

NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE  
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

*The Impact of Miracles on Church Growth at Redeemed  
Gospel Church, Quarry, Nairobi (1998-2007)*

BY  
BERNARD AMIANDA MUCHILWA

*A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Divinity in Missions Studies*

JULY 2007

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GOSPEL CHURCH, QUARRY, NAIROBI (1998 - 2007)

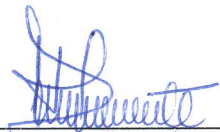
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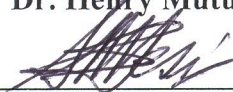
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July, 2007

**Student's Declaration**

**THE IMPACT OF MIRACLES ON CHURCH GROWTH AT REDEEMED  
GOSPEL CHURCH, QUARRY, NAIROBI (1998 - 2007)**

**I declare that this is my original work and has not been  
submitted to any other College or University for academic credit**

**The views presented herin are not necessarily those of the Nairobi Evangelical  
Graduate School of Theology or of the Examiners**

(Signed)



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**Bernand Amianda Muchilwa**

**July 2007**

## ABSTRACT

Whereas the happening of miracles, whether divine or demonic, may seem indisputable in some communities today, their impact is one thing that has not been systematically considered and chronicled. It was this realization, after years of ministry and study in the area of miracles and healing, that caused the researcher to embark on such a study whose purpose was to investigate the impact of miracles on church growth.

The focus of this study was on the Redeemed Gospel Church (RGC), Quarry, which is in the Embakasi area of Nairobi. This is a congregation that had begun in the early nineties but split in 1997 leaving a congregation of 40 people from an attendance of 200. What has caused the congregation to surge from 40 to about 800? What place has miracles had on this phenomenal numerical growth with the coming of their new Pastor in 1998 to 2007?

Research procedures were three faceted as a way of seeking to unearth data to answer the problem statement:

1. Literature Review (Chapter 2): This was widely done by the researcher as a beginning to find out what:
  - a) The Bible had to say on the topic
  - b) Researchers and authors have said or written on the same.
2. Qualitative Research: This was done in two spheres by the researcher: participant observer and ethnographic interviews of the Pastor and 25 members of the church.
3. Quantitative Research: closed ended self-administered questionnaires were used for the general congregation. 115 members filled the questionnaires (one of which was at the end discarded due to serious inconsistency), 112 believers, and 2 unbelievers.

The research findings (Chapter 4) based on all the procedures revealed that miracles have a positive and significant impact on church growth, especially numerically in RGC Quarry. It also revealed that preaching, which is laced with miracles, is a main attraction of the people to the church. Conclusions drawn from this and the missiological implications are given in Chapter 5.

**TO**

My late mother Dinah Ayuko Muchilwa whose faith, prayers, and a life of miracles left a lasting impression on me and catapulted me into the ministry of signs, wonders, and miracles.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

AICs – African Independent/Instituted/Initiated/Indigenous Churches

HBC - House Bible Church

RGC – Redeemed Gospel Church

RGCQ (1-25) – Redeemed Gospel Church Quarry codes for participants

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Background and Motivation for the Study**

As a child I grew up in an environment where miracles were witnessed and sought by people of different ages and classes. However, it was the healing of one of my brothers that practically brought me to the reality of miracles. This brother had lost part of his sight just after joining High School. Due to this illness he had been forced to drop out of school when he was in Form One unable to study. Medical attention, including an eye specialist at the then prestigious Aga Khan Hospital in Kisumu, availed nothing. I remember the sadness that engulfed our home and the entire village when my brother, having been among the very few selected students from all over Kenya to join Maseno National School, was brought home with all his belongings. To us this was the end of school for this teenage boy and the beginning of a hopeless and miserable future since, according to the medical fraternity of the time, there was no medical cure.

A few weeks after this, a Pentecostal preacher came to our location and held evangelistic meetings where the power of God was being demonstrated with the healing of the sick. One evening my mother took my brother to one of these meetings in a home where he was prayed for and came back totally healed. My brother returned to school immediately and has never had a problem with his eyes since then. Surprisingly, my brother neither got saved nor showed any keen interest in Christ following this incident of thirty-six years ago. Being nine years then I was so moved that I began attending the meetings of this preacher and got converted in one of his



overnight prayer meetings. The stir that these meetings caused attracted many people to the point that one would hardly get room in the houses or churches that hosted the preacher. Many people in our area were saved and a great revival broke out.

Since those days, I have kept close association with Pentecostal and Charismatic groups where miracles seem to influence and form their worldview. My interaction and involvement with them has often caused me to wonder if the performance of miracles has any bearing on church growth. This is what necessitates this investigation.

The rationale for choosing Redeemed Gospel Church (RGC), Quarry Nairobi, for this study was based on the following considerations:

1. It is an ordinary RGC congregation found in a slum area with ordinary urban dwellers.
2. The uniqueness of its growth in an area where church attendance averages less than 100 people.
3. As much as I may have wished to study other churches within Redeemed Gospel Church that are also growing fast in other cities, the financial and time challenges involved would not allow me.

The Redeemed Gospel Church (RGC) Quarry is located in the Eastlands area of Nairobi in Embakasi Constituency and only three kilometers from the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport. According to the current Pastor, Rev. Brown Chavaseki, when he took over in 1998 the congregation numbered ten families. The church had began in 1992 and split in 1998 when it had an attendance of 100 people with the then Pastor forming his own congregation. By the end of 2006 they had a combined attendance of about 800 in their three worship services on Sundays. The begging question is whether miracles have contributed to this growth.

## Problem Statement

This study was an attempt to find out perception regarding the impact of miracles on the growth of Redeemed Gospel Church, Quarry, Nairobi, from 1998 – 2007.

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to find out perception about the impact miracles have on church growth with specific reference to the Redeemed Gospel Church (RGC), Quarry, Nairobi. Further, the findings were to form the basis of advice and recommendations to the local church researched, other Redeemed Gospel Churches, Charismatic churches, and mission agencies that may be interested.

## Research Questions

1. What are the understandings of “a miracle” by the members/attendees of Redeemed Gospel Church (RGC), Quarry?
2. To what extent does the Redeemed Gospel Church (RGC) Quarry emphasize miracles?
3. In what ways does the receiving of /or witnessing of miracles influence conversion and the decision to join Redeemed Gospel Church (RGC) Quarry?

## Significance of the Research

This research is significant in that its findings may be used by at least three groups in church growth and mission endeavours:

1. The Redeemed Gospel Church Quarry, Nairobi. The church can enhance or down play its position on miracles depending on what the findings will be.
2. Other local churches that are struggling to find out how miracles can influence Church- growth.

### 3. Evangelical mission organizations.

Depending on the findings of this research, these organizations may borrow a leaf from the Redeemed Gospel Church, Quarry, Nairobi. Where the miracles are seen to positively influence church growth, they can look for ways of applying some of the practices of RGC Quarry. But in the event that they have no consequence on church growth, then they have such options as commissioning other researches modeled on Biblical teachings to probe this phenomenon that the Bible seems to have so much to say about.

#### Delimitations

The scope of this research was the impact of emphasis on and performance of miracles in the growth of Redeemed Gospel Church, Quarry, Nairobi. The research was not investigating other churches apart from the aforementioned. Besides, the research limited itself to the period 1998 – 2007, focusing on those who attend services or worship there. The research confined itself to interviewing those who had either received or witnessed miracles in or through this church. For interview purposes the researcher focused on a sample of 25 respondents on whom in-depth interviews were carried out, and 114 respondents on whom quantitative self-administered questionnaires were employed.

#### Limitations

Since most of the members of RGC Quarry attendees work in the nearby industrial area and are required to work overtime whenever there is much work, some of the people scheduled for the interviews could not make it reducing the number from 30- 40 to 25. The time span for research was short making it hard for the

researcher to interview many respondents. In addition the researcher was at the same period of research in school carrying a full load of 18 hours of class. Financial shortages were a main challenge such that the researcher could not make as many visits to the site as he would have wished, especially for the participant observer procedures.

However, the researcher addressed these limitations positively. As for the limitation on time, the researcher did in-depth ethnographic interviews with the 25 informants that came which compensated for the deficit. Moreover, the researcher complimented the ethnographic studies with quantitative data collection by giving questionnaires to 115 attendees of RGC Quarry.

### Definitions of Terms

There is need to define some of the terms that will be used in this research so as to help the reader understand. Other terms that have not been defined and need to will be given consideration in the text as they appear.

#### *Scripture quotations*

All scripture quotations by the researcher are from King James Version Bible.

#### *Miracle*

Since our investigation has to do with the way miracles impact church growth, it is necessary to clearly and broadly define what the word “miracle” and its synonyms mean. For the purpose of this research *miracle* will be understood to mean “... a divine intervention into, or an interruption of, the regular course of the world...”(Geisler1982, 13) or “...any event regarded as an act of God” (Grant and Bowley 1963, 663), or “extra ordinary events” (Lias 1890, 244). The Christian thinker, philosopher, and writer, C.S. Lewis says *miracle* means “an interference with

nature by supernatural power” (1947, 9, 65). From these we can say that miracles are extra ordinary events or happenings that are wrought by God for a particular purpose.

### ***Signs and Wonders***

In this research “signs” and “wonders” will be taken to be synonymous with miracles, i.e. used interchangeably. In the New Testament, according to Easton, four Greek words are principally used to designate a miracle and these are *semeion*, a sign, *Terata*, wonders, *Dunameis* , mighty works, and *Erga*, works (1978, 477-478).

### ***Church Growth***

This term will be used in this research to basically mean numerical growth evidenced by 1. Conversions to Christ; 2. Transfer of Members; 3. Attendance of Church Services by Unbelievers. Tippet (1987, 74) argues:

There is only one way the church can really grow. That is by conversion: Externally, individuals have to be won from paganism or from materialism; internally, each generation has to be brought face to face with Christ for itself .... The basis of all church growth is conversion.”

So on the bottom line church growth in this research will take this position of Tippet together with that of transfer of converted members. However, attendance of services by unbelievers may mean “numerical church growth”.

### ***Attendees***

In this study "Attendees" will be used to imply the people who attend the services at RGC Quarry, regardless of whether they are saved or not saved.

### *Synonyms*

The term 'participants' will be used interchangeably with such words as 'informants', 'interviewees', and 'respondents' meaning one and the same people, those who are the subjects of the interviews.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This research on “The Impact of Miracles on Church Growth”, demands a search and critical review of what others have written on the topic. Since this is a Christian based study, it is fitting that what is reviewed, researched, and eventually discovered be weighed against the teaching of the Word of God, the Bible.

The review of literature will try, as much as possible, to avoid falling into lengthy arguments regarding continuity or cessation of miracles. In addition, the abuse of miracles, except as it relates to the topic, was not given much consideration. The researcher examined what is written on how miracles impact or fail to impact church growth. From the outset, the researcher does not claim to exhaust a perusal of major works written on the subject but feels that what is examined in this section is adequate in helping to form a good picture of the impact of miracles on church growth in general.

In looking at this topic the researcher discovered that most of the authors mainly examine the purpose rather than the impact of miracles. For this reason the researcher looked at the purposes of miracles as a way of unearthing their impact. This was done in four phases: 1. In Jesus’ ministry. 2. In the ministry of the apostles and the Early Church. 3. In the contemporary Church. 4. In the African church, particularly in the African Initiated Churches (AICs).

