23, 24), chased out of Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-9), smuggled out of Berea (Acts 17:10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15-see note), sneered at in Athens (Acts 17:32), regarded as a fool in Corinth (1Cor 1:18,23), and stoned in Galatia (Acts 14:19), but Paul remained eager to preach the Gospel in Rome—the seat of contemporary political power and pagan religion. Neither ridicule, criticism, nor physical persecution could curb his boldness. (See 2Cor 4:5-18; 11:23,24,25,26, 27, 28; 12:9). But its inherent glory, as God's life-giving message to a dying world,

so filled his soul, that, like his blessed Master, he “despised the shame.” (See Hebrews 12:2).

Paul knew that Rome was a volatile place and that Christians there had already experienced persecution. He knew that the capital city of the empire was steeped in immorality and paganism, including emperor worship. He knew that most Romans would despise him and that many probably would do him harm. Yet he was boldly eager to go there, for his Lord's sake and the sake of the Lord's people.

He was not ashamed even though he had been imprisoned in Philippi, chased out of Thessalonica, smuggled out of Damascus and Berea, laughed at in Athens, considered a fool in Corinth, and declared a blasphemer and lawbreaker in Jerusalem. He was stoned and left for dead at Lystra. Some pagans of Paul's day branded Christianity as atheism because it believed in only one God and as being cannibalistic because of a misunderstanding of the Lord's Supper. Although that GOSPEL was then, and still is today, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, it is the only way God has provided for the salvation of men, and Paul was both overjoyed and emboldened by the privilege of proclaiming its truth and power wherever he went.

See also *καταισχύνω* in 5:5 and 9:33. This usage also fits Jewett's “Ambassadorial Letter” thesis (15) (2009), since it may include the thought of the representative (of “the gospel of God”) not being put to shame in the face of superior power. As Barrett (1970) has shown, likely, some connection between this assertion and the Jesus tradition preserved in Mark 8:38//Luke 9:26 should be recognized (“Not Ashamed”). Paul herein shows awareness of the tradition of Jesus' teaching and includes it within his understanding of “the

gospel"—the post-Easter interpretation of the “Christ-event” being consciously formulated in continuity with the proclamation of Jesus (see further on 1:1 and 12:14). This also means that Paul quite deliberately makes his own what must have been a shared affirmation among other early Christian communities who expressed their solidarity precisely in terms of their confidence in and loyalty to Jesus (Barrett, 1970).

As an apostle Paul is at the forefront of the early Christ movement, likely being perceived as one of its group exemplars (Kuecker, 2013). Especially as the Christ movement in Rome is facing severe opposition and persecution, and Paul himself has significant experience with it for the sake of the gospel (Acts 9:16). Along with the varying amounts of different “gospels” searching for voice across the religious landscape, Paul is completely clear which gospel that he is devoted to (Gal 1:6-9). By doing so the apostle is setting the foundation for the remainder of his theological elaboration on what it means to live out the righteousness of God.

There appears to be a context of negativity in 1:16, with the inclusion of ἐπαισχύνομαι (I am not ashamed), as Paul discusses a topic, he is so passionate about. However, as we look within the context of his message, we can see why he may be reflecting this way. The Greco- Roman world, with Rome as its centerpiece has shown its propensity against the gospel of Christ (1 Cor. 1:18) (Murray, 1968). Yet Paul proves to be insistent that the good news is missional, focusing on the universal gift of the righteousness of God (Jevis and Richardson, 1994). Elsewhere in scripture, we can see how Paul seems to be echoing the words of Jesus himself in Mark 8:38, while that passage uses a contrasting gloss from its construct of being «ashamed» (ἐπαισχυνθήσεται.

Paul must be aware of at least the implications of what it would mean for individuals to be “ashamed” of the gospel and thus is likely emboldening the movement in Rome (ἐν Ῥώμῃ) to avoid such an emotion.

Gospel - εὐαγγέλιον- from εὖ-- good + ἀγγελλω -- proclaim, tell. This was originally a reward for good news and later became the good news itself. The word εὐαγγέλιον was in just as common use in the first century as our word’s good news today.

Εὐαγγέλιον - Seventy-six times in seventy-three verses in the New Testament, some of them are:

Mt4:23; 9:35; 24:14; 26:13; Mk.1:1, 14, 15; 8:35; 10:29 (Kennedy, 1984).

Εὐαγγέλιον - Only once in the Septuagint (LXX) - 2Sa 4:10 not with the same meaning as "Gospel" in the NT! Note that the verb form εὐαγγελίζω/εὐαγγελίζω occurs much more frequently in the Lxx 1Sa 31:9; 2Sa 1:20; 4:10; 18:19, 20, 26, 31; 1Kgs 1:42; 1Chr 10:9; Ps 40:9 (Kennedy,1984) but most of these Old Testament uses of the verb were in the context of proclamation of "good news" in general, not the Good News of the NT Gospel (ibid).

God can offer the power of salvation. (Ro. 1:16b)

δύναμις γὰρ θεοῦ ἐστὶν εἰς σωτηρίαν

Power- δύναμις from stem *Δυνα* ~ basic sense of ability or capability) in simple terms describes inherent power residing in a thing by its nature. Δυναμις is the power that overcomes resistance, the power to accomplish. Dunamis is the ability to produce a strong effect. Δυναμις is the capacity for something (ability or capability to carry out something) as in 2Cor 8:3. Dunamis is translated miracle, miracles, or miraculous powers 22 times (out of 119 uses in

the NT) which give you a sense of the meaning, these uses, of course, reflecting the supernatural manifestation of power.

Δυναμις is the root from which we derive the English word dynamic, (synonyms = energetic, functioning, live, operative, working) which describes that which is marked by usually continuous and productive activity or change. That which is dynamic is characterized by energy or forces that produce motion, as opposed to that which is static. Another English word dynamite is derived from δυναμις and since dunamis is used by Paul to describe the "power of God", some have suggested that the Gospel is "God's dynamite". This is a misapplication of this English derivative in an attempt to try to picture the lifesaving power of the Gospel. Dunamis does not refer to explosive power, as if the Gospel will blow men to bits but as discussed above, it refers to intrinsic power (Jer. 23:29).

The Gospel is dynamic, God's dynamic, and so is powerful and able to effect radical regeneration of spiritually dead men and women. The Gospel makes dunamis power available to all believers. Δυναμις- 119x in 115v in the NT (Wendland, 2003).

Translated as - ability (4), meaning (1), mightily (1), mighty (1), miracle (2), miracles (17), miraculous powers (3), power (83), powers (6), strength (2), wealth (1).

In his letter to the Corinthian Christians, Paul emphasized that "the kingdom of God does not consist in words but in power" -1Cor 4:20, see context 1Cor 4:19 (1975).

Paul's confidence in the Gospel was based on the supremacy (that which holds the highest place in power, that which is greatest or most excellent) of its

divine message to a world enslaved to and deceived by sin. He knew the Gospel was superior to any religion or philosophy ever concocted by the sinful minds of men. The ancient world in Paul's day was dominated by Greek logic, Roman law, and Hebrew thought but all paled before the supremacy of the Gospel of God.

The second clause of the passage, opens with γὰρ functioning as explanatory conjunction, indicating that it is expressing the grounds in which Paul can be unashamed of the gospel (Wallace, 2008). He can be unashamed because of the “power of God” (δύναμις θεοῦ). Tying the power of God to salvation is εἰς, which is a preposition of purpose. All together the clause is suggesting that the power of God is capable of offering salvation.

δύναμις γὰρ Θεοῦ ἐστὶν εἰς σωτηρίαν παντὶ τῷ πιστευόντι, – ...
for it is the power of God for salvation to all those who believe... γὰρ is introducing an expansion upon the previous clause. This part of the sentence now tells us why Paul is unashamed of the gospel. He is unashamed because the gospel is the power of God for salvation to all those who believe.

For (εἰς) is, first of all, a preposition that indicates motion into a place or thing. Figuratively as used in this verse εἰς marks the object or point toward which the Gospel ends, i.e., salvation. More literally it reads "unto salvation.

Salvation - Σοτερία from Σοτερ- Savior in turn from σοζω - save, rescue, deliver) describes the rescue or deliverance from danger, destruction, and peril. As discussed more below, salvation is a broader term in Greek than we often think of in English. Other concepts that are inherent in σοτερία include restoration to a state of safety, soundness, health, and well-being as well as preservation from the danger of destruction.

(σωτηριοῦ/σωτηριον and ρηυομαι the verb meaning to deliver.)

The Hebrew (Ge49:18, Ex14:13, 15:2 where Salvation - yeshuah –deliverance - related to the Hebrew Name for Jesus - Yeshua; Lxx -soteria) and the Greek words for salvation both convey the ideas of deliverance (rescue), safety, preservation, healing, and soundness so that in context the picture of the Gospel is that it manifests the power of God to rescue men from the penalty of sin which is everlasting spiritual death and separation from the presence of God's Glory (2Th 1:8,9).

Salvation carried tremendous meaning in Paul's day, especially it's basic of "deliverance," for this concept was applied not only to personal but also to national deliverance (something Israel was looking for in Messiah Who they, for the most part, failed to recognize as their Deliverer - Jn 1:11). And so, the emperor of Rome was looked on as a sort of a "saviour"

δυναμις Θεου utilizes a genitive of source. The power or efficacy of the gospel is found in God and comes from Him. It is a power that He alone has and utilizes in this case for salvation. εις σωτηριαν denotes what the power in the gospel is being directed towards or the result of this power. God's power, through the proclamation of the gospel, effects, or results in salvation (Schreiner, 1998). What kind of salvation is affected though? It is not just salvation from physical evils, but it also has eschatological implications that are appropriated for the present. That those who believe are saved from God's wrath and for future life (Hultgren, 2011, Moo, 1996). Who are the ones which are affected by this power and hence are saved?

Everyone (παντι τω)) - means all with no exception. In the present context, there is the qualification that the "all" truly believe the Gospel. Paul

writes later that "whoever will call upon the Name of the Lord will be saved." (Ro 10:13-note). If you stopped with "salvation to everyone" and yanked it out of context, you would have the false teaching of universalism. Paul qualifies it with "who believes" which in the present tense signifies they keep on believing the truth of the Gospel. In short, the offer of the Gospel is universal, but participation is limited to those who trust and believe.

Believes (πιστευω)- pisteuw is in the present tense and active voice which more literally could be rendered "continually making a volitional choice to believe" whilst πιστευοντι means believing which means adherence to, committal to, faith in, reliance upon or trust in a person or an object, in this case, the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This belief involves not only the consent of the mind but an act of the heart and will. To truly believe unto salvation is more than mental assent although it certainly does include use of our reasoning faculties and initial receipt of the truth (e.g., "come let us reason together" in Isa 1:18, "And how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard?" Ro 10:14) but as the general direction of their life they are believing in Jesus and His Gospel and His power to save us every day (present tense salvation) and keep us steadfast until the end (future tense salvation).

Therefore, παντι τω πιστευοντι. Paul uses here a present active participle (τω πιστευοντι) which qualifies the noun παντι (to or for all). The present tense of the participle indicates that it is ongoing and the article indicates that it is an adjectival. So, it can be rendered together with παντι as to all those that go on believing or to all those who believe. This faith or belief is not just a mental assent where the content of that belief can be amorphous but is centered on the gospel and Jesus Christ revealed in it (Rom 3:21-26).

It is also ongoing and as such involves commitment (Schreiner, 1998). Faith is thus necessary for salvation. Salvation only is offered to those who believe, but faith is not a “work” which we can achieve. It is something given by God and is affected through the gospel as it is proclaimed to those who hear it (Moo, 1996, Schreiner, 1998).

- Ιουδαιω τε πρωτον και Ελληνι. - ... first to the Jew and then to the Gentile. This final clause in v16 helps us better understand the extent of παντι τω πιστευοσι. To the Jew first - This phrase was fulfilled literally and historically as Luke documents in the book of Acts, e.g. on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2:1, 5. Certainly, we are still to proclaim the Gospel to the Jews, but this phrase does not imply that we are required to evangelize the Jew before we go to the Gentiles. Even in context, this phrase is preceded by the non-exclusive word everyone.

God offered the plan of salvation to the Jews first but because the Jews rejected the Gospel, Paul turned to the Gentiles. God never planned salvation as an exclusive possession of the Jews. This verse has been grossly misinterpreted as John Piper (2015) puts it that the gospel was in the order of importance but I disagree with him. Base on the phrase Ιουδαιω τε πρωτον και Ελληνι, the Gospel is not to the Jew first in point of importance but in point of time. It came to them before it came to us. Therefore, in expressing to the Jew first, Paul is not at all prescribing an order of presentation of the Gospel throughout this dispensation. He is simply recognizing the fact that to the Jew, who had the Law and Divine privileges, the Gospel offer had first been presented, and then to the Gentile. As Paul says in Ephesians "And He came and preached peace to you that were far off (the Gentile), and peace to them that were nigh (the Jews)"

(Eph 2:17). We might just as sensibly claim that Ephesians 2.17 gives Gentile's priority because they are mentioned first -"you that were afar" over the Jews who were mentioned last, -"them that were nigh."