The researcher chose to exclude literature review on the purpose of miracles in the Old Testament and outside Christianity. This was because the focus was on the impact of miracles on church growth and the church was begun by Jesus and His

ministry. As much as miracles were experienced in the Old Testament, it is in the New Testament that sets the trend for the church. In addition, the researcher realized the focus on miracles outside Christianity, as much there may be claims to their happenings, would have made the scope of the research much larger than the time available.

### The Purpose of Miracles in Jesus' Ministry

Why did Jesus perform miracles? In other words what was the intention of those miracles performed? Whether the purposes of the miracles were met is not the main issue. Among the many purposes that may be gleaned from scripture and cited by scholars, we will limit this review to the impact of conversion or church growth. This means the researcher will deliberately downplay the other purposes as much as they may be valid.

#### ***For People to Know and Believe in Christ***

This appears to have been a central purpose of Jesus' miracles. He said, "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not; But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him" (John 10:37, 38). Throughout His earthly ministry, Jesus testified especially to His critics that miracles were meant to help those experiencing and witnessing them believe in Christ.

Van Der Loos argues that there was a clear link between miracles and faith in the ministry of Jesus Christ (Loos 1968, 265). In his 765 page book entitled *The Miracle Jesus*, he does a detailed examination of Jesus' miracles. He looks also at the Old Testament and says "the Israelites were moved to believe or were strengthened in



their belief by miraculous deeds” (ibid., 245). To him this is the same idea in the New Testament that is well illustrated by Jesus rebuking “those cities most of his miracles were wrought but did not repent” (ibid). The book is helpful in showing that Christ’s miracles were meant to impact people for faith.

From the scriptures there is infallible evidence some people believed on Jesus due to the miracles He did. In a way this impact was positive as far as the purpose for miracles is concerned. A number of the disciples, some of whom became apostles, believed on Him after experiencing or witnessing a miracle. Nathanael was surprised when Jesus called him by name, told him he was an Israelite indeed without any guile, and that He had seen him under the fig tree (John 1:47-49). To Nathanael this was a miracle for no man could know such about him without supernatural revelation, which prompted him to declare that Jesus was “the Son of God” and “the King of Israel”.

At the marriage in Cana, Jesus performed a miracle whereby He turned the water into wine in the presence of guests who included His disciples. John notes that this miracle caused Jesus’ disciples to believe on Him (John 2:1-11). Since they were already His disciples this believing on Him means a reinforcement of their faith.

Twelfree looks at the case of Peter responding to Christ by consecrating himself to Him after the miracle catch of fish (Luke 5:1-10). He points out “... there is no doubt that the miracle is the ground of faith and discipleship” (1999, 183). Deere is of a similar view as he states that God does miracles to bring people to repentance. He says this is what God did to bring Peter to repentance (1993, 222). The way he sees Luke’s presentation of miracles is quite insightful: that faith “is not only the possible but the required response to miracles” (Ibid., 184). This is an eye opener that when miracles happen there is possibility of people believing and they are

obligated to. Twelftree builds this case by saying that Jesus “rebuked the people of Chorazin and Bethsaida who failed to repent after seeing the deeds of power (1999, 185). From this rebuke one learns that God is not happy with people who hold on to unbelief in the face of the happening of miracles.

#### To Authenticate Jesus’ Message and Character

On the purpose of the miracles in Jesus’ life and ministry, Deere asserts that they were to authenticate the character of Jesus and His relationship with the Father (1993, 104). Bridge builds this idea of miracles meant to substantiate Christ’s character. He argues that, by quoting Origen, “The miracles of Jesus were not mere wonders intended to strike the imagination. There is a close relation between these marvelous events and the person of him who does them. They are visible emblems of what He is and what He came to do” (1985, 80, 81). The miracles in this case are vehicles into the character of Jesus Christ. They were to tell His hearers who He was. In citing Origen, Bridge wants to send home the truth that Christ did not intend his miracles to merely arouse awe and excitement in his hearers.

Another scholar, Lias, who was also an evangelical minister in England, wrote in support of miracles pointing to Christ’s character. He says:

We cannot fail to see that had Christ wrought no miracles in support of His pretensions, He would never have obtained a hearing... Christ must ... have shown in some way that He was what He professed to be, - the son of God. ...Consequently we are bound to tell mankind that these miracles were the methods by which He manifested His character (1890, 256-257).

So Christ’s miracles were a great way of declaring His character. To Jesus, as far as Lias is concerned, miracles were a way of telling people who He was – that is His character. Lias reinforces this argument by writing, “... you ask us how Christ first made the power known which has since been so signally manifested in the conversion

and regeneration of the world. We have no other answer than this: He worked miracles” (Ibid). In summary Lias is contending that Jesus wrought miracles to corroborate His claims and this has had the impact of conversion and regeneration worldwide.

However, Lias is of the view that the physical miracles of Christ were only meant for the period the church was in infancy. The way he justifies this is that during the infancy stage there was no other evidence the church could point to except physical miracles but now these have been compensated for by the practical results of Christianity, - results far more observable now...than they were at first” (1890,251 – 252). This argument of replacement of physical miracles today would not be helpful for this research. One would argue that if Christ needed the miracles to manifest His character when He was physically here Himself, would He replace them with something less powerful than what He had, especially now that He is present only spiritually?

### ***Jesus’ Miracles were for Advertisement***

Crowds were a common phenomenon in Jesus’ life and ministry. In several places He went we hear and read that multitudes followed Him. The main reasons we are given for these multitudes are that they came “to hear and to be healed” (Luke 5:15). John records that “...great multitudes followed him, because they saw his miracles which He did on them that were diseased” (John 6:2).

There was a secret behind the crowds coming to Jesus. They came because they had seen the miracles He had done on the sick. The miracles they had witnessed or experienced drew them to Christ. From Christ’s ministry, it is seen that miracles brought crowds. Shorter speaks of this compelling power of miracles in drawing

people to Christ as he writes, “Miracles are marvelous, in the sense that they are designed to attract attention” (1985, 147). There is a likelihood that God has put something in miracles that pulls people to those who work miracles who in turn are supposed to point the people to the real miracle worker, who is God Himself through the person of Christ.

However, it must be made clear that the pulling of the crowds by miracles in Jesus meetings did not necessarily mean that they all believed. Shorter is very clear on this as he rightly points out that instead of miracles “compelling the observers they summoned them to respond in faith and love. They challenged them to throw in their lot with Jesus ...” (1985, 147). The people who think miracles are to compel sinners to faith are mistaken for they are pointers to God (Christ) to whom they are to freely respond. Loos (1968, 246) argues that Jesus “regarded the working of miracles as publicity for his message”. For Jesus this purpose was fulfilled – the crowds came as a result of the miracles. In other words the author makes sense in pointing out that miracles are significant for publicity that possibly results in their eagerness to hear Christ or be healed.

Of importance to note is that Jesus never rebuked people for following Him because of miracles. Probably this was because He felt the miracles were having their first impact on the witnesses – to draw them to Him. Sometimes believers have said that some people only follow Jesus because of miracles and this is wrong. They justify this judgment by quoting John 6:26: “...Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.” In this case they were not following Christ because of miracles but food and that was wrong. The opposite is true, as Jesus turned no one away who followed or wanted to follow Him because of miracles. The only exception was the man from Gadara whom He told to go to

return to his “own house and shew how great things God hath done unto thee”. His invitation, “Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28) and “He that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out” (John 6: 37) affirm His commitment to receive and reward miracle seekers (Heb. 11:6 – “God is a rewarder of those that diligently seek him”). Bridge (1985, 87) criticizes those who advertise miracles/healings by saying that Jesus did not advertise. He forgets that the miracles advertised Jesus’ meetings and Him. It is not wrong to popularize Christ through miracles.

Before concluding this section let us look the other side of the results of miracles in Jesus’ ministry. There are some scholars who are of the opinion that since not all people believe as a result of witnessing miracles, there is no need for emphasis on miracles. What informs them and how can this be addressed?

Jesus himself went through the experience of people witnessing miracles and choosing not to believe. They even went further by throwing Him out of their cities (Mark 5:1-17), and plotting to kill Him (John 11:45-57; 12:9-11). Jesus had on many occasions hid from those who saw His miracles and wanted to kill him (John 12:36, 37).

Bridge is among the people who argue that only few of Jesus’ miracles led to conversions (Ibid). The Bible acknowledges this fact by saying that, “But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him” (John 12:37). Jesus responded to this phenomenon by saying that if these people had not witnessed the miracles He did “they would not be guilty” (John 15:22-24).

Geisler says of this trend of unbelief among those that witness miracles, “Of course, not all believe when they witness a miracle. But in this event, says the New Testament, the miracle is a witness against them” (1982, 116). He quotes John 12:37

as the witness. It is important that those who are involved in this kind of ministry be prepared for such response and take it as normal or expected. Geisler's book will be useful for this research since it prepares one for some negative response to miracles. More will be said on this in the section on "Purpose of Miracles in the Contemporary Church", especially as pertaining to the abuse of miracles.

### Purpose of Miracles in the Early Church

After the ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ, His disciples were left on the scene as the Early Church. This period begins with the Day of Pentecost. Earlier Jesus had told them, "... He that believeth on me the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do" (John 14:12). So the church is to continue His works.

Because the disciples were Christ's witnesses, the purpose of miracles for them was to be the same as it was for Jesus. The Holy Spirit in them was to glorify Christ by continuing the works Christ began (John 14:16-18; 26; 15:26-27; 16:7-15).

### *Corroborate/Confirm Jesus as God's Son*

Deere states that the purpose of miracles through the Early Church was to authenticate the message of Jesus. He adds, "This was the major function of the miracles as far as the ministry of the apostles was concerned" (1983, 103). He makes it very clear that God's purpose in working miracles in the Early Church was never to authenticate the apostles as His messengers but to confirm His word that they spoke (104).

What Deere proposes is confirmed by the apostles' messages and their writings. On the day of Pentecost, Peter said of Jesus, "... a man approved of God

among you by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him” (Acts 2:22). He testified that God approved of this Jesus by the miracles He did. Now that they were His witnesses there was need for some miracles to attest to this Jesus’ messengers (Acts 2:32). When the lame man was healed at the gate beautiful through Peter’s ministry, Peter said that it was God who had glorified His Son Jesus by healing this man. Then Peter went ahead to urge the people to believe as a result of this miracle (Acts 3:11-19). So for Deere, the performance of miracles in the Early Church was to authenticate Jesus, Christianity, and the gospel message.

### ***Miracles were to Bring People to Faith in Christ***

Greig, and Springer assert that:

One function of signs, wonders, and miracles, in the ministry of Jesus and the Early Church was to awaken and encourage faith in the gospel being preached. Why else would the Early Church have prayed prayers like the following, asking God for signs and wonders of healing to accompany its evangelism (1993, 146).

The scripture he is referring to is Acts 4:29, 30. The motivation for this prayer of Acts must have been after the church witnessing the conversion of about five thousand people as a result of the healing of the lame man. That one notable miracle impacted over five thousand people to faith in Christ.

From their experience, the Early Church seemed to understand the power miracles had in catalyzing peoples’ faith in the gospel, hence their prayers to God to work miracles. Greig further argues that even Paul was converted by “a demonstration of God’s power through the appearance of Christ to him” (150).

The Biblical testimony concerning the ministry of the apostles is clear that the miracles wrought through them led to many unbelievers getting converted. The raising of Dorcas to life resulted in many of the people of Joppa believing in the Lord

(Acts 9:42). Philip in Samaria witnessed many believe after preaching and miracles being performed (Acts 8:5-13). After God doing special miracles through the hands of Paul in Ephesus many believed and the word of God grew mightily and prevailed (Acts 19:11-20).

### ***Miracles Publicized Christ in the Early Church***

Just like in Christ's ministry crowds were attracted because of the miracles, the same was true of His disciples and the Early Church. This pattern can be seen the Gospels and the book of Acts.

Keener says, "Signs and wonders provide a powerful attestation of God's power and interest in this world and summon attention to the gospel we proclaim" (2001, 95). Keener believes miracles call attention to the gospel. Even in the cases where people are prone to ignore the gospel they are woken up by miracles. It is like what happened to Moses in the wilderness when he saw the burning bush yet it was not being consumed. The miracle that drew his attention was not the fire but the fact that the bush was not being consumed (Exodus 3:1ff). Keener concludes this thesis by affirming that, "As noted in Acts, signs and wonders remain the primary method of drawing peoples' attention to the gospel ..." (2001, 98). Among the scriptures he gives to confirm this is Acts 2:5-41, 43; 3:11- 4:4:4; 5:10-11, 12-16; 8:6-7, 13; 19:11-20; 28:5-6, 8-10).

### **Purpose of Miracles in the Contemporary Church**

The contemporary church refers to the church today. Ideally the Contemporary Church is different from the Early one in terms of space or time. Otherwise the doctrinal foundations are the same.



Since the church is one continuous institution, its purpose and mission in the world is the same. Concerning the church, Jesus said He would build it “and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matt. 16:18, 19). He added that, “And these signs shall follow them that believe ...” (Mark 16:17). So the believer and the church in the first century is the same in nature and accessibility to Christ as the one in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### The Notion that Miracles Ceased with the Early Church

This belief and teaching is held by a section of the church and the researcher skimmed through it in the course of this study. The researcher’s argument against the proponents of this is that if Jesus Christ is the same, with the same commission, consecration, and calling, why should the power – miracles – differ?

Those who hold this view like Lias (1890, 251-252), whom we have considered on “The Purpose of Christ’s Miracles”, agree that Christ and the Early Church performed miracles. But they state that they are no longer needed since the church has now matured, developed or evolved. But the question is, “In our day do we not have the same problems, needs, sicknesses, devils, and challenges that plagued the world of Jesus Christ and His Early Church? And if the church has developed and matured as not to need the miracles as we are told by these proponents, what are the alternative and more perfect ways of handling such cases and challenges?”

Another proponent of this is Benjamin Warfield whose book *Counterfeit Miracles* is about this teaching (Warfield 1918). On the cessation of the Charismata, which Warfield intensely labours to defend, the researcher disagrees with him because the ministry of miracles is to follow believers (Mk.16: 15-20; John14: 12-14).

## Rejection and de-emphasis of Miracles due to Abuse

Mikhaiel (1992) looks at the phenomena of “Speaking in tongues” and “slaying in the Spirit” among other apparent manifestations of the Holy Spirit. He makes strange arguments concerning those who practice or embrace such phenomena. As much as the Toronto Blessing Meetings have generated controversy due to some of the bizarre things associated with this revival, the researcher has reservations on some of the interpretations and judgments of Mikhaiel on these meetings. He uses the lack of similar precedence of such manifestations in the Bible to throw out what may be happening today. Of concern is his criticism of ministers like John Wimber and Kenneth Hagin whom he accuses of propagating this false doctrine and practice.

What is disturbing is that Mikhaiel makes no mention of people getting converted through some of these bizarre miracles. Yet it is on record these “miraculous” meetings are resulting in conversions especially those of Wimber and Hagin. Wimber upholds healing of the whole person whereby he emphasizes healing the spirit man through confession of sin and forgiveness (1986, 76-110). One of the most remarkable statements Wimber makes on conversion is:

*The key to our spiritual healing- and the one point that must be understood and experienced for the rest of what I write this book to make any sense- is becoming new creations in Christ and living our lives as fully forgiven and reconstructed people [Sic] (1986,88).*

Deere in *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit* responds very well to the accusation that miracle workers have abused this noble gifting. His acknowledgement that “there are significant abuses within some groups that believe in and practice the gifts of the Spirit” is a mark of sincerity and humility. But he is also open and quick to point out that such abuses are “not true of the majority of groups that practice the

gifts of the Spirit” (1993, 78). The recommendation he gives on how to handle abuse of miracles is that it should be viewed in the same way the scripture does. He made an interesting observation that God works miracles among those who have spiritual abuses, doctrinal errors, and even immorality (78). He gives the example of Samson and the Corinthians and Galatians churches that were steeped in sexual sin, sectarianism, and doctrinal errors yet miracles were abundant among them (Judges 15-16; 1 Cor. 1:5-7, 10; 5:6; 15:12-34; Gal. 1:6-9; 3:1-5; 5:15-21). Deere concludes:

The presence of abuses and even impurity in Christian groups in no way proves that their miracles are not from God. Moreover, the presence of doctrinal errors in Christian groups where miracles occur does not prove that their miracles are invalid (1993, 80).

This, answers well those who totally reject miracles because of the lack of consecration among those that are exercising them.

Paul addressed the question of people preaching the gospel with varying motives, selfish or godly. Nevertheless he was happy that whatever the motive, Christ was still preached (Phil. 1:14-18). Munala, founder of the “New Hope Church” in Kenya and along standing minister in the ministry of miracles across the nations, has this to say, “Just because there are lying signs is no grounds for rejecting miracles and healings wrought by the finger of God! The cure for misuse has never been disuse ...” (2001, 56). Munala is quite right in his contention that abuse does not justify the rejection of the miracles. In this he is in keeping with what Paul told the Phillippian church concerning those who preached the gospel for wrong motives, which was an abuse yet the gospel was real. As believers and Christian leaders we need to take heartily what Jesus told His apostles who stopped those who were healing and casting out devils in His name just because they were not in the apostles’ group. Jesus cautioned them against such prohibitions saying that if they were doing those miracles

in His name, though not in the same “club”, then they were for Him and not against Him (Mk.9: 38-40;Lk.9: 49-50). However, this in no way means condoning the sinful and unscriptural practices and teachings of those who may perform such miracles, but need to test the spirits and leave certain judgments to Christ who will search and judge our motives.

### ***Miracles Advertise the gospel***

Deere says the New Testament teaches that miracles draw crowds and get an audience to hear the gospel preached (1993, 223). He cites examples of Jesus’ ministry (Matt. 9:26, 31), and Philip’s (Acts 8:6). He poses a question on “...what would happen to the attendance at your church if in the next six months the Lord were to heal a paralytic and perhaps an AIDS victim...?” (223). According to him, miracles have a vital impact in advertising the gospel. Evangelist T.L Osborn who has been involved in gigantic massive gospel crusades around the world for more than sixty years including Kenya has a lot to say on miracles advertising the gospel:

One mighty miracle today, in the name of Jesus Christ, is worth more than a lifetime of theological theory....All normal human beings crave the supernatural. They long to see the manifestation of the power. Even an atheistic professor, who denies any existence of God, will edge in to the crowd to watch a miracle. Cultured men and women will listen to an uneducated preacher if he has faith in the living God - if he prays and gets an answer (Osborn 1977, 26).

### ***Miracles in the Contemporary Church Can Lead to Conversions***

The pattern of performance of miracles resulting in conversions in both Jesus’ and the Early Church’s ministries, is repeated in the contemporary church. Keener, a New Testament Professor, gives a testimony of one of his students from India who told him he was reaching “resistant Hindus by praying for those who were sick to be healed”. God answered his prayer and the church grew from a handful of members to

over four hundred members” (2001, 61). He is of the opinion that nothing short of radical faith, in many cases accompanied with signs, will allow us to evangelize the “hard areas” (65).

Vaughan in *The Complete Book of Church Growth* commends on Pentecostal’s growth by acknowledging, “the focus on the person, work, and gifts of the Holy Spirit is recognized by their leadership as the main cause for their growing churches” (1983, 199). This fact is attested to by Donald Palmer in Vaughan, who asserts that in Pentecostal churches, “gifting and lay involvement are principal factors of their growth” (205). The key in all these is “gifts of the Spirit” that necessitate performance of miracles. This position is also reinforced by Eskridge who states, “In many parts of the world Pentecostalism has made significant numbers of new comers” (Eskridge, 1995). Eskridge associates Pentecostalism with manifestations such as “holy laughter” that were a phenomena of the Toronto Airport Fellowship and Brownville Assembly of God church in Pensacola, Florida. Such manifestations were miraculous and drew people not only from North America but also from all over the world, leading to many conversions.

In Africa signs and wonders are not exhaustive without coming to terms with the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke. He is associated with big time crusades full of signs, wonders, and healings. “In 2002, he conducted the largest known evangelistic crusade in history, in Lagos Nigeria attended by some six million people (Wikipedia, 2001-2005). Among many Sub-Saharan African nations Bonnke is leading hundreds of thousands of nationals to Christ through miracle crusades.

Brazil’s super churches, Medureira Church with over 28,000 members, and Brazil for Christ in Sao Paulo with 15,000 members (Vaughan 1984, 245-257). As for Medureira Church there is nothing mentioned about miracles as a factor for

growth. However, the church recognizes 23 gifts of the Spirit exercised in the church (249). The mentioned gifts of the Spirit exercised in the church must be the axis of miracles which is releasing the observed growth. Concerning the Brazil for Christ church, much can be drawn from the Pastor's practice in their Sunday service in which he prays for people to receive the power of God. He also moves through the crowd offering prayer for healing, specifically praying for those who need miracles or surgery (257).

On the growth of Pentecostalism Shorter says "...It attracts members from other mission related churches who experience a need for healing and wholeness that is not fulfilled in their own communities" (1985, 185-186). This observation was useful in the interpretation of the research findings. It helped in understanding the reasons people who are saved moved from "their mission mother churches" to RGC Quarry, Nairobi.

Smith Wigglesworth who was a great international evangelist was used of God in the ministry of signs and wonders. The following testimonies are from his meeting in Stockholm, Sweden:

The meeting was in an 1800 capacity Hall overflowing with people with many standing outside. In the meeting a woman began to shout, "I am healed, I am healed". She said the Lord had healed her and saved her as she listened to the word.... There was another woman healed in the same meeting who was unable to walk. As she was ministered to "she laughed and said, 'My leg is healed .... I am not saved'. ...They prayed for her and later she left the meeting healed and saved and full of joy" (Wigglesworth 1924, 37 – 38).

This book is useful as it shows some people receive manifestations of God's power like laughter and later a miracle and this may lead them to salvation. May be this is food for thought for those who reject 'wholesale' the "Toronto Blessings" meetings on the account of the 'holy laughter' associated with it. At least it was happening in Wigglesworth's meetings in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### Those who Contest that Miracles Lead to Conversion

Criswell does not deny the issue of the occurrence of miracles but insists they are uncommon and not much necessary. His argument is similar to that of Warfield asserting that miracles are “for introduction, for authentication, for corroboration, for substantiation” (Criswell 1973, 79). Like Warfield, he believes miracles were necessary in the early part of the church but replaced after its establishment. He erroneously says that very few converts were won by “signs and wonders” (1973, 77). The problem is that he selectively documents a few Biblical examples where Paul and Jesus did miracles and people never believed (John 6:26, 66; Acts 14).