To claim that the Gospel must be preached first to the Jew throughout this dispensation is utterly to deny God's Word that there is now no distinction between Jew and Greek either as to the fact of sin (see Ro 3:22) or the availability of salvation (Ro 10:12).

Paul here is demonstrating the universal reach of the gospel. Not universalism, in that all are saved, but that it is offered to both the Jew and the Gentile alike (Schreiner, 1998). While the term Ελληνι could be more accurately translated as 'Greek' since it is being used in comparison to Ιουδαιω. The idea that the gospel is first going out to the Jew and then the Gentile can have several different meanings. Firstly, it could be reflecting the historical reality of Jesus being the Jewish Messiah and thus His message is first proclaimed to them (Kruse, 2012). Secondly, it could reflect the means with which Paul approached his call-in proclaiming the gospel. As he routinely went to the synagogue first and then preached to the gentiles after (Schreiner, 1998). Neither sense greatly alters one's understanding of the rest of the verse, except that the gospel is not just for a closed ethnic group (Dockery, 1989).

For the righteousness of God is being revealed from faith to faith.

(Ro. 1:17a)

Δικαιοσύνη γὰρ θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ ἀποκαλύπτεται ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν.

Righteousness (δικαιοσύνη see adjective δικαιοσ) is derived from a root word that means "straightness." It refers to a state that conforms to an

authoritative standard or norm and so is in keeping with what God is in His holy character. Righteousness is a moral concept. God's character is the definition and source of all righteousness. God is righteous because He is total as He should be. The righteousness of human beings is defined in terms of God's. In short, the righteousness of God is all that God is, all that He commands, all that He demands, all that He approves, and all that He provides (through the Gospel). The righteousness of God in opposition to the righteousness of men (Php 3:9) and because it justifies men in the sight of God. This specific phrase Righteousness of God is found in 7v.

A. T Robertson (1934) says that "righteousness of God" in the Greek is "Subjective genitive, "a God kind of righteousness," one that each must have and can obtain in no other way save "from faith unto faith"

Another rendering is righteousness from God, indicating that He imparts His righteousness to those who believe. It is thereby not only revealed but reckoned to those who believe in Christ (Ro 4:5).

Revealed (αποκαλυπτω) from απο- from + καλυπτω = hinder the knowledge of a thing; cover, conceal; see the study of related word 'apokalupsis' means literally to remove the veil or covering exposing to open view what was before hidden.

This righteousness is continuously (present tense) caused to be (passive voice = outside Source, the so-called "Divine" passive) fully known, disclosed, exposed to open view though previously hidden.

Faith - (πιστις) is synonymous with trust or belief and is the conviction of the truth of anything, but in Scripture usually speaks of belief respecting man's relationship to God and divine things. Additionally, the γάρ that opens up v. 17

is another explanatory conjunction that relates the current dependent clause to the former with εὐαγγέλιον. As the prepositional phrase of agency ἐν αὐτῷ (in it) will connect the two since out of the gospel God's righteousness has been revealed. Muraoka includes strong language back to the OT for the use of the term δικαιοσύνη. Such as a surprising connection to » conformity to the dictates of the religion of Israel,” which seems to make sense if the reading of Ἰουδαίῳ τε πρῶτον καὶ Ἑλληνι is speaking to salvation priority of the Jews. However, this study can suggest that there is a case to be made for a strong Jewish standing on the reading. For if Paul sees the physical promises of God's covenant with Abraham still valid, and then it is not unlikely that Paul sees Jesus as the fulfillment of the law for the nations. From that reading then, by being called to faith in Christ, who follows the holy intent of the law apart from sin, then that seems to reason that there would be conformity to the Jewish traditions (Snodgrass, 1988).

Regardless, the law is seen as a prominent focus within Paul's understanding of OT righteousness. It would be wrong to retract Paul from his Jewishness, who sought to oppose the ethnocentric exclusivism of his fellow Jews (Bird, 2013).

There is the immense significance for Paul to include the law and insinuate its meaning to the majorly gentile audience of the Christ movement in Rome. It is generally understood biblically and extraneously that the gentiles were set away from the commands of the Torah. To bring the gentiles into the in-group, he must seek to make them aware of Israel's use of ritual. A primary ritual of Israel would be their observance of the Torah, as it is the law of God that was given to Moses for the commonwealth. The Torah takes on a unique

role as it is a normative resource, and is the substance of a particular community that has been displaced. It is propelled by great theological intentionality and was able to diffuse memories into a coherent statement that Israel could stake its life on (Brueggemann and Linafelt, 2012). The use of ritual acts as a mechanism by which the social identity is expressed and is embodied with the group's symbolic values on display (Bell, 1998). Yahweh had originally called his people, Israel, into covenant with ritualistic observances that embody their faithfulness to Him. Under the δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ (the righteousness of God), gentiles are now able to be declared righteous by the salvific work of Christ and thus must also join in the ritual observance of Israel that is commanded of them by the messiah. This is in line with the covenant of Abraham according to Romans 4 and Galatians 3, with faith acting as the gentile expression of obedience to be grafted into covenantal identity with Israel. This impartial approach is supported by Paul in Romans 2:11, οὐ γάρ ἐστιν προσωποληψία παρὰ τῷ θεῷ (For God shows no partiality) (Calhoun, 2011). The passage twice holds the context of, Ἰουδαίου τε πρῶτον καὶ Ἑλλήνου (the Jew first and to the Greek), with contrasting themes of tribulation/distress and glory/honor. Yet while there is impartiality, Paul is careful to be particularistic that there is still a significant distinction between Jew and gentile responsibility and subsequent reward. All while trying to preserve their particular ethical interest within the covenant of Christ (Thielman, 2005). This is shown by his commitment to upholding the law himself and by his participation in the Jerusalem council in Acts 15 (Malina, 2002).

The historical understanding of the term δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ has a fairly wide array of glosses and interpretations, especially in reformation circles. Augustine sees that the phrase as an attributive genitive, that it is an attribute of his character. Luther sees the term as legal language, that God is 'just' in his authority to judge, as he saw an alternative meaning to the phrase as the "justice of God (Dodson, 2015). He would later conclude that God's justice/righteousness should be seen as a gift that he has given to mankind as he sees fit (Dodson, 2015)). Calvin, on the other hand, saw the phrase as an objective genitive, that God has desired the pursuit of the righteousness of mankind (Dodson, 2015).

Relatively recent scholarship has compared the law against the gospel; however, a better understanding is to see them as discussed above in unity (Wilson, 2006). With the entrance of the reformation age, there emerged a relatively large issue (understandably so) with the works-based righteousness of the Catholic Church. This then seemed to bleed into their understanding of Israel's faithfulness to the law, and to saw obedience to Torah in many ways as a contradictory theme to faith. While we would come to differing conclusions, Moo does state, "obedience always involves faith, and faith always involves obedience (Moo, 1996).

Those who have received righteousness live by faith

Καθὼς γέγραπται Ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως
ζήσεται.

As (καθὼς) is the strong connecting word καθὼς meaning "just as," and the use here emphasizes sameness and the formula "it is written" reminds the reader that Paul is quoting authoritative Scripture.

Written (γραφω) from root γραφ- - primarily means to scratch on or engrave as on an ornament, reports, letters, etc; English - graph, graphic, etc) means to engrave or inscribe with a pen or stylus characters or letters on a surface which can be wood, wax, metal, leather, stone, parchment, dirt (John), paper, etc.)

Righteous (δικαιος) from δικη = right, just) defines that which is by high standards of rectitude. It is that which is in right relation to another and so about persons defines the one who is morally and ethically righteous, upright, or just.



The basic meaning of the adjective δικαιος describes that which is proper, right, fitting, fair, righteous, just (acting or being in conformity with what is morally upright or good). From a legal viewpoint, δικαιος refers to one who is law-abiding (doing all that law or justice requires), honest and good in behaviour, and from a religious viewpoint one who is rightly related to God. In simple terms, this trait describes being by what God requires. The righteous man does what he ought. He or she is the person who conforms to the standard, will, or character of God. For example, Luke describes Zacharias and Elizabeth (John the Baptist's parents) as both righteous (δικαιος) in the sight of God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord. (Lk 1:6).

Shall live (ζήσεται) in this context means "shall be saved". It is consistent with the salvation mentioned in the previous verse. Remember that salvation past (justification), present (sanctification), and future (glorification) are all the result of faith.

Paul's audience likely would have understood 1:1-17 as his ethos, with his tone being like a teacher/preacher that develops an imaginary interlocutor

through his use of diatribes (Olbricht and Sumney, 2001). Furthermore, they would have seen verses 16-17 as his thesis, which is setting the foundation for the book's use of diatribe going forward (Olbricht and Sumney, 2001). Being that all things related to the gospel that has offered salvation to all that believe.

To strengthen his argument, Paul connects the righteousness of God (δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ) that has been revealed (ἀποκαλύπτεται) with the inclusion from the OT prophet Habakkuk 2:4. He connects the passage through adverbial comparative conjunction, paired with a perfect indicative verb, which indicates what is being compared to what had been previously revealed. It should be translated as "just as it has been written." Including this comparative conjunction draws upon the Jewish tradition of faith from the prophets.

Additionally, the exegesis of 1:17 δικαιοσύνη γὰρ Θεοῦ - For the righteousness of God... γὰρ is again introducing a thought which explains or clarifies why Paul is unashamed of the gospel, namely the rest of v17. The understanding of the term δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ has been widely debated and several interpretations have been put forward (Thielman, 2011). This phrase is also used elsewhere in the book of Romans (3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 10:3) and our understanding of it in the propositio should help us understand the way Paul employs it elsewhere. As well as what the letter is trying to argue for (Moo, 1996). Moo (1996, 70-71) lists for us three ways in which this term has been understood. Firstly, as an attribute of God, and that there are two ways this attribute could be expressed. Either negatively as the righteousness of God which demands justice or positively as the righteousness of God which is expressed in His faithfulness in salvation. The next interpretation takes Θεοῦ

as an objective genitive. Where in a forensic sense one has been deemed righteous before God. The last interpretation which Moo (1996) presents is that of the subjective genitive. That is the righteousness that is shown by God. Burk (2012) adds a fourth interpretation to this list which is a genitive of source, which is righteousness from God given to those being saved. Thielman (2011) argues for a dense understanding of this phrase, arguing that rhetorical convention would allow Paul to imply many meanings within this phrase in his *propositio*. He sees in this term the objective, subjective, and positive attributive sense of the genitive (Thielman, 2011). However, Burk, (2012) argues, quite persuasively, that for the objective or subjective genitive options to be valid that *δικαιοσύνη* needs to imply a verbal idea. The nominalized form of the verb *δικαίω* is *δικαιωσις* and not *δικαιοσύνη*. It is nouns that end with the *-σις* suffix which derive from verbs, while nouns that end with the *-σύνη* suffix are derived from adjectives (Burk, 2012). With *δικαιοσύνη* being derived from an adjective, it thus does not have a verbal idea and so the objective and subjective understandings collapse (Burk, 2012). Of the two options left, attributive genitive and genitive of source, the former would seem to make the most sense in this context. Burk (2012) eloquently goes on to conclude: If we take *Θεου* as a simple possessive [attributive] genitive, then Paul would be saying that God's attribute of righteousness is revealed in the gospel... Thus, God's righteousness is at its root an attribute of the divine nature, but it is also that which grounds and motivates the saving events that are narrated in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore, from the above exegesis of the text, whoever receives the gospel with faith is being imputed with the righteousness of God.

Εν αὐτῷ ἀποκαλύπτεται – ... is being revealed in it... The righteousness of God is being revealed in the gospel and its proclamation. This also further explains why Paul is not ashamed of v16. As the gospel is not just the power of God for salvation but also actively reveals His righteousness (Kruse, 2012).

The verb ἀποκαλύπτεται is in the present tense and not the default aorist. This revealing of righteousness is a day-to-day affair, that is, an ongoing process. There are two senses in how the revealing can be understood. Moo (1996) suggests first a cognitive revealing. A revealing where one comes to understand the concept of the righteousness of God when the gospel is preached. The second, which he favors, is what Moo terms a 'historical' understanding. As the gospel is preached the righteousness of God is made manifest and would match the sense of the same word used a verse latter but in the context of wrath (Moo, 1996). Each time the gospel is proclaimed the righteousness of God is revealed afresh and it has eschatological implications (Moo, 1996, Schreiner, 1998). God's divine attribute of righteousness is revealed in the proclaiming of the gospel, where God is shown to be just with regards to sin itself and justifies those who sin (Rom 3:21-26). Ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν - ... from faith for faith... This small phrase has been debated and interpreted in several ways throughout the church's history (Keener, 2009, Schreiner, 1998).

It could mean that the righteousness of God is revealed through regular acts of faith in God and so one's faith increases over time. Something akin to sanctification (Wardlaw, 2012). Waetjen (2003) proposed that it is indicating the progression of (Ἐκ πίστεως) and into the faith of Christ (εἰς πίστιν) believers out from the faith of Abraham (πίστιν). Quarles (2003) suggests that John Chrysostom's reading of this phrase can help, as he was a native Greek

speaker from early in the church's history. Based on this, and a survey of other positions, Quarles proposes two possible interpretations. The first being that this phrase indicates that righteousness is revealed first in the faithfulness of Christ. This then results in the faith of the believers. The second is that it could be indicating that the righteousness of God is revealed continuously from the faith of the Old Testament saints to that of the New Testament saints (Quarles, 2003). Therefore, this work succumbs to the first interpretation of Quale's proposal. Although, Calhoun (2006), in response to Quarles, suggests that he has misread Chrysostom. But still contends that Chrysostom is vital to understanding this phrase. He agrees with Quarles that this phrase is a βραχυρομημα (Calhoun, 2006). A phrase meant to be dense with meaning and compressing whole arguments into shorthand (Calhoun, 2006). His reading of Chrysostom would suggest that this is a phrase of moral extremes, to counter objections regarding God's righteousness and the immoral being saved through faith. As he puts it "from the faith of the patriarch [Abraham] at one end of the ethical spectrum to the faith of the prostitute [Rahab] at the other." (Calhoun, 2006). The exact meaning of this phrase is likely to remain a mystery, as all sides can muster a good case.

Καθως γεγραπται. Ο δε δικαιος εκ πιστεως ζησεται. - ... just as it is written, "The righteous by faith will live." Γεγραπται as a perfect indicative verb indicates that what has been written in the past still affects our present reality. It is also a common way in which citations from the Old Testament are introduced. Since there are variations between Paul's citation of Hab 2:4 here and the LXX, we shall just take this phrase as he used it. Though in doing this there is some difficulty. The εκ πιστεως could be understood to

modify and clarify either ὁ δίκαιος (adjectival) or ζησεται (adverbial; Hultgren, 2011, Moo, 1996,). This gives the two understandings of this phrase to mean either 'the righteous by faith will live' or 'the righteous will live by faith'. The first reading, based on the context of other parts of Romans, is the preferred. Paul is quoting a prophet in his thesis statement to make a point which he later expands upon (Hultgren, 2011, Moo, 1996,). Namely that the righteous through faith have an eschatological hope and will live (Rom 4:11, 13; 5:1; Hultgren, 2011, Moo, 1996). Thus, it may conclude that, by the phrase from faith to faith, Paul is simply arguing that it is by faith and faith alone that one receives this righteous status and understands God's work of saving sinners.

Summary

The axis on which the five divisions of the letter to the Romans revolve is an internal religious conflict between the Jews and the gentile Christians which underpins two different religious positions that permeate the entire letter. The first part unveils Paul, introducing himself to the divided Roman audience and stressing his purpose of visit. The second aspect letter refers to the narration, thus, giving the highlight to his missionary project to come to Rome. A look at this letter to the Romans shows the internal conflict between two strong religious groups which are Christian Jews and the Gentile Christians. The third part of the letter indicates the stance and the main argument and it introduces the problem statement of the debate between the two major groups mentioned above. This part of the letter is the main concern for the study. The letter refers to the debate as "righteousness by faith alone in Christ" which opposes "the works of the law" in respect of justification before God, hence, we should not be ashamed of the gospel. The fourth division of the letter gives the proof of

righteousness by faith which has been rightly understood and has effectively facilitated the transformation of the Roman house churches and the participation of the world mission. The final segment of the letter presents Paul appealing to the Roman house churches to help participate in the missionary work and the recommendations to the potential missionary leaders for being supportive.

Conclusion

From the above exegetical studies, Paul collectively presents the whole humanity as Jews and Gentiles who are to respond to the call of God's salvation. The righteousness of God is not simply an attribute of God but it is a quality by which God judges his people. In other words, it is an activity of doing right. The righteousness of God is the power of God which has been operative in the framework of his covenantal relationship with Israel and the nations at large. Paul uses the Greek word "ἀποκαλύπτω" which means to "unveil, reveal." This word specifically used the righteousness of God that has been revealed in Christ. This objectivity of revelation has to be responded to by the subjective response of humans. This exactly means when Paul says, "through faith (objectivity) for faith (subjective response)."

The phrase "δικαιοσύνη Θεου" in Pauline thought is radically different from the legal conception of righteousness in Judaism. The righteousness of man is only a gift and act of grace by God but not dependent on man's work. The righteousness of God is not simply an attribute of God but is an act of God. God's gift of righteousness (though, Θεου being taken as genitive origin) There is an objective and subjective aspect of "the righteousness of God." It is objective as it has been revealed in Christ and was given as a gift to everyone

who believes. It is subjective as it calls for human response. It is an active power of God which is at work- confronts and transforms the unbelieving.

Today Feminists are fighting for women liberation. Liberation is not something that you get liberated to oppress the other gender. Liberation is a transformation of relationships. The realization to create a "new humanity" comes from the realization of the righteousness of God which has been appropriated in Christ. Once we as individuals receive this gift of righteousness there can be a corporate transformation of relationships that can shape "new humanity."

To sum up, the dominant theme of Romans 1: 16-17 is "the righteousness of God." Paul explains this concept very dexterously from Jewish and Gentile points of view. The righteousness of God has been revealed in the life, work, and person of Jesus Christ. Christ –event is the dawn of new humanity. The objective revelation of the righteousness of God in Christ calls for a subjective response as an individual as well as a corporate body. In other words, no one is justified by their own merits but justification comes through faith in the righteousness of God which has been appropriated in Christ. The righteousness of God is not static but it transforms our relationship with God, man, and others; thus, creating a new humanity. Just as Paul was unashamed of the gospel, we should be unashamed as well. Finally, after creating a strong distance from the text, it has been developed exegetically that, salvation is attained by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone. Seemly, Adventists have a firm belief in the righteousness by grace through faith alone stated clearly in the study but the alleged conflict between some specific Adventist beliefs and teachings, such as their emphasis on Sabbath observance, and the traditional

Protestant understanding of justification by faith sound conflicting, therefore, the above exegetical development has aided the understanding of the text which will necessitate its appropriation in the SDA in the SDA Church in Ghana since this work intended to find out the Adventist understanding of the unity of the teaching of Scripture on justification by faith in Christ alone through grace alone.



CHAPTER THREE

THE BACKGROUND OF SDA CHURCH

Introduction

This chapter deals with the historical setting of the church, foundational experience of the righteousness by faith in Romans 1:16-17 by the founding pioneers of the SDA Church on how the doctrine of righteousness by faith was debated alongside with another stand that, the doer of the law is also justified, Mission and Vision and finally, the belief system of the church.

History

The origin of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church in the whole world could be traced from William Miller (1782- 1849) an American. He was a farmer, soldier (Captain), and the founder of the Millerites Movement which later assumed the name the Advent Movement. It was through this movement that the Seventh-day Adventist Church was born.

The Advent Movement finally became disappointed in 1844 since their expectation of Christ's Second Advent did not materialize on their predicted date on 22nd October 1844. Some of the members remained and continue to search the scriptures. They had answers to their problem and became united again, and formed a church. Many names to be given to the church were proposed but the name "Seventh-day Adventist Church" proposed by David Hewitt was endorsed by the members and this became the accepted name for the Church on 23rd May 1863 with 3500 members.

In Africa, the Seventh-day Adventist message was first received in Oran, a city in Algeria, 1886. Algeria accepted the Adventist views through

the reading of French periodicals. This was followed by Cape Town, South Africa in 1887; Apam, Ghana in 1888 and Cairo, Egypt in 1889.

As far as the individual is concerned, Francis I. U. Dolphijn of Apam is the name documented for the origin of Seventh-day Adventist message in Ghana (The Gold Coast). One of the earliest believers on the West Coast of Africa was Francis I. U. Dolphijn. He learned of the Adventist views by receiving from the captain of a vessel which was anchored for a while in the harbor of Apam a roll of Seventh-day Adventist papers sent out by International Tract Society. The reading of this literature let him in the year 1888 to begin the observance of the Sabbath and finally establish the first SDA church in Ghana.

The Church is now a worldwide church and currently (as of May 2020) has a worldwide baptized membership of over 20 million people and 25 million adherents. Currently, SDA Church in Ghana has developed tremendously and is now holding two unions (head offices), namely; Southern Ghana union and Northern Ghana Union of which the scope of this study centered on the Southern Ghana Union which has its head office in Accra and with a current baptized membership of 170, 443 with 935 churches.

Foundational experience of SDA Beliefs

The founding pioneers of the Seventh-day Adventist Church believed in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour and the Bible as their guide in life. Those who had come through the Millerites Movement had first-hand knowledge of disappointment and discouragement. As they studied the Scriptures concerning end time prophecy, the sanctuary types and their fulfilment, and the perpetuity of the law of God, they saw the necessity for organization as a means

for proclaiming these truths to the world. The denomination was formally organized on May 23, 1863, in Battle Creek, Michigan.

The men and women who were a part of the development of this denomination came from various religious backgrounds, bringing with them into the new movement some beliefs peculiar to their former associations. Two significant hold-over theological views were semi-Pelagianism and Semi-Arianism. The focus of the early Seventh-day Adventist Church tended more toward basic denominational organization and development, emphasis on obedience to the Ten Commandments, and efforts at evangelism and church growth during the anguish of the American Civil War and its aftermath. After its formation the doctrines of Salvation and righteousness by faith were understood and accepted but stayed in the background, mostly because these truths were familiar to most churches, so bringing out of these and other specific theological points awaited later focus and discussion. Though their Biblical arguments brought many to the church, they had minimized the centrality of the indwelling Christ as the only power to obey the commandments and to keep the Sabbath, and self-satisfaction and complacency began to affect the church.

Sources of the developing conflict

By the second generation of the movement, the denomination had become well established across the United States and had mission fields around the world. As the church grew, so did conflict between the members cropped in in respect to the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ alone and the law as well as other oppositions, particularly regarding the seventh-day Sabbath. Emphasis on the Ten Commandments as a part of obedience to God was a firmly established and central tenet of the denomination by the 1870s. Sunday-

keeping Christians claimed that keeping the seventh-day Sabbath was a sign of legalism or judaizing. Convinced of the Biblical correctness of the seventh-day Sabbath, Seventh-day Adventists turned to their Bibles to show the beliefs and doctrines from scripture and teach other Christians, prompting the moniker “People of the Book” to be applied to them, and not a few became decidedly legalistic. So, at the 1888 General Conference Session in Minneapolis, the presentation of the message of Christ as the only source of righteousness by two young preachers created conflict with some members including church leaders.

Defending Sabbath observance

Ministers and laypersons alike used scriptures in debating the beliefs of Adventist, including this particular issue from Scripture. However, there was still much opposition to the Sabbath belief, and there were Christians that said that Seventh-day Adventists were indeed legalists who held strictly to the “letter of the law.” All the work involved in developing and extending the denomination seemed to focus attention upon what the individual could accomplish, opening the door to self-reliance in spiritual matters as well. The Christ centred gospel was displaced by man’s efforts.

The Mission and Vision of SDA Church

The Mission

The mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is to make disciples of all people, communicating the everlasting gospel in the context of the three angels' messages of Revelation 14:6-12, leading them to accept Jesus as personal Savior and unite with His remnant Church, discipline them to serve Him as a Lord and preparing them for His soon return.

The Vision

In harmony with the great prophecies of the scripture, we see as the climax of God's plan the restoration of all His creation to full harmony with His perfect will and righteousness.

The Fundamental Beliefs of the SDA church

The Seventh-day Adventists accept the Bible as their only creed and hold certain fundamental beliefs to be the teaching of the Holy Scriptures. It holds twenty-eight (28) Fundamental Beliefs as the church's understanding and expression of the teaching of Scripture. In these 28 beliefs have the righteousness/ justification by faith through Jesus Christ alone as one of the stands found in the Romans 1:16-17, captioned, "The experience of salvation" as belief ten (10) in the official document of the church. With this belief, the Church accepts that in all infinite love and mercy, God made Christ, who knew no sin, to be sin for us, so that in Him we might be justified and made the righteous of God. Led by the Holy Spirit we sense our need, acknowledge our sinfulness, repent of our transgressions and exercise faith in Jesus as Lord and Christ, as substitute and example. This faith as found in Romans 1:17 which receives salvation comes through the divine power of the Word and is the gift of God's grace. Through Christ we are justified, adopted as God's sons and daughters, and delivered from the lordship of sin. Through the Spirit we are born again and sanctified; the Spirit renews our minds, writes God's law of love in our hearts, and we are given the power to live a holy life. Abiding in Him we become partakers of the divine nature and have the assurance of salvation.

The Law (SDAFB, 2006)

This belief nineteen (19) from the fundamental beliefs of the Church however states that the great principles of God's law are embodied in the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17) and exemplified in the line of Christ. They express God's love, will and purposes concerning human conduct and relationships and are binding upon all people in every age. These precepts are the basis of God's covenant with His people and the standard in God's judgement into salvation. Through the agency of the Holy Spirit they point out sin and awaken a sense of need for a Savior. In contrast, the belief states categorically that salvation is all by grace and not of works, but its fruitage is the obedience to the law and one of the such laws is the Sabbath.