Unfortunately Criswell neglects the numerous scriptures that show people believing the gospel after witnessing miracles (John 2:11-11; Luke 5:1-11). Kelhoffer ably refutes this by citing peoples’ salvation response to Peter’s miracles (Acts 4:4; Cf. 4:16, 22; 9:32-35) (2000, 269).

Contributing on the same matter Warner says, “The idea is sometimes set forth that when people see God work miracles they will be more apt to believe” (1991, 116). He adds there are biblical examples for that happening and also not happening (Acts 5:12-41; 8:4-8; John 6:36; 7:5; 15:24). Nonetheless, Warner is of the view that God is using miracles to attest to the truthfulness of the gospel (125).

### The Role of Miracles in the African Initiated Churches and her Leaders

There is a necessity to look at the church in Africa separately and see the place of miracles in its growth. This is justified by Anderson’s observation: “... although much has been written on the strength of Pentecostals and Charismatics in the Americas, relatively little has been written on their significance in Africa and Asia”

(15). The Africans are associated with a strong belief in the supernatural, power of divinities and spiritualism in their worldview.

The church in the continent of Africa is believed to be among the fastest growing on the globe together with that of Latin America and Asia – usually referred to as the global South as Jenkins advances in his book *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (2002. Book on line). This line of thought is followed by a prominent African scholar, Kalu in his work *African Christianity: An African Story*. His argument is that Pentecostal-Charismatic influence is generating rapid growth in Africa and the reason is that such movements “bring resources of the gospel as answers to questions raised within the primal worldview... healing and deliverance feature prominently” (2005, 41).

#### Miracles among African Ministers and Churches

The African church began to resonate with the miraculous as far back as the 1900s. Here it will do well to look at some African preachers and the experience of the supernatural in their ministries and churches. The impact of their ministries will also be seen in response to the working of the supernatural power of God in their lives.

Notably, and yet regrettably, some of the churches began by these Africans came to be known as “African Independent Churches” – as branded by the leaders and adherents of the mission founded churches. They were perceived as rebels who were out to remove the foreign white missionaries and establish churches that did not reflect the Biblical model. However, as is evident everywhere such movements arose, this was not the case. They were meeting a need that had been neglected by the existing and established mission churches. Their churches came to be referred to by



such names as “African Independent (or “Initiated”, “Instituted”, “Indigenous”) Churches”, which are commonly abbreviated as AICs. Let us look at some of the major leaders or founders of such churches and movements in Africa in the light of the working of miracles and its influence on church growth.

### William Wade Harris

Wade Harris, as he came to be commonly known, was one of the main preachers and leaders of the African church during its inception. He was born in Liberia about 1865 (Kalu 2005, 286).

Harris was an amazing man who was born in the village of “Graway near Cape Palmas, close to the Ivory Coast border” (Oosthuizen 1992, 12). He was converted at twenty, joined and served in the American Methodist church at Cape Palmas where he was an active minister, married and had six children (13).

While in prison the Angel Gabriel visited him, called and commissioned him to “preach a gospel of repentance, to destroy fetish worship, and to baptize those who obeyed” (Shank 1994, 3, 4). Soon after this experience he was released from prison and began to preach in Liberia. However, his ministry would take a different turn in 1913 when, as Hastings records, “... a strange barefooted figure crossed the frontier from Liberia to Ivory Coast to begin the most effective evangelical crusade in modern African history” at about 50 years (1994, 443).

### Characteristics of Wade Harris’ Preaching and Practice

Kalu notes “Wade Harris itinerated on foot from Liberia into Ivory Coast and Gold Coast in the years between 1910 and 1914, preaching, performing miracles, and creating an enormous growth for both Roman Catholics and Methodists” (2005, 285).

Further he says that Wade's evangelical revival was based on "prophecy and healing" (286). In other words he is pointing to the significance of the miraculous in his ministry to the expansion of the church.

Bond *et al* (eds) argue, "Harris grew as he was believed to have worked a number of miracles" (1979, 14). There are stories that Harris demonstrated so much healing power using his holy water to the extent that those judged incurable by traditional healers were healed leading to the conversion and baptism of "whole villages ... led by their religious and political leaders" (14).

Shank gives "Spiritual phenomena as thought patterns" in the ministry of Wade Harris (1994, 175-188). He cites various incidents, which were authenticated, where there was exorcism, healings, signs, and miracles that were performed through Harris. The following personal quotes and from people attest to this. "I am sent by God, clothed with His power. I am coming to convert you and to cast out from you all the influences of the fetishes, and the idols..." (178). "In Kraffi I baptized the Adjou crus-heal many women with water" (179). A case is given where in the Gold Coast "the Roman Catholic members there attempted to defy him, their church was destroyed owing to a certain prayer he made and lifted up his rod in the sky, and after this many people were converted through his instrumentality" (185).

#### Harris' Impact on Conversion Due to Miracles

Lamin Sanneh says that Harris had a rich harvest of souls in Liberia, the Ivory Coast, and Western Ghana between 1913 and 1915, which was estimated at between 60,000 and 100,000 (1983, 123). Sanneh adds that this man's impact was so great "that his converts stretched the resources of existing churches and spilled over into a cluster of independent churches led by self-styled prophets ..." (125).

Bond *et al* notes that Harris' ministry and influence "raked in tens of thousands of believers in the church whom he advised to join any of the existing churches" (1979, 18). He observes that those who sought membership in the Catholic Church grew by leaps and bounds while many others who were converted lived too far from the Catholic churches and built their own churches and worshipped on their own. This situation continued till 1924 when protestant missionaries came and were overwhelmed by the number of people seeking to join their churches, offshoots of Harris' ministry (18, 29).

In conclusion on Wade Harris, I agree with Larbi that Harris largely succeeded "because he understood the African worldview and made Christianity relevant to his followers" (2001, 58). This African worldview to which Larbi refers is steeped in the belief and interaction with the supernatural.

### Simon Kimbangu

The twentieth century was to see the emergence of a great African church founder whose name and mass movement became household names. According to Sanneh, Kimbangu founded the "most important movement of Christian Independency in the whole of Africa" (1983, 206). He was born in 1889 at Nkamba in the then Belgian Congo and began his career in 1921 (206). He had been baptized with his wife in 1915 in the Baptist church when he was 26 years and worked as a lay preacher with them from 1918 (Hastings 1994, 508 - 509).

The performance of miracles was an important factor in the growth of his new movement that he named "the New Jerusalem" and was himself Christened by "his followers *Ngunza*, which meant "prophet/messiah" (Sanneh 1983, 206). Ndiokwere

alludes to this impact on numbers sparked by performance of miracles in *Prophecy and Revolution*:

The reported miracles done by the new prophet ... spread like wildfire, thus initiating a large movement of pilgrims to Nkamba – the scene of the fantastic stories told about Kimbangu. Hospitals and dispensaries were said to have been left empty as people sought help from this wonder-worker... ( 1981, 47).

Hastings attests to this episode by reporting “large numbers of people began coming to Nkamba to be healed ... abandoning hospitals, Catholic mission, whatever” (1994, 509).

Following this we can observe that the trooping of the people to Nkamba was for healing which by 1966 had created a powerful following estimated to number about 500,000, making it the largest single group in the entire history of African Christian Independency (Sanneh 1983, 207).

### Prophet Mokaleng

Born in 1900 in Thabo Nchu in the Orange Free State as Jacob Mokgwetsi Motswaosele, he took a nickname ‘Mokaleng’ by which he was popularly known (Oosthuizen *et al* (eds) 1994, 41).

Mokaleng was transformed through the 1923 revival of a visiting Southern African prophet Morolong in which he was filled with the Spirit. Later on he went to work in Southern Africa but returned to Botswana in 1949 after receiving a call to minister. He settled in Matsiloga where prayer meetings were held and Mokaleng was filled with the Spirit and began to prophesy. It was during this time of conducting fulltime prayer meetings that “large groups of people ... gathered at Matsiloga ... crippled, and blind people went to the prophet for healing ...” (42).

Ransudu in Oosthuizen notes Prophet Mokaleng was accused by missionaries of deliberately poaching members from their registered and established churches. He attributes the move of the members of the missionary established churches to Mokaleng's church to the healing aspect that is a feature of his church (Oosthuizen 1994, 53).

#### The Ministry and Writing of Bishop Dr. Otieno Mare Munala

Dr. Munala is along standing minister of the gospel born in Vihiga District of Western Kenya. He has an International ministry as an itinerant evangelist, revivalist and Bible teacher with practical signs and wonders. He is also the founder and Bishop of the "New Hope Church".

Dr. Munala represents a group of many second generation Kenyan charismatic preachers that were raised of God in the sixties whose ministries have had profound effect on the nation. The researcher picked on Dr. Munala among his peers and those before him and after because, apart from serving under his leadership for a few years, he is a writing minister. The researcher can attest to the authenticity of what Dr. Munala writes and affirms that he practices what he teaches concerning healing and miracles.

In his inaugural book: *Healing in His Wings: Messages of faith, hope and restoration* (2001, Nairobi), Munala handles issues of the Christian faith that include healing, miracles, and integrity among others.

On building the church he says Jesus does this by "... preaching, teaching, and demonstrating the Gospel" (2001, 43). Munala well builds the case for the impact of miracles on church growth by contending that building the church "cannot be done by technologies, human forces, structures .... Binding Satan, casting out devils, healing

the sick ... is how it is done. Captives are freed and ushered into the kingdom”

(51). Very clearly he details Biblical cases of how New Testament miracles impacted the communities of their day while decrying the failure of the so called contemporary miracles to visibly affect church growth. In reference to Peter’s ministry at Joppa and Lydda he says,

Just think of it! An entire village, or was it a town turned to Jesus! That is better than many costly crusades are yielding these days! That is better than many ‘anointed men or women of God’ are producing these days! Even after much advertising in both print and electronic media, we don’t have such results. Even with our making them “fall” techniques, we don’t see whole towns turning to God. In fact many whom we register as deciding for Jesus have been registered before, by other preachers in previous crusades. And certain of those who “fall” in our meetings go away and continue to live like the devil (2001,52).

Munala continues to build the case for healing and its impact arguing, “Healing is one of the powerful keys of the kingdom Jesus talked about. There is a healing revival in Jerusalem: but unlike today, it is also a time when multitudes are getting saved” (54). Munala’s concern is genuine as one wonders why in some quarters the performance of “miracles” leads to so few turning to Christ.

One of the strongest and justification for miracles in the light of the abuse of miracles that may be rampant in our day is given by Munala:

Just because there are lying signs is no grounds[sic] for rejecting miracles and healings wrought by the finger of God! The cure for misuse has never been disuse ... without the real and true signs, wonders, and manifestations of God, the unstable and ungrounded may be deceived by the counterfeit .... Sheep are hurting, they are sick ... they need tending, feeding, cures. Or they will run after wolves promising them cures and prosperity (56).

It is very unfortunate the way many evangelicals and some charismatics throw away the miraculous because of the abuses and suspicion of false miracles. Does that explain, as Munala claims, why so many of the hurting sheep are experimenting with

and experiencing many false miracles at the hands of witch doctors and false ministers who exploit them?

### Generalized African Initiated Churches (AICs)

As we look at the African church, there is need to go beyond the so-called AICs and interact with all that embrace “charismaticism” and Pentecostalism. But since the AICs have set the pace in this charismatic and Pentecostalism experience and explosion, most of what is considered is from their sources.