The Sabbath (SDAFB, 2006)

The law of the Sabbath as the number twenty (20) of the fundamental beliefs is equally important for SDA Church. The belief of the church further states that the beneficent Creator after the six days of creation, rested on the seventh day and instituted the Sabbath for all people as a memorial of creation. The fourth commandment of God's law requires the observance of this Seventh-day Sabbath as the day of rest, worship, and ministry in harmony with the teaching and practice of Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is a day of delightful communion with God and one another. It is a symbol of our redemption in Christ, a sign of our sanctification, a token of our allegiance, and a forestate of our eternal covenant between Him and His people. Joyful observance of this holy time from evening to evening, sunset to sunset, is a celebration of God's creative and redemptive acts. Therefore, the same church

that accepts that salvation is by grace through faith in Jesus alone also believe and insists that we are redeemed and saved through God's law.



CHAPTER FOUR

CONTEXTUALIZATION AND APPROPRIATION OF THE TEXT

Introduction

The previous two chapters dealt with the exegesis of the text and the background of SDA Church which unearth issues for this chapter. This chapter is therefore divided into two; the first part deals with the contextualization of said text among Adventist Christians (S.D.A.C.) in the Southern Ghana whereas the second part presents the appropriation of the text. The first part uses the ideas that came up from the interpretation of the text for Adventist Christians (S.D.A.C) context in Southern Ghana. This will give a thrust to ascertain the stand of the SDA Church on righteousness by faith. The appropriation session also deals with the impact of the doctrine on the life of the Church members, challenges related to the transmission of this doctrine, challenges related to the appropriation of the doctrine and assessment of the church's interpretation of the doctrine. Regarding the method, purposive sampling was used to select respondents that enabled me to acquire the needed information, and to meet my objectives and contextualization is the second pillar in the Tri-Polar exegetical tool adopted for the study. The ideas that emerged from the interpretation of the text as noted earlier are:

- i. Not ashamed of the gospel
- ii. The power of salvation
- iii. The righteousness of God
- iv. The righteousness by faith

In this respect, this study employs West's (2015) contextual Bible Study (C. B. S) approach that revolves around Six commitments (6 C's) of a trained reader. These commitments are:

- i. Commitment to read the Bible from the perspective poor and the oppressed
- ii. Commitment to read the Bible in a particular community with different context
- iii. Commitment to read the Bible critically
- iv. Commitment to read the Bible for personal and social transformation.
- v. Commitment to read the Bible within collaborative interpretation among organised community of marginalised and organic intellectuals.
- vi. Commitment to read the Bible with 'struggle' (contestation).

Facilitation Process

The researcher followed the protocol of the church by first sending in a written letter to the local churches of SDA where the focus groups were targeted within the scope of the study. The researcher visited the areas twice; first, distribution of the letters and second time to form the groups but unfortunately, could not have the visit that would have led to the reading of the text as suggested by West (1993) as C. B. S. due to the COVID-19 pandemic directives from the government of Ghana, therefore, the focus group discussions were done through video calls, mobile conference calls, WhatsApp group discussions and one-on-one one interviews for those that proximity would allow and finally, interview guide to those who could read and write.

For the interviews, every single meeting lasted for fifteen (15) minutes, unless there was a need for a follow-up. The digital micro recorder was used for some of the interviews and even recorded the conference calls for the focus group discussions. Four (4) people were engaged in the conference calls which lasted for twenty (20) minutes on Thursday, 2nd April 2020; five (5) members on video calls (zoom cloud meeting) for thirty (30) minutes on Sunday; 5th, seven (7) WhatsApp group members for WhatsApp discussions which also lasted for forty-five (45) minutes on Friday, 10th April 2020; four (4) church members were engaged for one-on-one interview for fifteen (15) minutes each and finally administered five (5) interview guides to five church members from 13th -16th, 2020. In all, twenty-five (25) participants were engaged for data collection. The groups for the conference calls and WhatsApp groups comprised of Pastors, Pastors' wives, elders, elders' wives, University lecturers, student pastors from seminary (VVU), youth members, and women ministries members in the SDA church within the scope of the study.

However, some of the Pastors, lecturers and other members consulted could not make it in the online C.B.S. The following Adventist who is lecturers at the University of Cape Coast facilitated the process: Pastor Professor Afari Yaw Ankomah coordinated the conference call group discussions and some part of the WhatsApp group discussion, Elder Professor Emmanuel Kofi Gyimah, and Elder Doctor Kingsley Adjei coordinated some of the WhatsApp discussions and the video calls.

The conference calls were solely Twi and Fante languages as a medium of expression through the reading process. Whilst, Twi and Fante languages were used on the WhatsApp groups. On the WhatsApp groups, some of the

participants made audio and posted it on the platform for those who could not write and who could write but felt to ease the discussion by making audio recordings. In this respect, the participants were asked to read the text under study three times in the Twi and Fante languages before meeting on the WhatsApp groups and conference calls. On all the media platforms mentioned above, two participants together with the researcher read the text before the studying of the text. Throughout the reading process, the researcher served as the 'trained reader' for the participants who were the 'ordinary' readers. The researcher took the time to explain West's (2015) concept of the C.B.S. for the study groups. During the reading process, the researcher briefly explained the literary context of the text to ordinary readers. In the course of the reading process, the researcher read the C.B.S questions and explained them to the participants. This guided the participants in reading the selected text. The responses from the group discussions and the interviews differed not only from one group to the other but also within the same category, on issues such as the exegetical meaning of the text, individual contextual understanding, and the position of the church on justification by faith alone in the text.

C.B.S questions on Romans 1:1-32

The questions for the C.B.S. on the text reflected the ideas that emerged from the exegesis of the text. Although the questions were set given the ideas, they were also in tune with the six commitments of the C.B.S pointed out earlier.

PART ONE: CONTEXTUALIZATION

This is the second interpretive process of the Tri-Polar exegetical tool by Jonathan Drapper (1991). This is why exegesis of the Bible is so important, because what a community of faith believes affect what it does (Patte and Grenholm, 2000). The second chapter dealt with the first pillar, thus; Distantiation, therefore, this part of this chapter deals with the second pillar known as contextualization. This is where the study takes the text into Ghanaian context.

Knowledge of the doctrine of *righteousness by faith alone*

Responses on personal knowledge of the doctrine

During the interviews and focus group discussions, one of the questions asked of the respondents was to state briefly their understanding of the doctrine of righteousness by faith alone in the text under study. The following responses were given, according to the five categories of respondents mentioned above.

The responses from church leaders on their knowledge of the doctrine of justification by faith alone were almost uniform. One respondent said, “The doctrine of righteousness by faith alone is the cardinal doctrine of the SDA church, and of course all. It teaches that we are justified by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Another leader added that “a person is justified by faith in the death of Jesus Christ for the remission of our sins, not on account of our good works.” Similarly, three other respondents affirmed the view that righteousness is by grace through faith in the redemptive work of Christ on the cross for humankind, not by works of merit, but two others respondents expressed it

using additional phrases and terms such as “God’s mercy” and “redemption” etc.

The responses of the church leaders suggest two things; first, they seem to have a good understanding of the doctrine. Their position may not be unconnected with the level of their theological education. Second, if this is what they hold of the doctrine, have they effectively communicated it to the clergy, who can then pass this onto the congregants? What then is the understanding of the clergy, who form the tier of the SDA’s operations below that of the church leadership, of this doctrine?

The clergy interviewed cut across all levels of university education, as such, responses from the clergy vary. Two of the clergies admitted that it is easy to mention righteousness by faith alone but not easy to explain. Commenting on this further, he said, “justification is a process or an act that reconciles one to God based on what Christ has done appropriated through faith, and even faith is a gift from God.

Using a judicial term, three pastors said, "justification is God's acquittal of sinners of their sin and it is appropriated by faith, not works. Supporting this, another pastor said, "Justification is through the grace of God alone accepted by faith alone; we are justified and accounted righteous before God by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. If you have faith, it will make you do the works or it will qualify you to do good works.

However, the simple response that we are justified by faith or that justification is by faith alone, as expressed by some clergy, without referring to God's word of promise of grace, which is an important aspect of SDA theology, is not enough. These kinds of expressions reflect the lack of proper

understanding of the doctrine, and this would then filter down to the laity. Their responses are also capable of giving the impression that justification is as a result of a synergy of faith and works since the point that justification is only through faith is not emphasized or explained sufficiently. According to Paul Althaus (1996), these simple statements are not enough; one needs to be more precise. He says, "It is not enough, to say either that faith receives justification, or, that man receives justification in faith. By stating that faith is the work and gift of God Althaus means that faith receives the gift of God's grace which justifies, and this faith is also a gift from God. Therefore, one could say that faith and justification are inseparable since they are all gifts from God. Furthermore, it is only faith that receives justification because it trusts and depends on what has already been worked out by Jesus Christ not works or the law.

The responses of the clergy reveal the following: first, some clergy are still struggling with understanding the doctrine. As one of them put it: "it is easy to mention but not easy to explain ... the challenge I am faced with is how to develop or translate this doctrine so that the local people will understand it. I find this statement quite revealing because if one cannot communicate the meaning of a concept, it means that one has not understood the concept. That is why C. S. Lewis says, "I have concluded that if you cannot translate your thoughts into uneducated language, then your thoughts are confused. Power to translate is the test of having understood your meaning" (Lewis in McGrath 2010). Thus, in the light of what Lewis says, the above response seems to me to be a modest way of admitting that one lacks a proper understanding of the doctrine. Second, the clergy are not properly equipped to translate and to

critically engage with this doctrine. They seem not to have the resources to tackle such a translation into understandable language and meaningful messages. What then are the views of the seminary lecturers, as those who trained these clergy?

The seminary lecturers are entrusted with the responsibility of forming the church's clergy, who in turn instruct the laity on the Christian faith. The responses of the seminary lecturers were similar in meaning but differ in their wordings or expressions. For instance, a lecturer said, "Just means to be made righteous or right with God by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ alone." Another said, "It means a Christian is justified by faith in God alone not works coming from human effort, but benefits from God's grace." Collaborating on this issue, another said, "human beings are justified not by personal merit but by grace through faith in Christ alone."

Giving a historical background, one lecturer's reply was that, "The doctrine of justification is an Old Testament teaching re-echoed by prophet Habakkuk, St. Paul and Martin Luther. It simply means we are fallen creatures that need to be made righteous. The process of becoming righteous once again happened through the blood of Christ that was shed on the cross appropriated by faith not works."

The responses of the seminary lecturers revealed the following: first, they are clear in their responses of what they understand by justification by faith alone as well about the SDA's official understanding. Second, the official understanding of the church is theological but is not reflected in practice. According to one lecturer, "... there is hardly any correct affirmation of grace as against works in the church."

However, if the understanding, in theory, is at variance with its practical application and affirmation, then it means the understanding is incomplete. Practical application can address practical concerns of the people, which the theory alone cannot do. In the words of Theodor Dieter (2009), "Luther's doctrine of justification is of relevance here because it specifically addresses this concern for wholeness. God's way of seeing encompasses the whole person...". This concern for the whole person (the physical, emotional, and spiritual aspects) can only be possible when theory and praxis are integrated, but according to my respondents, this integration is not happening in the SDA. The Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWOT) which met in Dar es Salaam in 1976 expressed its dissatisfaction with this type of theological exercise in the final statement thus: "We reject as irrelevant an academic type of theology that is divorced from action. We are prepared for a radical break in epistemology which makes commitment the first act of theology and engages in critical reflection on the reality of the Third world" (Torres and Fabella 1978; see also Kalilombe 1999). It is when these two vital concepts of commitment and critical reflection are put together that theory and praxis will gain proper integration in people's practical realities.

The lay members interviewed fall within two categories: two seminary students and three ordinary Church members. With the seminary students in both individual interviews and focus group discussions the responses were that justification is by God's grace appropriated by faith, not by any deed, power, or knowledge. It is through the blood of Jesus Christ shed on the cross that people have been restored to fellowship with God.

Unlike the responses from the seminary students, responses from lay church members were varied, some did know the basic meaning of the doctrine, while others did not, as expressed in these responses below.

Two responses from lay members convey the message that there is a lack of proper understanding of this doctrine among members. The first respondent said; through faith one is saved, but I would like to add that one must add works to faith to be justified. The other respondent said, "not through faith alone but together with works one is justified". Yet another respondent, during a focus group discussion, said, "Faith alone can never justify for faith cannot stand alone. Faith is the foundation and work is the building. We are justified by faith but for it to be complete works are important. The Women ministries members were also divided in their understanding of this doctrine as expressed during the focus group discussion. One of the two women ministries' members thought that justification is by faith alone while the other one held that it is by faith and works. The situation was similar for the other groups, namely three Adventist Men ministries members and two Youth ministries members.

Responses from the laity revealed the following: first, according to some respondents, on one hand, justification is by faith and works; therefore, the statement justification by faith alone is not correct. Second, according to others, indeed justification is by faith alone. Even though justification by faith does not rule out the significance of works, many of the responses tend to elevate works above faith with regards to the subject of justification. What do the respondents mean when they say that justification is by faith and works? Do they see faith as the instrument of justification; while works are its evidence? If, however they see works from the perspective of earning salvation as they

tend to suggest, then their understanding is not properly formed. In the words of one of the respondents, "the laity is not well informed because of this issue borders on theology. For one to understand this doctrine there is a need for the church (SDAC) and its pastors to develop a good Bible study material for the instruction of the laity."