Cephas Omenyo in Vahangas and Kyomo asserts that the presence of charismatic dynamism is “perhaps more articulate in Africa than in many other areas” (2003, 1). He observes that African Christianity is expanding rapidly in terms of numerical growth while arguing that it is “impossible to ignore the impact of these movements in Africa today.

### Factors for the fast Growth of the AICs and Pentecostals

There is a necessity to search for the factors that are common in the growth of the charismatic and Pentecostal churches, which include some of the AICs. The factors mentioned here are in no way exhaustive.

### Healing and Deliverance

These two items are a major emphasis of growing churches in Africa. Haar admits that the fastest growing churches in Ghana are “... those of a Pentecostal or charismatic nature”. He adds that those types of churches have in common, among others, “efficacy of prophecy and healing, and they all engage in some form of exorcism or deliverance” (Haar 2001, 250). He argues further that these churches

emphasize “healing and a belief in miracles”, and provide “healing services where such miracles are believed to occur” (269).

Omenyo, in Vahangas and Kyomo, concurs with this observation in reporting, “Healing and deliverance are major factors that attract members of the mainline to the AICs and other Pentecostal churches” (2003, 17). These factors are also reiterated by Faith Lugazia in Vahangas and Kyomo (51). Kyomo who did research on healing on the African context says that his research revealed the reason for the rapid spread of the African independent churches is “because healing in these churches is at the center of their worship” (151). He argues that the same reason accounts for the growth of the Pentecostal type churches” in Africa where prayer for physically sick people, prayer for healing for psychological ailments are conducted (151).

Writing on the *Christ Apostolic Church of South Africa* Kalu says it “grew tremendously, because in 1928 a payload driver, Joseph Babalola, had a clear vision that he should preach and heal” (2005, 296). Vahangas argues that the Pentecostal and charismatic churches in Tanzania are growing rapidly due to their emphasis on healing “and their influence is wider than their membership” (203, 157). Concerning Independent churches Ndiokwere relates that most of them practice faith healing and that “the healing message is the ‘pivot of the activities’ of these churches” (1981, 114).

Maboea in Oosthuizen *et al* (Eds) argues that the Zionist church appears as an institute of healing where these healing message is the pivot of all church activity” (1994,121). Interestingly Maboea contends that the usual answer as to why a person has joined a Zionist church is: “I was ill, they prayed for me, now I am well” (Oosthuizen, 121-122). Moreover he observes, “People attend their services only to be prayed for” which the author says is the reason one finds there not only “members



of AIC, but also people from mainline churches and others who belong to no church”(122).

The author repeats that many people in the AICs do not come to church to worship God but to be prayed for regarding their problems and needs (123). As much as this may be true it is in line with the New Testament experience whereby many came to Jesus primarily to be healed and to hear him as we have already noted. The author admits that those who are prayed for and healed end up joining the churches (123-127).

Oosthuizen in *The Healer-Prophet in Afro-Christian Churches* notes:

“Many members of the ‘historic’ dissociate themselves from the indigenous churches, but they are there at the nocturnal healing sessions. They simply arrive for healing ...”(1992, 71). He repeats this by saying these Christians from the ‘historic’ churches maintain “double membership”(Oosthuizen 1994,122).

Philomena Njeri Mwaura on “Women as Healers” in Kalu States that “the healing function is significant in AICs, Charismatics, and Neo Pentecostal churches and is usually the basis for their appeal. Most usually join after experiencing healing” (Kalu 2005, 433).

### Prosperity Emphasis

The preaching of and emphasis on material prosperity has had an effect on the growth of the charismatic, Pentecostal and AICs in Africa.

Magesa in Vahangas mentions among the attractive elements in charismatic churches as being “the prosperity gospel”. He notes that this emphasis, coupled with the doctrine and practice of healing “pull crowds” (2003, 38, 39). As much as this

often referred to “prosperity gospel” has generated some controversy in a section of Christianity, its appeal to both the poor and the well to - do cannot be gainsaid.

On the influence of Pentecostalism in the area of prosperity, Larbi, who researched and wrote at length on Ghanaian Pentecostalism, affirms: “Though in the early days the initial source of recruitment for the Pentecostals was mainly from the ‘society disinherited’, they later attracted the highly placed within the society” (2001, 51). He further argues that both the ‘inherited’ and the ‘disinherited’ in their context of need turn to the supernatural due to their common search for salvation (51).

Larbi prefers the terms “abundant life” rather than what is termed the “prosperity gospel” (312, 313). He very well says that for Ghanaian Pentecostals prosperity does not mean a “fleet of cars”, “expensive clothes, a multi-roomed and similar notions” (312). To them it means basic essentials like a “comfortable living, that is, enough food to eat, decent place to live, a decent means of transport, and decent clothing” (313).

#### Miscellaneous Factors

Definitely there are other factors that contribute to the proliferation of the Pentecostal, charismatic and the AICs churches. Though they are not given emphasis in this review, of necessity they should be mentioned.

Kalu, in what we have already referred, attributes this rapid growth in African Christianity by Pentecostals and charismatics to what he calls “the cultural fit” (2005, 41). In other words these churches are culturally relevant and appeal to the people. Larbi concurs with this as he refers to Wade Harris whom he says succeeded largely because of his understanding of the African worldview and making Christianity relevant to his followers (Larbi 2001, 58). Of course for Harris it meant the

contextualization of worship. In this regard he asked the people who converted in his meetings to sing their own songs adding the name of God on it” (Bond *et al* 1979, 19).

The other factor in this category is the experience of glossolalia – that is baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues. This phenomenon is usually followed by other manifestations of the Spirit. Such experience may have some influence in drawing people to the churches as Larbi notes in his narration of Anim’s Organization (Church). As a matter fact Larbi says the outpouring of the Spirit at Brekumanso village near Asemankase attracted people, some of them walking as many as 160 miles to receive the Holy Spirit. This happening led to “considerable growth” of the church in Ghana (Larbi 2001, 104-105).

In conclusion, the phenomenon of healing and miracles and its effect on the growth and development of the church in Africa and worldwide is very real. Moreover the worldviews of Africans and the general human need to experience power in a supernatural way create curiosity for miracles and eventual attraction to them when and where they are performed.

The performance of healings, signs, wonders, and miracles has largely contributed to the growth of the church, especially the Pentecostals and the AICs, as has been already noted. The proliferation of these churches and movements is mainly due to the impact of the supernatural. This is in keeping with what Kalu asserts, “charismaticism has been the strongest instrument of church growth in Africa since the 1970s” (2005, 306).

### Conclusion of Literature Review

This review of the New Testament teaching and writings of the aforementioned authors reveals certain things that are significant in this study.

Miracles had a great significance in the ministry of the Lord Jesus, the Early Church, and should be so in the Contemporary church. The review has revealed that miracles had an impact on the recipients who responded by exhibiting faith in Christ. At the same time literature has revealed that some of the people who witnessed miracles did not believe in Christ and that is to be expected.

An observation from the review reveals that there are those authors who hold that miracles were only valid and necessary during the inception of the church and when the church became mature they ceased. After examining the varying views of these authors, the research moved on with the understanding that miracles, biblically and through the contemporary and African Church, have a strong and positive bearing on church growth. Yet it must be born in mind that the performance of miracles does not automatically result in all the witnesses embracing Christ as Lord and Saviour.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

The researcher on “The Impact of Miracles on Church Growth” at RGC Quarry used qualitative method as the major means of gathering data. However, quantitative research methodology was also employed in the later stage of the research as a way to supplement what was being done. Use of mixed methods, i.e., qualitative and quantitative, is justified by Creswell in his examination of “Pragmatic Knowledge Claims” (2003, 11- 22).

The researcher agrees with Creswell on his sentiments for the employment of mixed methods as he well argues,

Thus, for the mixed method researcher, pragmatism opens the door to multiple methods, different worldviews, and different assumptions, as well as to different forms of data collection and analysis in the mixed methods study (2003, 12).

The contention that the collection of both closed- ended quantitative data and open – ended qualitative data are advantageous to understanding and unearthing the problem, greatly helped the researcher particularly in data analysis and interpretation (2003,18,22).

#### Site Entry

By “Site Entry” we mean the way the researcher gains access to the area designated for research. Research sites have “gate keepers” who are the authority figures behind them and their permission must be sought before the commencement of any research as Seidman observes:

A researcher studying the experience of people at a particular site, whether it be factory, school, church...or business, must gain access through the person who has the responsibility for the operation of the site”(1998,37-38).

In the case of this researcher, entry to the site was smooth. This happened because the Pastor of the church knew the researcher and some of the church members were familiar to the researcher, having been a regular guest speaker at their church. Moreover, as early as January 2006 the researcher had asked the Pastor if he could be allowed to do his research at RGC Quarry when the time would be due. In early January 2007 the researcher requested the Head of Missions Department (HoD) at NEGST to write a letter to the Pastor of RGC Quarry, Rev. Chavaseki, to permit the researcher to carry out this study in his church. The concerned HoD promptly did this and the Pastor gave the authorizing letter (See Appendii V1 and V11).

#### Definition of the Population

This kind of research required that the population of study be clearly defined. The general population of research was the entire church, which Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias describe as the aggregate of all cases that conform to some designated set of specifications (1996, 179). The population of the church was about 800, a figure that the Pastor had given me and looked reasonable from the participant observation. Most of the people are of low income working as casual labourers in the nearby industrial area firms. Specifications here meant the church members that had received or witnessed miracles. This population was well defined and was arrived at through sampling as indicated below.

## Sampling

Having a church with a size of RGC Quarry presents a problem in terms of the actual population that is researchable due to the limitation of time and availability of funds. This is where the principle of sampling comes in.

Sampling operates by choosing “subsets from a large group to represent the whole group” (Sogaard 1996, 110). Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias say that in sampling generalizations are not based on data collected from all the observations or all the respondents but “researchers rely on a relatively small number of cases (a sample) as a basis of making inferences about all the cases ...”(1996,173). For the purposes of this study the researcher selected a sample of 25 members of RGC Quarry as the main focus of his qualitative study. For interview purposes these members were coded from RGCQ1-25(1-25 representing numbers). The argument for this was it saves money, time, and is more accurate (Sogaard 1996, 111-112). For the quantitative aspect of research, since the researcher employed mixed method as indicated above, a sample of 115 people from the church was used.

## Selection of Research Participants

The selection of research participants was broad to ensure that the samples fairly represented the population. The principle of randomness and probability sampling were used. The concept of random selection sampling demands “every person in the total population must have a known chance of being selected for the sample” (Sogaard 1996, 112).

For the ethnographic interview the researcher gave opportunities of participation to as many members of the church as possible. Participation in the researcher was purely voluntary. This is in keeping with what Seidman (1998, 53)

advocates that "...participation in research must be completely voluntary and that volunteering is based on being informed." This was accomplished by asking all the members who had received or witnessed any miracle to avail themselves of their own accord for interview. The researcher did this by announcing in all the three main Sunday Worship Services about the need for such volunteers. Announcing in all the services three times was to give each eligible member an equal chance of being selected. Kidder (1981, 332) says, "The most familiar kind of sample is called a simple random sample, where each element in the population has an equal probability of being included in the sample."

The researcher gave a questionnaire to those who responded (See Appendix I, Questionnaire 1) to fill, which was used to select the actual 25 respondents (Sogaard, 118). Through intelligent selection of the participants the researcher made use of stratified samples to "ensure that different groups of the population are adequately represented in the sample" (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias 1996, 188). This was done by shortlisting the qualifying respondents in terms of sex, age, and job status. In addition the researcher asked the Pastor to provide leaders from the various levels of the church to be interviewed, i.e., Women, Men, Youth, HBC, Evangelism, and Intercessory leaders. The interviews covered at least three groups of people in this church: The Pastoral staff (1), Selected departmental and Home Bible Church leaders (7), Ordinary RGC Quarry church members (18).

For the quantitative research the researcher used the same simple random sampling procedure to get his population of study. In all the three Church Sunday Services the researcher availed himself and made announcements requesting those willing to fill forms to provide general information on church and miracles to remain.



The researcher told the congregations on that day that everybody qualified to fill that form. Those who responded and filled the forms were 115.

### Data Collection

Data collection was done using various methods. Since this was largely ethnographic research, most of the means of gathering data were those used in qualitative studies and few of the quantitative. Basically the sources of data were members, leaders, Pastoral staff, and any unsaved attendees of the church.

### Participant Observation

This is a very crucial method of gathering information in ethnographic studies. Kidder says it is defined as a “period of intense social interaction between researchers and subjects in the milieu of the latter, during which time data...are unobtrusively and systematically collected” (1981, 3). The researcher used this method sparingly since it requires a long and continuous stay on the field by the researcher. The researcher occasionally availed himself to participate with the members in some of the various church services of RGC Quarry. The researcher attended Sunday church worship services on five different occasions, and house fellowships (commonly called “Home Bible Churches” or HBCs).

### Ethnographic Interviews

This was the main research method that was used in this study to collect data. The methodology employed personal interviews covering in-depth research and possibly some questionnaire interviews.

On in depth-interviews, the interviewer asks “respondents questions designed to elicit answers pertinent to the research hypothesis”(Kidder, 232). The interviews

were based on unstructured and semi-structured Questions. Lewis in Greig and

Springer says:

Although participant observation is a standard research method among cultural anthropologists... it is almost always supplemented by in depth interviews and attempts to understand the perspectives of the Participants themselves (1993, 322).

In semi-structured (closed) interview the respondents may be interviewed using an interview guide like a prepared interview questions as a supplementary to the in-depth interviews (Appendix II).

### Quantitative Interviews

Since this study also followed quantitative methodology as part of seeking to answer the research questions, questionnaires were used to gather data. The Questionnaires were given to willing members of the congregation after each of the three services on March 18, 2007 and filled at the church compound. Each questionnaire had 18 items (questions), which the respondents needed to respond to. A total of 115 questionnaires were filled. The questionnaires were developed by the researcher and checked by his supervisor. Creswell says that as part of rigorous data collection there is necessity to develop and name the actual instrument that needs to be used to collect data (2003, 157). For the details of the questionnaire see Appendix V.

### Data Recording

Nachmias and Nachmias (1996, 291) argue that in field research the primary sources of data are what people say and do. They note "Researchers may record the behaviour they observe by writing notes, tape recording, and on occasion

photographing...” Creswell (2003, 190) recommends handwriting of the observations and interviews which thing the researcher did in addition to photographing during participant observer sessions.

For the quantitative interviews the participants were involved in the recording of the data since the questionnaires given to them were self-administered. This was also helpful in that it provided anonymity for those who wished for it, as they were not to indicate their names on the forms.

#### Interview Venue(s).

The participants were interviewed at the church compound in an office provided by the church for this purpose. However, the participants had been given the leeway by the researcher to select a different venue in case the church office was not convenient for them.

The researcher personally interviewed the participants. The interviews were held once in a week on Saturdays between 12.00 p.m and 7.00 p.m. The individual interviews lasted between one and two hours with few deviations. The period of data collection was January to April 2007(three months).

#### Data Analysis

Data analysis largely followed the framework Creswell gives (2003,190- 194) which involves organizing and preparing the data for analysis, reading through all the data to get a general sense of it, and beginning a detailed analysis with the coding process.

For the participant observer for ethnographic interviews with the members and the Pastor, the reports were read through by the researcher and the process of coding

and forming themes began. The researcher identified recurring themes like miracles in worship, emphasis in preaching, and the involvement of members in the dissemination of miracles. Saoshiro lends credence to the method of developing themes from the vast ethnographic information by suggesting that ‘commonality’ of themes is among the criteria that can be used to interpret data. Since this study was both ethnographic and quantitative in terms of methodology with a greater leaning towards the qualitative method, the analysis has followed the same format. The reporting of the qualitative findings has been confined to narration as Cresswell suggests: “The most popular approach is to use a narrative passage to convey the findings of the analysis...Many qualitative researchers may use visuals, figures, or tables as adjuncts to the discussions” (2003, 194). The researcher has included relevant pictures of the RGC Quarry that illustrate some of the ways the church emphasizes and practices the ministry of miracles. The findings of the quantitative questionnaire were analyzed using tables, and bar graphs to demonstrate the findings (Sogaard 1996, 203). Percentages were worked out to compare the impact of miracles on church attendance.

This mixed method of data analysis was used by Lewis who analyzed data on people who had claimed to receive miracles in John Wimber’s meeting at Harrogate Conference, England (Greig & Springer 1993, 321-338). According to Lewis scales can be drawn on which the data is tabulated and analyzed. Then percentages can be drawn and compared (332).

#### Validation and Reliability of Data

In his book on miracles, C.S. Lewis says, “Most stories about miraculous events are probably false ... we must therefore find a criterion whereby to judge any

particular story of the miraculous” (Lewis 1947, 104). The researcher agrees with Lewis that we live in a day of such gross exaggerations and manipulation of information even among Christians that data gathered from religious people by themselves is held in suspicion.

Lewis goes further to suggest that the stories whose historical evidence is sufficiently good should be accepted (104). Historical evidence was very useful to the researcher as most of the miracles reported by respondents were verified by other participants who cited the same without being asked. The miracles of the healing of the paralyzed lady in Rev. Angela Lynch’s meeting, the testimony of miracle born children, the drunkards saved and delivered in the crusades were among the many repeated miracles that were self-validating. Since the researcher was well known to the Pastor and the leadership of the church, it was his policy to corroborate some of the claims to miracles by checking with the Pastor on the veracity of the same.

Validation of the data was also through some of the methods Creswell presents (2003, 196): 1. The use of rich, thick description to convey the findings thus enabling the readers to be part of the setting and experiences of the participants and the researcher. 2. Spending prolonged time in the field. Though three months of research with weekly interaction with participants at RGC Quarry may seem short, the length of time spent in ethnographic interviews and participant observer at the church may, in away, justify the researcher’s claim to a prolonged stay.

## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter is a report and interpretation of the data collected in the quest to solve the research problem: “The impact of miracles on the growth of Redeemed Gospel Church (RGC), Quarry, Nairobi, from 1998-2007.”

The findings are reported and analyzed within the three major data collection procedures employed in this study, that is, participant observer, ethnographic interviews, and self-administered questionnaires. Since the approach of the study was principally qualitative, although it was coupled with quantitative in a lesser way for the purposes of comparison, the findings largely reflect this. The most popular approach in conveying qualitative findings is the use of “a narrative passage” as Creswell argues (2003, 194) and which is the line taken by the researcher in this study. Mann argues that “depth interviews of a very personal kind, with a very small number of people, may be interpreted qualitatively, as well as quantitatively by the people who carried them out...” (1985, 200).

#### Findings of Ethnographic Interviews

The results of these interviews are drawn from twenty-five interviewees, who represent RGC Quarry church attendees, leaders, and the Pastor. After data collection, the researcher followed the recommendations advanced by Sogaard (1996, 184-185) and Creswell (2003, 190-192). Sogaard is of the view that to get a picture of how the answers are given then the responses need to be read in order to develop a set of categories.

Creswell adds to this by advising the researcher to “read through the data to get a general sense.” Indeed this is the trend the researcher followed after data collection as Saoshiro insists that there is no precise way for interpreting these types of findings but needs to be based on commonality (1997,26). Following is the researcher’s categorization of the data based on common themes.

### ***Definition of a Miracle***

The researcher sought to know the respondent’s understanding in response to research question one. The respondents defined a miracle in similar ways. Two of them (RGCQ2, RGCQ6) said, “It is the hand of God that works in people.” One of them (RGCQ4) said, “It is something that God does in your life so that afterwards His name can be praised.” Still another respondent (RGCQ7) saw a miracle as “anything God can do in your life that can impact others.” Seven respondents (RGCQ11, RGCQ12, RGCQ13, RGCQ16, RGCQ17, RGCQ20, and RGCQ22) defined miracles as supernatural or extra ordinary works of God. Then there was an overwhelming number of fourteen respondents (RGCQ1, RGCQ3, RGCQ5, RGCQ8, RGCQ9, RGCQ10, RGCQ14, RGCQ15, RGCQ18, RGCQ19, RGCQ21, RGCQ23, RGCQ24, and RGCQ25) that saw miracles as a happening beyond the understanding and ability of man. Yet as much as some acknowledged that miracles are done by the power of God, they underscored the value of human faith in facilitating miracles.

### ***Types of Miracles***

The participants were asked whether there are different types of miracles and to cite the ones they actually had witnessed or received. The general list given here is condensed from what they gave.

### Healing the sick

Healing was seen as the main type of miracles. At the same time some of the respondents saw healing as duo faceted with physical healing on one hand and heart healing on the other hand. In the realm of physical healing was healing of blindness and paralysis among others. Another respondent referred to healing as spiritual healing – in the soul. Still another respondent categorized this as spiritual miracles.

### Deliverance miracles

A number of respondents talked of deliverance miracles. To them these are miracles where God delivers people from various oppressions or disasters like accidents.

### Divine protection

A particular respondent cited this type and told me, “This is the kind of miraculous protection God gave to Israel when she came out of Egypt and Egypt followed her to destroy her. God came between Israel and Egypt” to separate them while in essence He was protecting Israel.

### Salvation miracle

A lady who is a teacher by profession, related how she resisted to be saved but the Lord showed her a vision from which she was convicted and got saved. A few other respondents attested to this miracle.

### Provision miracles

This category has a number of items to which most of the members testified to receiving or witnessing. These include provision of the necessities of life like food, clothing, job, business enterprise, and financial miracles. Several respondents



testified that people getting jobs in answer to prayer is the order of the day at RGC Quarry. Primary school dropouts, maids, masons, young professionals narrated how the Pastor prayed for them and how they consequently got jobs.

Acquisition of property by the Church.

A number of the interviewees shared with me the miracle of the church acquiring physical structures around her, especially having been wall to wall with a bar. Now it has grown structurally and swallowed what surrounded her.

Miraculous birth of children

A coordinator of all the HBCs who is also among the senior leaders of the church said, “There are people in the church who had no children, The Pastor prayed for them and now they have children.” He says he has witnessed many barren women at RGC Quarry prayed for and bear children: Respondent RGCQ.25 who is a senior leader in the church had stayed for five years without a child but received one.

Another lady with an unsaved husband and without a child for over ten years got one.

### ***Emphasis on miracles***

The researcher sought to investigate the extent to which RGC Quarry emphasizes miracles based on research question no.2. Through the responses given to the face-to-face ethnographic interviews some common themes emerged that need to be analyzed. In a way, the findings on this inquiry will shed light on whether there is any link between the (or) non-emphasis of miracles and the growth being experienced at RGC Quarry.