These responses raise the following questions: what informs these responses by the various groups and individuals: is it how the church transmits the message of justification to them; is it to do with the practices of the church; or is it connected to their cultural world view? Do these responses reflect the understanding of the church or they are at variance with it? To attempt to answer this question I now turn to what my respondents think the church understands by Righteousness/justification by faith alone.

Responses on the SDAC official understanding of the doctrine

The responses of the church leaders on the understanding of righteousness by faith are that justification is by grace through faith in the atoning death of Christ on the cross for humanity. However, one leader said, "The SDA understanding is shallow and tends towards emphasizing works. This is due to lack of proper teaching; even some the baptismal classes are handled by laity who lack proper understanding and have no theological background. This was corroborated by another leader who added that "The church (SDA) has a problem letting people know and understand this doctrine, this is evident in the fact that they continue to live in fear of death. Most of our members do not understand this doctrine."

From the responses of the church leaders on the church's understanding of this doctrine, the following points can be drawn: first, it is evident that the

emphasis of the church's understanding is on faith in the death of Christ rather than works of merit. Second, there is also a lack of satisfaction with the way the doctrine is presented to members and with how they, in turn, appropriate it. Since the church is not managing to transmit the meaning and implications of this doctrine to its members well, what then do other sectors other than the leadership of the church hold of the church's understanding of righteousness by faith alone? To attempt to answer this question, the views of these other sectors are crucial. First, I look at the responses of the seminary lecturers in this regard.

The lecturers are divided in their responses on the church's understanding. For instance, one lecturer said the understanding of the church is that: "Justification is by faith alone apart from works of merit. We are saved by believing in God's gracious gift to us through Christ not works." Another lecturer responded.

In principle, the understanding of the church is grace and faith-centered, but in practice that is not the case; because there is hardly any correct affirmation of grace as against works in the church. Certain practices of the church; how it disciplines and exclude people from the Eucharist and other practices suggest that we are justified by faith and works almost on the same level with scripture.

The responses of the seminary lecturers show the following: first, in their view, the church's understanding is that justification is by faith, not works or synergy of faith and works. Second, the practical appropriation of this understanding is at variance with the church's stance. Third, some practices of the SDAC do not facilitate a proper understanding of this doctrine, since they tend to suggest a faith and works dimension of justification.

Most of the clergy interviewed stated that the understanding of the church is that we are justified by God's grace through faith in the death of Christ on the cross for our sins. One clergy said, "The church's understanding is that God's grace is the sole means for the remission of the sins of guilty humankind and we appropriate this by believing what Christ has done on our behalf not by works of merit." Corroborating, another clergy remarked that, "without the work of Christ on the cross no one can be saved; works and morality aside, rather we appropriate God's gift by faith in Christ alone." However, one clergy respondent asserted, "The church understands justification by faith to mean participating in church activities and being obedient to Jesus who alone died for us."

The responses of the clergy on the church's understanding of this doctrine revealed the following: first, that justification is by faith in the redemptive death of Christ. Second, that justification is not by faith alone. This is evident in the response of one clergy who said, "Justification by faith means participating in church activities and being obedient to Jesus who alone died for us." This response confirms what a church leader and one of the lecturers said, namely that the understanding of the SDAC is shallow and there is hardly any correct affirmation of grace as against works in the church. This further confirms two things: first, that even the clergy are struggling with their understanding of this doctrine; and second, that there is a failure on the part of the SDAC to transmit the message of justification by faith alone to the church members. From this, it could also be argued that, if the clergy have difficulty understanding the doctrine, it follows then the situation among the laity will be even more problematic.

The responses from the laity on the SDAC's understanding of justification by faith alone are varied: some said the church's understanding is that justification is indeed by faith alone while others said it is by faith and works. For example, a participant in the Women ministries focuses group discussion stated that "The two-work hand in hand, faith without works is dead; you cannot separate the two when you do faith becomes barren. Justification is 50% faith and 50% works." Some members of the Adventist Men Ministries (AMM) also share similar views, expressed thus, "It means doing God's work. Faith through works will make one justified." Another, however, said, "It means one cannot be saved by works except through believing in God alone, not by works." The situation in another group, the Adventist Youth Ministries (AYM) was also similar: some posited that the church's understanding is that justification is by faith, while others argued that it is by faith and works. What this study discovered from the responses of the laity is that; first, there are varied opinions on what the understanding of justification is, some said it is by faith alone while others said it is by faith and works. Second, these responses indicate that the participants do not have an informed knowledge of this doctrine.

What are some of the reasons for this lack of understanding? Could it be linked to people's cultural world view? Or to put it differently, are they struggling to understand the realities of their identity - who they are as Christians?

Transmission of the knowledge of the doctrine to members

Responses on resources, means, and method of transmission

The general opinion among church leaders was that there are resources to help the elders and the Pastors in transmitting the church's faith to its

members, some of them are; the Holy Bible (Scripture), fundamental beliefs of SDA Church, Church manual, Sabbath school Bible study guide and other books from Ellen G White, however, from the data gathered, it exposed the lack of in-depth teachings and studies of the doctrine which has resulted in the knowing and understanding of the exegetical meaning of the theme of the text under study. The church relies solely on general Sabbath school study guide but unfortunately, the doctrine of righteousness by faith which happens to be one of the beliefs of the church, not mount regularly in the study guide but it can only be found in the majority of Adventist's books, such as; the SDA Bible Commentary, Spirit of Prophecy, the Book of Concordance, pamphlets, fundamental beliefs, church manual, etc., but they are even written in the English language. These resources are even scarce and have not been translated into local languages. One elder of the church said, "The medium of communication is Ghanaian language, mostly 'Twi' but such doctrine has not been reduced into the local language writings. For now, there are no resources available at the disposal of church members on the doctrine of justification by faith alone in the local dialect, therefore, "without these documents there can be no proper understanding of justification by faith alone; because these documents provide good explanations on the subject," said another leader.

The seminary lecturers concurred with the position of the church leaders on the issue of resources. One respondent said, "I doubt if there are enough documents - we only have rehearsed statements, but none deals with the subjects of righteousness by faith in the local dialect. However, some of the important personalities of the church pointed to the availability of some local

resources, referring to the church manual, the Bible and fundamental beliefs of the church, SDA Bible commentary, and other Ellen White Books.

Some of the Pastors also agreed that there are very scanty documents locally available that address Adventist beliefs including righteousness by faith alone in Christ. However, the vernacular trained elders and the Pastors who are equally good in the local dialect said there are local resources for the transmission of this doctrine. When asked to give some examples they mentioned the Bible, church manual, Hymn Book, and daily devotionals (Sabbath school study guide) as resources.

The thrust of these responses is focused on resources and methods of presentation. These provide pointers to the kind of theological education provided in the church. Regarding the issue of resources, most respondents argued that there are no or few local resources available and that even the general Adventist resources are not readily accessible or even useful in transmitting the tenets of the faith to church members. Hence, some asserted that without these documents there can be no proper understanding of doctrine because they are needed to provide clear and correct explanations on this doctrinal teaching. As for the means and methods, teaching and preaching are employed in the church, as well as Sabbath school and baptismal classes, Bible studies, and seminars to transmit knowledge of the doctrine to members. However, some of the respondents complained that these means and methods are not effective due to lack of resources, as well as a lack of commitment from pastors and members and language barriers. On the latter point, a few clergy members said that using the vernacular for teaching was very effective, especially with the older people, but that they no longer employ the vernacular

because it is too demanding on them. Others blame the low level of training and seminars for church elders in that effect. For instance, a respondent said. The level of training and seminars offer for church elders are very low in terms of Adventist beliefs; therefore, the ordinary church elders who are not properly trained through workshops, seminars, etc., are not adequately informed which results in the very limited output. If the elders who are on the frontline do not have a good understanding and the total grip of the doctrine, the teachings in the local churches will just be a brush over with little or no impact.

Summary

The data revealed among other things that: a) there is lack of proper knowledge of the doctrine among members, b) the theological education program of the SDAC is somehow purely ministerial oriented, c) there is lack of contextual approach in the teachings of the doctrine of righteousness by faith, d) there is a lack of adequate teaching resources including qualified personnel, e) there is a lack of the local language printed material on the teachings of the righteousness by faith in the church and f) there is an insufficient commitment from the SDAC in transmitting its beliefs and practices to the grassroots. As a result of all these factors, there is an increasing gap or even a clear contradiction between theory and praxis, formal and informal learning in the lives of SDAC members about the doctrine of justification by faith alone.

The doctrine of righteousness by faith alone in Christ has suffered from an improper understanding by the majority of the church members, since the inception of the church. As such, many works have been written to correct some

of these misconceptions. The effort put into these works has helped in some ways, but the problem persists.

Conclusion

The Church members approach to the understanding of the text under study does not mean that the subject is uninteresting; rather it is as a result of many factors, one of which is that it does not naturally fit into what the existing worldview and experience of the people, because it has no provision for their active participation. Hence, there is a need for continued attempts in search of fresh insights that will help enhance the understanding of this doctrine by the ordinary people.

However, the official position of the SDAC church which it subscribes to is that righteousness by faith is from start to finish and act of God's grace to humankind through the redemptive work of Christ and is appropriated by faith alone in Christ (Fundamental Beliefs of SDAC, 2006). The doctrine of justification by faith alone is faith rather than works centered; nor is it a synergy of faith and works. Any form of work arising from the justified is seen as an expression of gratitude and a demonstration of one's love for God and humanity (Luther LW 34, 1960).

The role of the local dialect in communication and enhancing comprehension of the message is enormous. Through the process of translation and contextualization, the message of the gospel becomes easily accessible to the receiving audience. Therefore, through the use of local language and careful translation of the Christian faith into the relevant everyday language of the ordinary people, an informed understanding of justification by faith alone could be enhanced. This approach is vital for developing grassroots theology.

The inadequate knowledge of the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ among members is indicative that, they have not been taught properly. The responsibility of teaching the members the beliefs and practices of the SDAC lies with the church. Because it is the church that develops the training programs for the training of its ministers and laity and them in turn assigned to minister to the needs (including education) of their members at the grassroots.

PART TWO: APPROPRIATION OF THE TEXT

Introduction

This is the last pillar of the exegetical model of Draper. It is the moment of appropriation of the text under study in the light of the context of the reader/s which implies praxis (Speckman and Kaufman, 2001).

Therefore, appropriation is the time when both the message of the selected text and that of the readers, in other words, the community of faith come together to bring out new understanding and consciousness which Drapper (2008) has coined as "the other self" (Drapper, 2008, p.53). This facilitates the transformational process of the individual in the reading community by living to the standard of the informed decision of the exegesis of the text. In this section, an investigation of the impact of the doctrine of justification by faith alone on members will be made. In the second subheading, a discussion on the challenges that are associated with transmitting, understanding, and appropriating this doctrine will be presented.

Responses on the assessment of the impact of the doctrine on the life of the church members

Most of the responses from the church leaders indicated that the impact of the doctrine of righteousness by faith in the text on the life of church members is very minimal. A respondent said “there is less impact because most members do not understand the doctrine. Some members are more of nominal Christians than genuine. There is a need for concerted efforts towards teaching.” Corroborating this, another respondent said, “The few who understand the doctrine can easily be identified; they have committed Christians and are actively involved in church activities, while those who do not understand misappropriate salvation by grace, using it as a license for laxity.” However, another church leader argued that it has impacted them positively because “it creates the desire for the love of neighbor as a fellow human being.”

The responses of the ordinary church members, like that of the church leaders, were varied: some were of the view that there are misconceptions about the doctrine among members which led them to conceptualize justification by works, not faith, while others held that it has impacted them positively. One respondent out-rightly opined that: “it has not impacted them because their Christian life is still works centered rather than faith-centered.”

The problem with these responses on the impact of the doctrine on the life of members is that they were not explicit in terms of what they meant by positive impact and or no impact, even after probing them further on this.

The impact of the doctrine on the life of members as observed by the clergy was viewed as both positive and negative. Some of the elders responded that.

The impact is both positive and negative. On the positive side, it elicits a life of forgiveness in those who understand it properly. On the other hand, it is abused rather than being appreciated because of a lack of proper understanding as it is used as an excuse for the freedom to do what they like. However, it is clear that most members have a good impression of this doctrine, what is left is how to educate them so that they can have a proper informed understanding because this doctrine has become a pillar and fortress of the church.

The view that the doctrine has suffered abuse was supported by another church elder who said, "Some members argue that God's grace is sufficient for them, therefore, they live a carefree lifestyle." This negative appropriation of justification is what St. Paul condemns by asking, "Should we continue to sin that grace may abound?" (Romans 6:1). According to Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1948) holding such a view amounts to cheap grace, which means "the justification of sin without the justification of the sinner". This attitude is at variance with what grace truly means. Bonhoeffer further posits that, "... the world finds a cheap covering for its sins; no contrition is required, still less any real desire to be delivered from sin" (1948), all because of its wrong perception of grace. Bonhoeffer argues that grace is costly, it costs God the death of Christ, and therefore, there is no such thing as cheap grace. Do the Pastors of the church share the same view with the elders about the impact of righteousness by faith alone on members?

Some clergy are of the view that the doctrine has impacted the lives of members positively. A clergy member in her response said, "It helps them relate well with people of other faiths and are willing to share their Christian faith with others. They are committed and enthusiastic about their faith." In agreement with this, another clergy said, "It serves as a rule of conduct in their relationships outside the church." However, one clergy was of the view that the doctrine has not impacted the lives of members.

The responses of the clergy revealed that: first, it is either the clergy that have not paid proper attention to how the doctrine has impacted the lives of members; or they have not taken time to educate their members properly. Second, there was no clear response as to what could be categorized as a positive or negative impact apart from the comment that some members abuse grace. What do the members think of the impact of this doctrine on their lives?

The responses of members on the impact of the doctrine on their lives are mostly relational. A member of the Adventist youth ministries (AYM) responded that "This doctrine has impacted my life positively; it has opened my mind to trust and depend on God in every situation I find myself." A section of the women participants from the Women Ministries group responded: "It helps create a healthy relationship with neighbors and makes them forgive when offended" and, "It has helped me to trust in God rather than my effort as it removes doubts. I am more hopeful than before. Some of the student pastors from the focus group discussion said.

The doctrine of justification by faith alone has helped prepare me for the challenges of the world. It has opened my eyes to see the folly of relying

on my efforts. Draws me to the need for daily praying to know more of what God requires of me.

The responses of members on the impact of the doctrine on their lives are that it has made a positive impact on their lives. This position is contrary to that held by the church leadership. Various respondents, apart from those of the laity opined that the doctrine has made little or no positive impact on the life of members because, as they argue, most members do not understand the doctrine. They also felt that this is due to misconceptions about the doctrine which leads to work centeredness. Some said the doctrine has impacted the lives of members negatively as they abuse and use it as an excuse for loose life and sometimes feel disappointed and eventually leave the church. However, the laity and a few other respondents said that the doctrine has impacted the lives of members positively and that it elicits a life of forgiveness in them in response to their being forgiven by God through Christ.

These responses reveal: first, a feeling of dissatisfaction with the impact of the doctrine on the life of members from both the leaders of the church and the clergy. This is to be expected though, given their earlier responses which revealed that there is a lack of an informed understanding of this doctrine among members. Second, it was further pointed out that there is little commitment on the part of the church and its clergy in instructing the church members; and because of that, the clergy may not be very keenly observing the impact of the doctrine on the life of their members. Third, the clergy and the church elders who have been entrusted with the responsibility of instructing the members may be facing other particular challenges. What then could be the factors responsible for this situation? What are some of the challenges

associated with the transmission and appropriation of the doctrine of justification by faith alone?

Responses on the challenges involved with the doctrine of justification by faith alone

Challenges related to the transmission of this doctrine

The people who are directly involved with imparting the knowledge of the Christian faith are the Pastors, lecturers, and elders of the church, therefore, the question on challenges associated with the transmission of the doctrine was directed to them. Their responses showed that there are many challenges involved, the key ones are those presented here.

Some lecturers in their responses focused on the challenges they face in trying to teach their students, while others focused on the attitude of the students. Those who were concerned with how to teach the doctrine mentioned the following as challenges.

Commenting on the attitude of students towards what is taught, a lecturer said, "There is no coherence between theory and practice. Because some students do not believe in what is taught, as such there is no proper transformation in their lives."

In their responses, the clergy enumerated several challenges that affect their effort in teaching members of the doctrine. Most of them said that a lack of resources and language barriers are the major challenges. A clergy said, "After reading some concepts in English one has to translate these into Hausa, then the local dialect and in the process, the original meaning of the concept is lost." Another clergy member also added a low educational level of members and inadequate personnel as additional challenges. He said;

My training has all along been in English, so it is difficult to translate some concepts into the vernacular and teach them properly. I am faced with two levels of crisis regarding how to handle this doctrine. It is difficult to use relevant vocabulary. Also, the educational level of some of the church members, even some of the church elders is very low. Another challenge is the lack of personnel; the numbers of congregations assigned to one pastor are many for one person to manage effectively.

My focus here with regards to the challenges is on the transmission of the doctrine by the ministers of the church and on how to facilitate the understanding and appropriation of the doctrine by the church members. Some clergy also have a problem with understanding the cultural world view of the people, which is why they find it difficult to translate the concepts from English into the local language and teach them properly. Another challenge the clergy are faced with is the size of their area of jurisdiction due to insufficiently trained readers. This is further compounded by the low educational level of the congregants.

Challenges related to the appropriation of this doctrine

The members also have challenges in connection with this doctrine, as expressed by some of them during my study. The major challenge members are faced with about this doctrine is lack of resources. The responses from the focus group discussion with the s pastors and the elders dealt with the issue of understanding and appropriating the doctrine. A respondent said, "My major challenge is how to appropriate this doctrine in real critical or practical life situations especially coming to a context that lays much emphasis on the reward for hard work. Contributing to the discussion another said, "my challenge is

how to embrace both grace and law without neglecting any yet depending on God's grace that justifies as the only means of salvation, not my merit.”

The church members on their part have a lack of resources and a problem with how to appropriate the doctrine in their cultural context as their major challenges. This was stated thus by one respondent, who said her challenge is “Lack of resources and how to appropriate the meaning of justification in critical life situation.

This partly confirms what some clergy said regarding the knowledge of the doctrine among lay members as well as its impact on them. That is why some respondents asserted that only the clergy know the doctrine and that it has only impacted the lives of the clergy.

Most lay members lack proper knowledge of their culture and some cannot even read in their local language due to the influence of either the English. This is evident in their responses especially concerning their local language. Language is an important aspect of culture; therefore, if they cannot read in their local language, then, it means that they cannot understand their culture as well. Martin Luther as quoted by Carl E. Braaten (2007) acknowledges the place of language in transmitting the Christian faith. Luther says, "We will not long preserve the gospel without the languages. The languages are the sheath in which this sword of the Spirit is contained" (Luther in Braaten 2007). Given the above challenges, what then is the people's assessment of the church's interpretation of the doctrine?

Assessment of the church's (S.D.A.C.) interpretation of the doctrine

In their responses, most of the church leaders stated that the church's interpretation of the doctrine of justification by faith alone is sound, but

expressed dissatisfaction with its impact on the life of members. They also blamed for this on a lack of teaching. One respondent said;

The church's interpretation is scripturally based but at variance with practical life. It is in agreement with official confessional documents though members lack a proper understanding of these documents due to lack of teaching. It is preached but not lived.

Another leader in his response said, "The church's interpretation promotes Christian spirituality though it suffers from inadequate presentation because it is not given adequate attention by the church and the clergy; hence, it affects members'" Christian spirituality negatively."

Since most of the complaints from the church leaders are pointed in the direction of teaching, what is the view of the pastors and the elders who the front lines with regards to the church's interpretation since these two groups are directly responsible for teaching in the church?

The Pastors agreed that the church's interpretation of the doctrine is scripturally based and is sound, but they expressed dissatisfaction with the way it is presented to members. They pointed to a lack of literature as the cause for the failure to develop a proper understanding of the doctrine among members.

The general impression among the clergy who were interviewed was that the church's interpretation of the doctrine is good; however, lack of literature and its appropriation by members in practical life situations constitute the major challenges.

A clergy said, "The interpretation is faithful to Scripture but its application in practical life by members is faulty and there is no strong emphasis on it by the church. Only the clergy understand and benefit from the

interpretation." Another respondent, focusing on whether the doctrine promotes Christian spirituality or not said, "It has weakened some people's Christian spirituality especially those who do not understand the doctrine well. Some people are saying they have been saved by works while others are saying by grace through faith. To some extent, this doctrine has encouraged people to indulge in sin."

The onus of the argument has been that lack of teaching is responsible for the ignorance of members of this doctrine. Therefore, it is to be expected that the seminary (VVU) students who are taught theology will have a better understanding of this doctrine and will be familiar with the official stand of the church stated in the fundamental beliefs and the church manual.

Summary

The data presented maintains that the church's interpretation is scripturally based. However, it is of the view that the doctrine has suffered from inadequate presentation because it has not been given adequate attention. This has partly contributed to the negative impact that the teaching has on the life of the church members.

It is of interest to know that the church leaders, seminary lecturers, and the clergy (Pastors) were all aware that the doctrine of justification by faith has not been adequately presented, but the question is, what are they doing to address the situation? The mere acknowledgment of the existence of a problem without taking deliberate action to address them is like diagnosing a disease without prescribing medication for it.

Conclusion

This chapter examined the data generated from respondents during individual interviews and focus group discussions. The responses are diverse due to the educational level of the respondents as well as their various kinds of engagement in the church. The discussions touched on the following themes: knowledge of the doctrine; gospel versus cultural world view of the people; resources and means of transmission; policy on theological education; the impact of the doctrine; challenges associated with understanding and appropriation; and assessment of the church's interpretation. The findings from this chapter are as follows:

First, the knowledge of the doctrine of justification by faith alone is limited among members as compared to the clergy. Even though the leadership of the church and clergy seem to have a better understanding, this is not reflected in the lives of their members, suggesting that they have not adequately transferred their knowledge of the doctrine to the laity. Consequently, there is a lack of proper application, leading to a negative rather than positive impact of the doctrine on the life of members.

Secondly, the methods employed for the transmission of knowledge are not contextual and therefore not very effective. This is exacerbated by the language barrier as some members cannot read understand either the local language or English. Some of the clergy (ministers of the church) too cannot express fluently in the local language. Another issue is lack of learning resources such as books, which means that the members totally depend on what they get from their pastors and none of them is written in the local language as far as the righteousness by faith is concerned. Generally, the fieldwork revealed

that the church's interpretation of the doctrine of justification by faith alone is not clear and this has affected its understanding by members.

At this point, it is pertinent to consider how the church can address these challenges to provide an interpretation of the doctrine that is both relevant and life-transforming. The next chapter will recommend the possible ways of achieving this for the way forward.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

Justification by faith alone is not a threat to morality, but the sworn foe of all forms of self-justification (Wright, 2016).

The previous chapter examined data from the fieldwork to assess the knowledge of the text in the context of SDA Church, Ghana and the appropriation which is the final stage of the Tri-Polar model employed for the study. Therefore, this current chapter five brings the entire thesis to an end by looking at the summary, findings, conclusions and recommendations.

Summary

The main concern of this study is to research the theme of Romans 1:16-17 and its appropriation in the SDA Church in Ghana. The target area of this study revolves on the three pillars developed by Jonathan Draper, (2001) which are:

- i. Distantiation of the selected text
- ii. Contextualizing the text in terms of SDA Church's understanding of righteousness by faith alone in Christ as the main theme of the text.
- iii. Appropriation of the main text under study which explores the practical applications of the doctrine of justification by faith alone in the SDA Church.

Hence, the study is divided into five chapters. The first chapter discussed the background information of the study including the statement of the research problem, objectives of the study, research questions, the purpose of the study, the research design and methodology, scope of the study, the

significance of the study, delimitation, and organization of the whole work. The review of the scholarly works covered the main theme of the text, thus, righteousness by faith alone in Christ which in extension covered the stands of Martin Luther and St Augustine. The review also captured some of the SDA scholarly writings on righteousness by faith. For instance, the review considered Romans 1:16-32 as my periscope of the entire structure of the book of Romans which later landed on the selected portion of text. The study revealed that for a proper interpretation of the text in regards to justification by faith, the SDAC's understanding of the text needs to be considered. This means that contextualization is crucial since it facilitates the transmission and interpretation of justification by faith alone for a better and deeper understanding.

Having understood the role of contextualization in arriving at an informed understanding and interpretation of justification by faith alone, the second chapter was devoted to discussing the distantiation of the selected text, thus, the exegetical reading of Romans: 16-17. From the exegesis, the good news is that, the power of God to offer salvation to both the Jew and Greek, to all who believe, for it is righteous who will live by faith. In that, God's righteousness has been revealed to the people of God, since they are unashamed of its power for salvation, thus the righteous will live by faith in Jesus Christ alone.

Chapter three dealt with the background of the SDA Church which entails the foundational experience of SDA Beliefs, the Mission and Vision of the Church and finally, the fundamental beliefs of SDA Church.

The fourth chapter briefly discussed the contextualization and appropriation of the selected text. The church teaches that a person is justified by grace through faith in Christ Jesus, not by works. However, from the fieldwork, the data showed that it is only in theory; in practice, the church seems to lay more emphasis on works thereby pushing grace to the background. This confused position leaves members uncertain and unclear as to what the church's actual interpretation of the doctrine of justification is. Appropriation as the final stage of the tri-polar method. This portion is purely concerned with the practical aspects of the study namely the experiences of the people as expressed by the participants in this study, during both the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, etc. The chapter presented the way the text is understood and appropriated in their day to day lives, thus, how SDAC understands the justification by faith and practice in their daily lives. The chapter also discovered that a proper understanding of justification by faith alone is one that is wrought through practical application and life experience; or one that is experiential. From this perspective, theology becomes, "an interrelated account of the whole experience of faith" (Schreier, 1993). This understanding is also expressed by St. Paul, St. Augustine, and Luther in their teaching, writings, and preaching, as reported by scholars discussed in chapter one.