The findings are presented and analyzed under the broad categories of Sunday Services, House Bible Churches (HBCs), and Evangelistic meetings (includes

crusades and open air meetings). Under these broad categories, there emerged sub-themes that form the core of the report. The researcher will lean so much on Sogaard's suggestion that the responses from this interview be used as quality input into the data "and may be helpful to quote certain responses directly in the final report" (1996,190-193).

### ***Sunday Services***

The Sunday service is the outward (what is clearly seen) face of Christianity in many places where Christianity is represented across the globe. Most Christians have their active church life on Sundays and tend to equate church with Sunday. For RGC Quarry, findings show that Sunday life at the church is the life spring and model of the church. This is why it was necessary to categorize findings related to Sunday activities on their own.

### ***Pastor's Role in Emphasis of Miracles***

Throughout the interviews, the Pastor's name and his involvement in the people's lives kept coming up. From the respondents' point of view their Pastor, whom they popularly call 'Pastor Brown', is not only with the people but also plays a central role in the miracle phenomenon of the church.

Out of the twenty-five respondents that were interviewed, it was unanimous that their Pastor is on the forefront of providing an atmosphere that is conducive to the working of miracles. Below are some of the ways that Pastor Brown 'promotes' miracles.

#### 1. Prayer

Prayer is crucial in the RGC Quarry Sunday services with the Pastor on the frontline of this. One of the women interviewed (RGCQ.15) and who has been in the

church from the time this Pastor came had this to say, “When Pastor Brown came we were in a small hall and without a place to teach children. We were surrounded by a bar and a hotel. Pastor told us to pray and we prayed, then the bar and the hotel were removed and now the church has won. When the other Pastor was here we were 200 people but when Pastor Brown came we had remained 20 people (after the split). Now we have grown from 20 people to over 500 people and this is a miracle. There are churches that began the same time with us (1998) but they have not grown, yet we are growing day after day.” This is clearly telling on the influence Pastor Brown is exerting on the congregation through his inspiration of prayer.

Another respondent who has been in the church since 1997 said when Pastor Brown came, the church was in the same premises with the bar and used to share many things with it. This respondent added, “But he asked us to pray and through prayer the first miracle was that the bar closed, and the Church building which used to be very small ...through prayer miracles have happened.”

Apart from urging and leading the people in prayer, Pastor Brown stands out when it comes to praying for the sick and needy in his church. Respondent RGCQ.9 who has been in the church since 1998 affirmed that “praying for the sick and the needy is the ‘climax’ of the service. That is why we come to church and it must happen”. All the interviewees said the Pastor attaches great importance to prayer and does it consistently. Many of the respondents have emphatically said that the Pastor prays for the sick and needy and that they are healed and their needs met respectively. One of them (RGCQ.10) said, “There are people in the church who had no children, Pastor prayed for them and now they have children. The pastor also prays for the sick and they are healed”. Another added, “The Pastor prays for people to get jobs, barren women to get children, sick people to be healed, people to be saved.”



**Photo 1: Prayer session in the 3<sup>rd</sup> service (some people slain on the ground)  
Date of photo: 18/03/07 by the Researcher**

The above photograph is an illustration of how the Pastor emphasizes miracles by praying for the sick. To underscore the importance of prayer for the sick and needy, Pastor uses various ways to pray and minister to the people. When asked the manner of Pastor's praying, all of them said he employs a variety of ways depending on the occasion and how the Spirit leads Him. However, there are some methods that are more common like calling the people who need prayer to the front, laying hands on them and praying over them. Occasionally, the interviewees said, Pastor anoints the people with oil and prays for them. Sometimes the Pastor will ask the needy and the sick people to stand wherever they are in the service, or raise their hands or put their hands at the ailing part of the body then prays for them from the pulpit. Usually, this happens when the people are too many to come to the front and or the time is very

short in the service. But even when this happens the Pastor asks his congregation to lay their hands on the sick and needy and help pray with them as he leads the prayers from the pulpit. There are those moments that Pastor will speak from the pulpit, usually during worship, and say that there is a particular person with a specific problem or need as the Spirit is showing him. The people with that problem usually stand and come forward and are prayed for. This is confirmed by RGCQ. 6 who says, “Sometimes Pastor may say ‘There is someone with this kind of sickness’. The person comes up and is prayed for and gets healed. This happens once in a while.” The HBC coordinator (RGCQ.18) alludes to the Pastor being used occasionally in this way to minister to the sick and needy. He adds that after that happens Pastor prays for others in the service and “some people are healed instantly and afterward get saved in the same service.”

## 2. Preaching

Preaching is an essential aspect of the ministry of the church. Paul said “it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe” (1Cor.1: 21). Our Lord Jesus said He was anointed of the Spirit to preach the gospel to the poor (Lk.4: 16). The interviews greatly reveal the importance of preaching in RGC Quarry and how it is used to emphasize miracles, especially through the ministry of the Pastor.

Though the Pastor is not the only one who preaches in his church, the members interviewed were unanimous that it is the Pastor’s preaching that has set the tempo for miracles in the church. In as much as most members were of the opinion that Pastor puts much stress on miracles, there are those who put it in clear perspective. It is this other perspective the researcher wishes to look at first. This appears contradictory to the general trend set by the majority views. In a way this is

in keeping with Creswell on validating the accuracy of findings who encourages the presentation of “negative or discrepant information that runs counter to the themes” (2003, 196).

One of the people holding this view said in Kiswahili, “Pastor hatilii mkazo mambo ya miujiza (Pastor does not emphasize miracles in his preaching.”

Respondent no. 11 says, “What the man of God does is to plant people deep in the word of God. Pastor roots people in the word of God – not necessarily miracles.”

The observation by this small section of interviewees is very sensible. What they are essentially saying is that Pastor is not just parading miracles to the congregation irrationally but he is actually teaching the word of God in which he wants the members to be rooted. What is indisputable is that Pastor is a good teacher of the Word.

Even the people who were speaking for miracle emphasis in the preaching still credited the Pastor with solid teaching that builds the Christian life and character in members that is necessary for experiencing miracles. One of them said of their Pastor “Pastor tells people to live a holy life so that they can ‘see’ (experience) God – so that God can do miracles for them.”

There is no doubt that the evidence for emphasis of miracles is great. There is constant stress on “miracles and the power of God in preaching”, one reported. Pastor’s common words as he preaches are: “God is faithful. If you trust Him, He is able to give you what you want. There is nothing that is hard for God. You can receive your miracle.” Moreover, Pastor encourages people to have faith in God by using such words as “God is able”, and “What He has done for others, He can do for you.” Since the Bible declares that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God (Rom.10:17), the miracles wrought in RGC Quarry are due to the faith of the

recipients in God which is emergent from the preaching of the word of God concerning God's promises and His power.

### 3. Music and Worship

The researcher combined music and worship rather than examining them under separate sub-themes. This was necessitated by the understanding that music is part of worship that leads into worship.

The findings of miracles being emphasized and expressed through music or worship have strong Biblical precedents. Perhaps the greatest song that attests to miracles attributed to Jehovah our Lord is what Israel sung after the Red Sea had parted and they moved on dry land as recorded in Exodus 15: 1-21. Some of the lyrics of this song have unique correlation with the findings on the lyrics of the songs at RGC Quarry, for example: "I will sing unto the Lord for He has triumphed gloriously...Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods.... Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea." Among the most popular Swahili titles that are sung at RGC Quarry is "Ni nani kama wewe Bwana" ("Who is like you Lord"). The title suggests that this is a very unique God doing wonders, miracles, and mighty deeds.

Virtually all the respondents said the songs in the church services 'talk' about miracles with one of them stressing "Almost all the songs talk speak about miracles. Most of them speak about the power of God and His doings." The researcher found out that some of the songs are invocation of God to work miracles like "Tenda muujiza Baba tukuone, muujiza wako unatutia moyo" ("Father work a miracle that we may see you, your miracle encourages us"). Another song in this group is "Baba wa mbinguni, nyosha mkono wako, watu wauone, walisifu jina lako" ("Heavenly Father stretch your hand that people may see it and praise your name"). This invocation of

God is more like the prayer of the church in Acts 4: 29-30, “And now Lord ...stretching forth thine hand to heal...”

One of the youths interviewed who is in the music department had so much to say about the implications of those worship songs to the congregants. She gave me this popular title and sung it to me, giving its meaning to the worshippers:

*Unajibu Na ijulikane kwamba upo*  
*Mungu wa Elijah*                    *x2*  
*kwa wazi*  
*Mungu wa Elijah*                    *x2*  
*Unajibu kwa moto*  
*Mungu wa Elijah*                    *x2*

Translation:

*Let it be known that you are (exist)*  
*The God of Elijah*                    *x2*  
*You answer (prayer) openly*  
*The God of Elijah*                    *x2*  
*You answer (prayer) by fire*  
*The God of Elijah*                    *x2*

To get a glimpse of the song this interviewee RGCQ.8 sung for the researcher, follow her explanation of the meanings hidden in the lyrics of the song: “The way I understand this song is that if there is a sick person, God should heal him so that people can know He is (alive). If there is somebody without a job, God should provide one for him so that people may know He is. If Pastor prays for somebody without a job and he gets one, or the sick and they are healed, then I will know that God whom Pastor preaches is the true God.”





**Photo 2: Congregation worships in the 2<sup>nd</sup> service  
Date of photo: 18/03/2007 by the Researcher**

The above photograph is a live Sunday morning worship service with members of the church actively involved. One interesting finding of this research was what happens during song services or worship in RGC Quarry meetings. One of the respondents confidently said, “Most of the miracles take place during the song service especially for me.” This truth was well articulated by another respondent (RGCQ.17) who is in the choir and in the worship team. He said, “Songs are for ministry to the lives of the people. Some come depressed but when we sing, their marriages are healed. Some times when we lift the name of Jesus they are healed in their hearts, and people come forward to be saved while the worship is going on.” A living testimony of healing during the service was by interviewee no. 22 who is an usher in the church. She had pain in her legs during the service in October 2006. She said,

“The worship leader, (interviewee RGCQ. 19) told us to stand when I was in serious pain. I obeyed and soon after the first jump the pain left and I was healed.”

### *House Bible Churches (HBCs)*

The House Bible Churches, popularly called HBCs, are a very strong arm of the church that is visible outside the official church that is known on Sundays at the central gathering place in “Quarry.” The HBC is the church at home, in the estates, and in the work and market places. What is the place of miracles in this “miniature church” in the advancement of the cause of the central RGC Quarry?

The researcher found out that this is a replica of the main church as one of the interviewees said that they do everything that is done in the main church only that it is done within a shorter time. The interviews brought out clear incidents of miracles in the HBCs and their environs leading to some influx of new people into the church.

#### HBCs as an extension of miracles

HBCs are involved in praying for the sick and the needy that are part of their membership and non-members. All the interviewees that attend HBCs agreed that their particular HBCs are actively involved in this kind of ministry at least with their members. Among the respondents were three leaders of HBCs while one of them was the coordinator of all the thirteen HBCs of the church.

There are many testimonies of people who are prayed for in the HBCs and healed, with some of them eventually joining the church. An interviewee from Kwa Njenga HBC said, “There is prayer for the needy and sick. There are non-members who attend the HBC and are prayed for concerning needs and sickness. They eventually come to church.” Another respondent (RGCQ.15) from Mwatate HBC said

they pray for the sick and needy and “also visit the sick and pray for them.” This is reinforced by respondent RGCQ.9 from the same HBC who added, “Many times people have been prayed for in HBC and come to church. There is a mother we went to her house after an HBC meeting to pray for her, as she was sick. Afterwards she came to church and she is a member.” There are people who attend HBCs out of the needs they have and together with those needs they are witnessed to as they are prayed for. A report from one of the respondents goes: “In 2006 there was a young man who attended our HBC but was not saved and had no job. He was prayed for to receive salvation and then to get a job. He then joined our church and after three weeks he got a job.” These are clear indications that miracles performed through HBCs are drawing people into the church.