Chapter five is the conclusion part of the study. The chapter highlighted the insights and discussions that have emerged from the study. In addition to answering the research question, some signposts for future research are identified and the way forward in addressing the challenges is proposed. The chapter summarizes the study. It goes on by stating the research findings, draws

general conclusions, and finally points out recommendations based on the study. The summary of the study tries to carve out the salient points each chapter handled. Hence, it gives a clue and prepares the ground for the findings.

Findings

Research findings are the principal outcome of the research project, what the project suggested, revealed, or indicated. This usually refers to the totality of outcomes, rather than the conclusion or recommendation drawn from them (Google search, QAR, 2013). Findings don't come out spontaneously and isolation but they depict the objectives of the study which relate to the interpretation of the text, i.e. distanciation, contextualization, and appropriation of the text.

The data revealed among other things that:

- a. There is a lack of proper knowledge and understanding of the doctrine of righteousness by faith among some of the members.
- b. There is a lack of contextual approach in the teachings of the doctrine of righteousness by faith alone in Christ.
- c. There is a lack of adequate teaching resources in the local languages and qualified personnel.
- d. There is an insufficient commitment from the Church in transmitting the righteousness by faith alone in Christ and its practices to the church members. As a result of all these factors, there is an increasing gap or even a clear contradiction between theory and praxis in the lives of the SDA church members about the doctrine of justification by faith alone.

The Text (Distantiation)

The letter to the Romans was a discourse between Paul and the house churches in Rome. The discourse was necessitated by the dichotomy between the Gentiles and the Jews. The concept of "not ashamed" in verse 16a used by Paul was on the bases that, he drew his reason from the previous verses 14 and 15 using the conjunction 'gar'. Paul, a Jewish believer, begins the thesis of his letter to the other Jewish and gentile believers in Rome, with the connecting conjunction γὰρ in verse 16. From the exegesis of the text, it was unveiled that, the reader of the text must keep in mind that it is a continuation of thought from verses 14 and 15, where Paul says that he is not only willing but eager to share τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, which was given to him. Also, Paul does not just reference the fact that this is some generic good news coming from God, but he uses the *par excellence* article τὸ, which distinguishes it from any other εὐαγγέλιον, and declares that "it is the only one deserving of the name." Therefore, Paul is not just simply stating that this is good news, he is laying out that this is *the* good news that the Prophets spoke of long ago (1:2-3), concerning Jesus Christ, "who is its sum and substance." Paul was alluding to the fact that it would be a temptation to be ashamed of the gospel for every believer in every generation. Paul was speaking to a Greco-Roman cultural value in "honour" and "shame." With such a magnitude of interpretive options, it is probably the case that Paul would have been referring to several of these when he used the term. But, even with multiple interpretive options, it should be noted that Paul used a word that held a significant cultural meaning for the Greeks and a historical relevant term for Jewish believers, giving the reason for why he was not only eager to share

the good news with those in Rome but wanted to encourage other believers (gentiles) to share in his eagerness.

Just as Paul used the conjunction $\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$ in the previous clause to show its dependency on verse 15, he uses it again in 16b as *causal conjunction* to expound on the grounds for why he is not ashamed in 16a. Thus, saying he is not ashamed of the good news because it not only contains the power of God, but it is God's power. Paul is unashamed to share the gospel because it came to his people first. His priority as a Jew makes him eager to share the gospel and bless the nations. So, Paul is eager to share the good news because he was so thoroughly convinced of the truth of the gospel and because he has so fully experienced its blessing and power in his own life and he attests to it.

In verse 17, just like in 16b, Paul continues the layout of his thesis with another *causal conjunction* $\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$ that continues his argument for why he is not ashamed of the gospel, as he writes in 16a. In this way, he writes that he is not ashamed of the good news because it is God's power to save, and because by it, the righteousness of God is revealed from His faithfulness.

Paul writes that the good news is instrumental in the revelation of the righteousness of God. Paul's use of the word $\alpha\pi\omicron\kappa\alpha\lambda\upsilon\pi\tau\epsilon\tau\alpha\iota$ for reason being that he is not ashamed, because it is not something that comes from man, but from God. This builds on his previous argument that it is the power of God, in that, God's faithfulness to Israel is substantiated in His people and shows how it is now available to the unbelievers by faith.

Finally, the study of the text suggests that Paul is attempting to bring everyone (both Jews and Gentiles and for our modern times everyone who believes in Jesus Christ alone without any strict observance of a particular law)

under one faith, and in doing so, the distinction and priority of the Jew are lost and salvation has been given to everyone who believes in Jesus Christ as it is written, the just shall live by faith. So, Paul is not ashamed of the gospel, because it is God's power for salvation to the Jews and then all other nations.

Contextualization of the text

In this regard, the contextualization of the text helped the study groups and interviewees especially. They realized that the text they read and any other biblical text can be contextualized to address challenges and problems that Christians encounter.

The study group relates their understanding of the text to their contextual interpretations. The doctrine of justification by faith alone is faith rather than works centered; nor is it a synergy of faith and works? The group contextualized their understanding of the justification by faith through Jesus and work as to expressing one's gratitude to a kind gesture bestowed upon some. Thus, any form of work arising from the justified is seen as an expression of gratitude and a demonstration of one's love for God and humanity (Luther, 1960). It is not an extra requirement for the completion of one's justification. It meant faith together with works. The situation today in the SDAC is not different from that of Luther's context. The responses of some members reveal that their understanding of this doctrine is that of a synergy of works and faith as discussed in the previous chapter. Justification is predicated on the idea of atonement or propitiation. Other acts that are central to justification by faith alone are redemption, forgiveness, and reconciliation. About justification, these acts provide another opportunity for renewal and restoration. Similarly, these concepts are also crucial in the Ghanaian tradition (propitiation). That is, if you

offend someone, you have to seek for someone with high esteem to plead on your behalf through propitiation before you are justified. Through this practice, the offender is forgiven, and reconciled or reintegrated. The practice conveys three things related to the doctrine of justification by faith alone;

Firstly, the person believes that what was done on his or her behalf has settled the debt owed. Secondly, the person contributed nothing to make the redemption that was acquired through, but simply benefits from the result; that is, pardon and acquittal (justification). Thirdly, once the redeemed person is pardoned, he or she is expected to show gratitude to the benefactor in words and good living. This appreciation contributes nothing to the process of the redemption; rather, it helps in enhancing the relationship between the redeemed and the benefactor.

The understanding was made clear by the members that, Christians are, therefore, not under the law but the grace through faith in Jesus Christ. That is, salvation is by grace through faith alone in Christ.

In the same vein, when one turns to the doctrine of justification by faith alone, one could see that it is built on the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, namely, his sacrificial death on the cross which satisfied God's justice and thereafter grants pardon and the acquittal of the sinner. It is important to note here that, in the case of justification by faith, the redemptive work of Christ is not repetitive, it is a once for all event.

However, teaching and interpreting the bible in the local languages are very necessary tools for understanding, transmitting, and appropriating the Christian faith, in which the doctrine of justification by faith is central. The SDAC has not taken these three elements; understanding, appropriating, and

transmitting seriously, as expressed by some respondents during this study. The SDAC started with a similar attitude to that of Luther, but as it grew, it abandoned the practice of utilizing the local ordinary language in communicating the gospel; as a result, a large segment of the ordinary people is not catered for in most branches of the church as far as the doctrine of righteousness by faith is concerned.

Finally, the responses from the respondents revealed that both translation and the use of mother tongue in teaching and preaching have been relegated to the background in the SDAC. This attitude of the church has huge consequences on the life of its members when it comes to understanding and appropriating the beliefs and practices of the church. One of the effects of this neglect of local language in the life of the church is manifested in the members “inadequate knowledge of justification by faith alone. Considering the role of mother tongue in communication, a re-engagement with this issue will help to create an informed understanding of the church’s beliefs and practices; and will also enable the church to better meet the spiritual needs of the people, especially the elderly and uneducated members who have problems understanding English.

Therefore, through the use of local language and careful translation of the Christian faith into the relevant everyday language of the ordinary people, an informed understanding of justification by faith alone could be enhanced. This approach is vital for developing grassroots theology.

Appropriation in the Ghanaian Context

The justified in turn claims or appropriates this gift of propitiation that grants justification by faith. Thereafter, in appreciation, the justified live a life

of gratitude, not to pay back or to complete the process of redemption/justification, but as a practical testimony of a change that occurred in his or her life.

Through contextualization the learners will be exposed to the felt needs, values, and lived experiences of their context and will be able to integrate what they learned with the real-life situation on the ground; that is, to integrate theory and reality.

Through a contextual approach, the people's felt needs will be taken into consideration when transmitting the Christian faith through teaching and or preaching. This approach will also help them deal with practical life issues about their faith. Also, it will assist them to relate to people of other faiths and cultures.

The methods employed for the transmission of knowledge are not contextual and therefore not very effective. This is exacerbated by the language barrier as some members of the church do not understand English and some clergy too cannot express themselves fluently in the local language, especially Twi. Another issue is the lack of learning resources printed the local language, such as books, which means that majority of the books are printed in English, therefore, the members depend on what they receive from the pastors. Generally, the fieldwork revealed that the church's interpretation of the doctrine of justification by faith alone is not clear and this has affected its understanding by members.

The study group resolved that, although they have been justified through faith in Jesus Christ, they should not treat others as condemned because, they don't observe some of the laws, however, legalism out of some of the doctrines of the church has mildly created membership drift in the SDA church, because

some of the members thought that their works could save them, but they felt disappointed and eventually, left the church.

The knowledge of the doctrine of justification by faith alone is limited among members as compared to the pastors and elders. Even though the leadership of the church and clergy seem to have a better understanding, this is not reflected in the lives of their members, suggesting that they have not adequately transferred their knowledge of the doctrine to the laity. Consequently, there is a lack of proper application, leading to a negative rather than positive impact of the doctrine on the life of members.

Finally, they understood that they are not ashamed to spread the gospel because they are justified by faith through Christ alone.

Conclusions

The topic of this study is 'Romans 1:16-17 and its appropriation in the SDA Church in Ghana' this title was chosen based on the understanding of the righteousness by faith and its appropriations in the Church. The introductory session of this topic set the tone for handling the topic. The study shows that Romans 1:16-17 which talk about righteousness by faith in Jesus Christ alone is the central theme of the book of Romans chapter one. Paul, a first-century Jew, makes the case in the introduction to his letter to those who believe in Rome for why he is eager to share the good news and why he is unashamed of the good news. With his careful rhetoric of the Greek language, he attempts to unite other first-century believers, both Jew, and Gentiles, without eliminating their distinction and specific roles. As a Jew, Paul is eager and unashamed because the good news is the power of God for salvation, to the Jew first, and to the Gentiles using God's faithfulness to His people. In this thesis, Paul reveals

a formula for how the good news is given to all who believe, and this is not purely historical, but should be an ongoing reality. His formula is set up so that everyone who believes in Him would be blessed through His relationship with all believers. There was a conflict between the Jews and the Gentiles as stated in chapter one and as such, the distantiation reveals how Paul dealt with tension by pointing to the faith alone in Jesus Christ that can bring salvation to every believer and brings freedom on the side of the Gentiles through the faith of Jesus Christ alone.

The church's attitude towards the language of the people in the writings of some of the resources has played a major role in how the members, in turn, view the relationship between the gospel and their culture. This is further compounded by lack of attention to contextualization in the teaching of the Biblical text, by the Pastors and the elders. Consequently, this has created a vacuum that counters the enhancement of the method of teaching and preaching by both the Pastors and elders. Since the view of the people on faith is obscured and their mother tongues have been ignored; the understanding of this doctrine by members is rendered inadequate.

Finally, this study shows that although the church members mildly understand justification by grace through faith, the relationship between faith and works in obtaining salvation is not clear in the minds of many SDAs in the Southern Ghana Union Conference. Church members perceive that the observance of doctrines (especially those that are behavioral) constitutes the basis of salvation and assurance. Perhaps, many understand sin mainly as wrong behavior.

Recommendations

Looking at the findings and the conclusions of the study, there have been some points that have paved the way for recommendations. The recommendations are:

The church members who had the opportunity to participate in the contextual bible reading should channel the detailed outcome to the other pastors, elders, and church members who could not have the same opportunity. The study revealed that the interpretation has not enhanced the understanding and appropriation of the doctrine by members as reflected in previous chapters. Therefore, having discussed the challenges impeding the adequate interpretation that will lead to proper understanding and appropriation, the following missional signposts have been identified and suggested for further research. These proposals touch on the following areas:

1. To embark on the local language teaching resources.
2. Introducing adult education courses for some of the elders and church members who have challenges in reading both English and local languages.
3. Establishing a contextual theological education program.
4. Strategically planning and effectively implementing means of transmission, namely; preaching and teaching.
5. Creating a department of research and development in all the conferences in the Southern Ghana Union Conference of SDA Church.

In addition to this, the church members also need theological education to help them communicate and live out the faith they profess correctly. This education should go beyond simple catechistic instruction, to cater for a

pluralistic society like that of Southern Ghana Union Conference of SDA Church.

Though the theological education program of the SDA Church is clergy centered; the training offered even in this limited realm is inadequate, because it does not adequately equip the trained pastors for ministry in a religiously pluralistic society. According to respondents, the level of training is low and it lacks a contextual approach as reported in chapter three. There is a need for developing relevant resources for teaching in the local language concerning righteousness by faith as the cardinal doctrine of the church.

Therefore, since the church has other good resources that contain the doctrine of righteousness by faith in the English language, pastors who can contextualize the text to ease the understanding and appropriation should solely handle the baptismal class of the church as the starting point to transmit the exegetical knowledge to the church members.

There is a need for the use of translation as a viable tool for an informed understanding of justification by faith alone. The translation is an important tool for the transfer of knowledge whether it is religious or secular.

There is an urgent need for the inclusion of a contextual theological education program in the theological training of both clergy and laity in that, church leaders should endeavor to send qualified members to tertiary institutions to become biblical scholars who will assist the church leadership in conducting Contextual Bible Study (CBS) to enhance dealing with lifelong challenges and problems that confront the church and her members. Since preaching is one of the most viable means through which the Christian faith is communicated to members, the preaching of justification should not be done casually.

Finally, by embracing these recommendations, it is hoped that the Southern Ghana Union Conference of SDA Church will gain much in integrating righteousness by faith in presenting the SDA fundamental beliefs as an effective approach to church growth. Placing Jesus Christ at the center of every doctrinal presentation, it will naturally result in more power to the presenter, more conversion, more active participation of lay members in evangelism, and spiritual enrichment.



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APPENDICES

Appendix 1a

Interview Guide

University of Cape Coast

College of Humanities and Legal Studies

Faculty of Arts

Department of Religion and Human Values

University Post Office

Tell/Fax: 03321: 30943

Email: religion@ucc.edu.gh

Dear Sir/Madam

Informed Consent Letter

I am a Minister of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church and a student of the University of Cape Coast pursuing a program in MPhil (Religion and Human Values). As part of my study, I am carrying out a study titled: "Romans 1: 16-17 and its appropriation in the SDA Church in Ghana". Specifically, the study explores how the members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the Pastors interpret and understand the text.

I am very much aware of your heavy schedule but have the strongest conviction that your voluntary participation would help in clarifying understanding of the text. I therefore humbly solicit your consent and voluntary participation. If you accept to be part of the study, you will complete a set of questionnaires and participate in an interview and focus group discussions, where applicable. It is not a test so feel free to supply credible information.

You have the assurance that any information you supply would be used for its intended purpose, hence accorded utmost confidentiality. You are therefore not required to write your name anywhere in the questionnaire instrument for purposes of anonymity.

All things being equal, the interview and focus group discussion would last for between 40 and 50 minutes. With your permission, I will use a digital micro recorder to record the interviews and the focus group discussions but would dispose of the data after its usage.

My contact details and that of my Supervisor are given below in case you want to confirm the above information or find out anything from her.

Appendix 1b

Informed Consent Form

If you agree to be interviewed or participate in the focus group discussions, please sign the consent form agreement below.

Consent:

I..... (Full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participate in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

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Signature of participant

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Date

Appendix 2

Introduction

My name is Garnet Owusu-Ansah an MPhil student, University of Cape Coast. I am researching the topic "Romans 1: 16-17 and its appropriation in the SDA Church in Ghana". I am very grateful for your time and the responses that you will provide to these questions. Your input will be carefully listened to and used in developing the research. It will also help us understand your main concerns in this area of research.

1. a) What is your understanding of the text Romans 1:16-17?



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- 1b. Briefly state your understanding of the doctrine of *justification by faith alone*.

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2. What is the Church's understanding of the doctrine of *justification by faith alone*?

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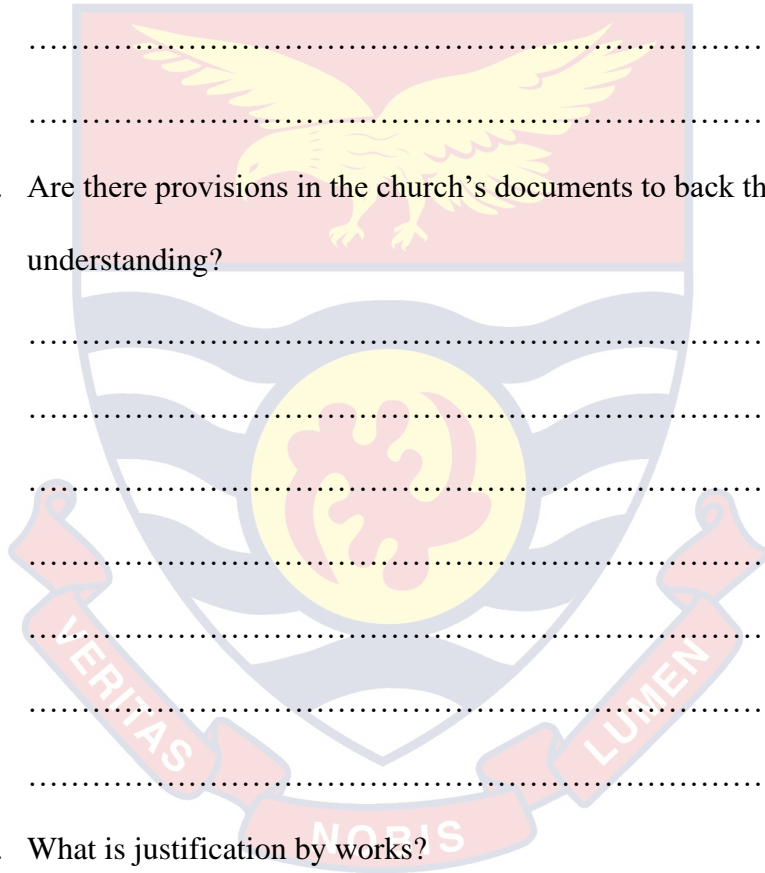
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3. Are there provisions in the church's documents to back this understanding?



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4. What is justification by works?

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5. Observing the Biblical Sabbath and other commandments of God justify one as righteous for salvation?

A. YES []

B. NO []

6. Can you justify your answer?

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7. What does the Church use to communicate this understanding to its members?

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8. What resources are there to help church members understand this doctrine?

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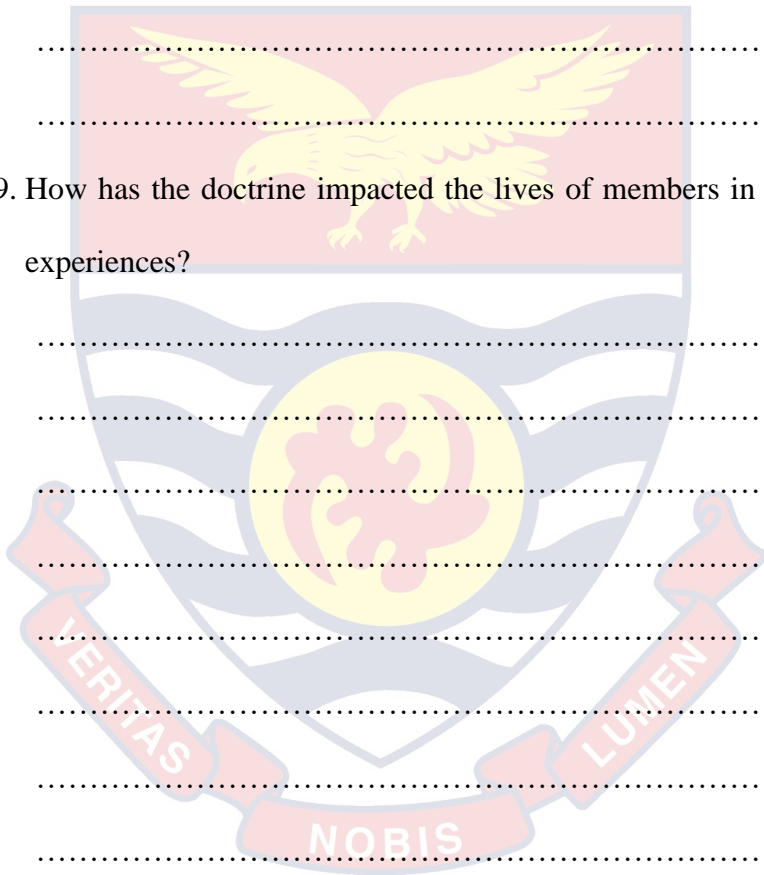
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9. How has the doctrine impacted the lives of members in their day to day experiences?



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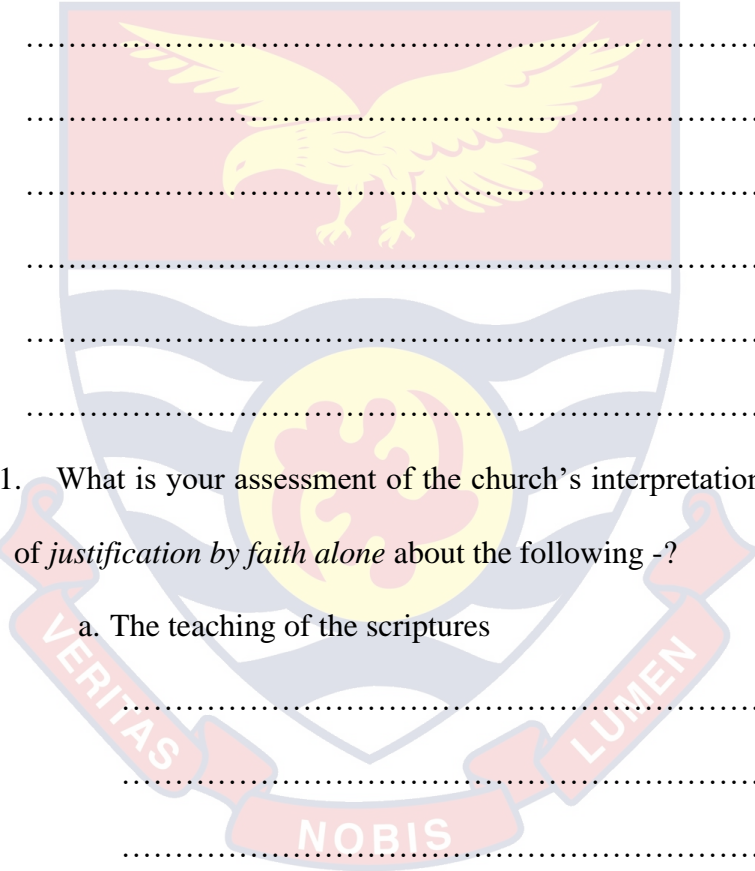
10. How has the doctrine impacted the spirituality of church members?

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11. What is your assessment of the church's interpretation of the doctrine of *justification by faith alone* about the following -?

a. The teaching of the scriptures

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d. How does it encourage the development of Adventist spirituality?

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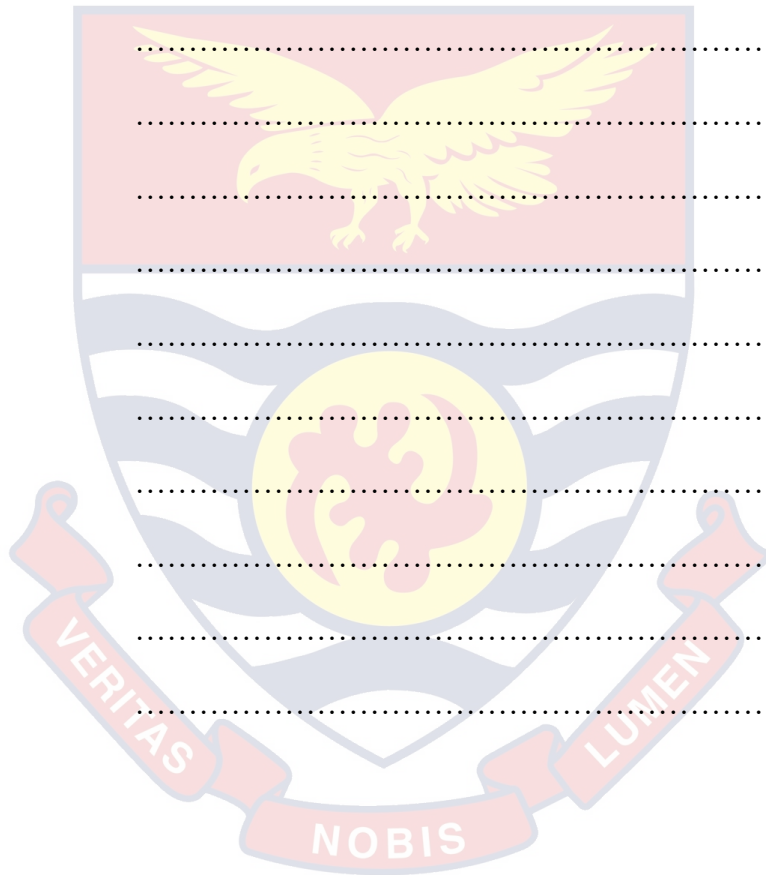
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Thank you for your time and contributions to the research study.