Even those who do not convert through witnessing miracles in HBCs may find their way into the church and become ordinary attendees as evidenced by the testimony of interviewee RGCQ.2:

A lady member of our HBC was sick and when we went to pray for her at the house, we found her unsaved sister whom we witnessed to but in vain. The same night the sick sister was healed and the following Thursday she came to the HBC together with her unsaved sister. She came because of the healing miracle she saw on her sister. Since then she comes to the HBC and even Sunday services though she is not yet saved.

### *Evangelistic Outreaches*

RGC Quarry is involved in mass evangelistic outreaches especially Crusades and Open Air meetings. The findings from these inquiry show that there is a demonstration of healing and miracles that is positively impacting church growth in RGC Quarry.

### *Miracles are Witnessed*

More than half of the interviewees acknowledged that they had attended evangelistic meetings hosted by RGC Quarry. A good number of them testified that miracles occur in these meetings.

Interviewee RGCQ.19 related that, “We have seen God heal the sick and they are worshipping here.” He emphatically added that many people had come to church through crusade miracles one of them being (interviewee RGCQ.16) “who sometimes drives Pastor’s vehicle. He was a typical drunkard.” The researcher had interviewed the referred to respondent earlier and he had mentioned how he was converted in a crusade when he was totally drunk which was a salvation miracle.

There was overwhelming evidence that evangelistic miracles are resulting in people coming to RGC Quarry church. A certain interviewee said,

Many people come to church after crusades and this makes us realize God has done a miracle in their lives. There are people who are prayed for and healed instantly in the crusades.” What interviewee RGCQ. 8 shares needed to be considered as healing miracles touch even those who are visiting witchdoctors: “There is one young man who got saved in the Kwa Njenga crusade and was prayed for concerning sickness and got healed. He said he decided to come to church because he had visited witchdoctors and hospitals without remedy but when Pastor prayed for him he got healed.

The demonstration of miracles in evangelistic outreaches does not mean that all who receive or witness them end up believing the gospel and joining RGC Quarry. This particular interviewee (RGCQ.4) described evangelistic meetings as having more power than the church services: “Hiyo inakuwa kali kuliko kanisa” (This one is much more “hot” than the church). His observation was that there are people who are prayed for at the crusade and get healed or received miracles but do not necessarily come to church or get saved. This may further be confirmed by the respondents who said they have not seen or heard of any of the people who received a miracle at the crusades come to church (RGCQ. 5 and RGCQ. 11).

### Members “Advertising” Miracles

The question the researcher sought to answer was whether members of RGC Quarry were involved in the declaration of miracles that are happening in their lives and church to people around them. It is based on interview questions nos.4- 6. In simplicity, this was an exercise to discover whether members are doing anything to disseminate miracles and advertise the church, which by extension is advertising the kingdom of God.

There is a Biblical rationale for this. Psalm 96: 1 says, “Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.” One inspiring Old Testament account of Proclamation of Jehovah’s miracles is that of the Israelite maid to Namaan’s wife. She only needed to say to Namaan’s wife, “Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! For he would recover him of his leprosy” (2Kings 5:1-14). This short and simple testimony set in motion a series of actions that were to culminate in the cleansing of Namaan from Leprosy. The researcher now shares his findings of the ways members relate to people and God in response to the miracles they have received or witnessed.

The researcher found out that most of the recipients or witnesses of miracles in RGC Quarry talked about such miracles to both Christians and unbelievers around them. One of the respondents said he invites other people to come and receive miracles. He spoke of his brother in-law whom he invited to church to receive a miracle and he came and got saved. There are those who are invited so as to receive a miracle yet they do not show up. This is the experience of interviewee no.3 who invites people to come and be prayed for though without “many positive results”.

A number of the interviewees, inasmuch as they invite people to church for the purposes of receiving from Him, made it known that they were not out to advertise

miracles or their church per se for the sake of gaining members. Respondent no.12 told said, “Honestly I don’t tell people to come and receive miracles because if they miss they will be disappointed but I tell them to come and attend.”

The witness and invitation of the members to outsiders concerning miracles has yielded much fruit. Interviewee RGCQ.16 said, “I tell people to come to our church to receive miracles. There are some who have responded and are in the church today. One of them used to be a drunkard with me.” Interviewee no.8 said she talks to all around her concerning the miracles she has received and invites people to church to receive a miracle. When her sister who was hosting her saw she had been healed, “she decided to come to our church (from ‘Salvation Army’) and she got saved in our church.” The interviewee who is now a Bible School student had this to say, “I have been a ‘publisizer’ of miracles. There are people who have come to church out of the miracles God has done in my life. Some of them are my relatives. Several people – neighbours – have come to church and got saved because of my miracle of salvation.” An interviewee who is married for over three years and is believing God for her own children as Pastor prays with her, confidently said this regarding proclamation of miracles, “Yes I tell people and invite them to our church. There are people who have come in response to my invitation and they are in the church. Some of them are my friends whom I have told what God is doing in my life and my own church. I have brought very many.”

### ***Miracles lead to qualitative growth***

Receiving miracles by the members in RGC Quarry has not only resulted to numerical growth as they witness to and invite those around them, but has brought spiritual growth to the members themselves. This came out very clearly as the research inquired what the miracles have meant to the interviewees.

A number of respondents said the miracles they received motivated them to serve God more. One said miracles had helped him “believe God is here and that the God we worship here is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Elijah.” We have those who felt that miracles drew them closer to God and hence were “growing every day” (RGCQ.22).

Something that came out strongly was the way miracles have impacted believers in terms of commitment not only to the Lord but also to RGC Quarry. The words of Jesus that “...there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me” (Mk: 9:39), shed light on the attachment of the members to the church and their Pastor. We have those members who feel the church is home to them because of the miracles. One said, “Since coming here I have experienced many miracles in my life. Here is where I began to see God’s greatness and God using me through the Pastor’s prayers.”

Many of the respondents said they were satisfied being in RGC Quarry and had no desire of going to any other place because of the miracles God is doing to minister to them. One told the researcher, “Because I have seen God visiting us I have no desire to go elsewhere,” while another said, “The things I have witnessed are a sign that if only I continue being here great things will happen and this has helped me to stay in this church.” Then there was this respondent RGCQ.8 who never went beyond primary school but had received tremendous miracles in this church. She said, “The miracles I have received here have made me desire to serve and know God more. I see that this is a true church and I should continue to stay here since the Pastor prayed for me and I got a job and healing.”

## Participant Observation

The researcher spent time to attend some of the church services so as to gather some first hand information. The observation was done the same time in-depth interviews were being carried out. This involved attending several Sunday church services, lunch hour, and HBC meetings between the months of January and April 2007. The researcher actually attended actually attended five Sunday Services, one HBC meeting, and one lunch hour meeting.

During the period the researcher observed, recorded, and took pictures. The researcher did not interview any of the participants concerning what was going on.

RGC Quarry has three worship Sunday morning services at 7.00 a.m., 9.00 a.m., and 11.00 a.m. Then there is an evening miracle service from 5.00 p.m. mainly attended by the youth. The researcher was able to attend all the Sunday services except the last one – evening miracle service.

Through observation of the happenings in the Sunday Services, the common themes around which the service revolves are: Worship, Preaching, Prayer, and Announcements.

### *Worship*

This is the first item in the services at the church on Sunday. Usually opened by the person leading the songs (worship) that day.

The session may begin with an opening prayer or a short worship chorus followed by a brief period of congregational “cleansing”. It is after this that the praise service takes off with a number of fast moving songs played loudly with music instruments. In the first service this would be from 7.00 a.m., second from 9.00 a.m. and third from 11.00 a.m. though these last two usually start later.



Though the first two services are conducted in English language, most of the songs are mainly in the Kiswahili language.

### *Songs*

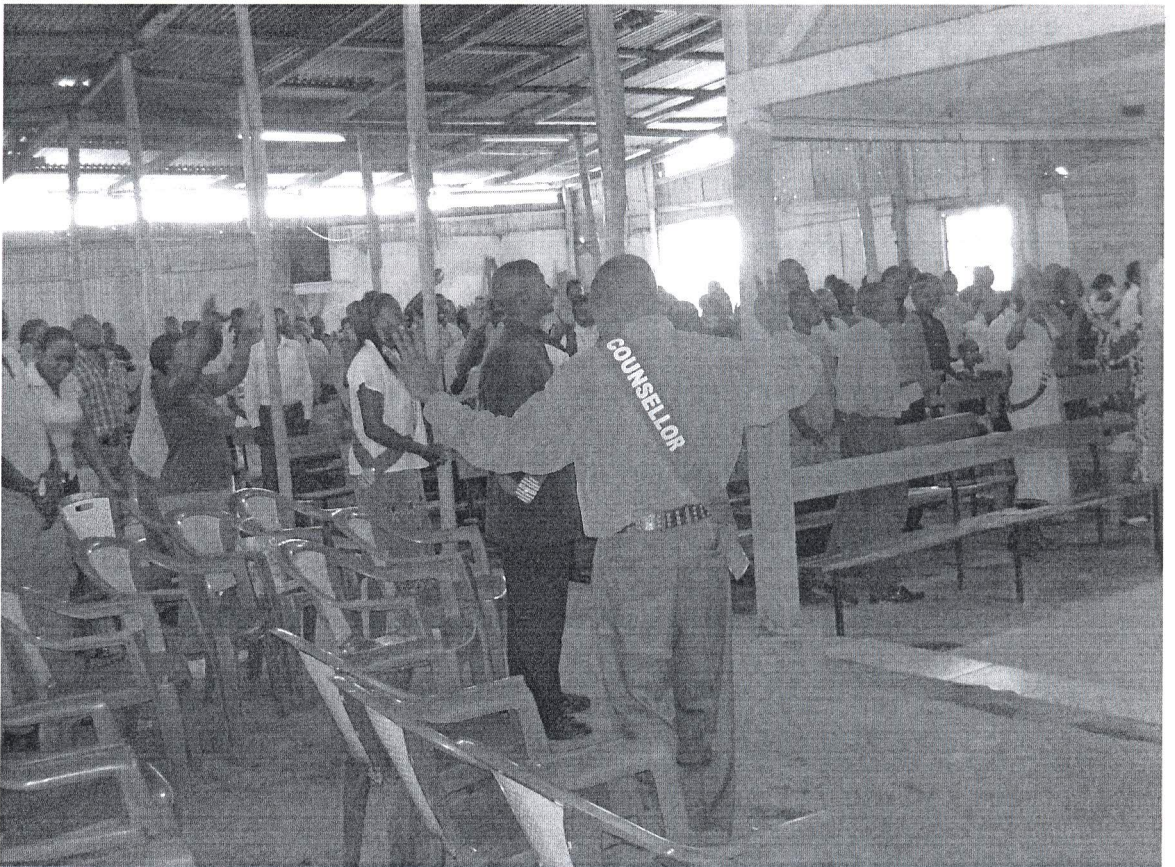
The songs in the worship services are varied in speed, message or theme as the researcher observed in the Sunday services he attended.

Typically the first two to three songs are fast moving and lively. For example, in the second service on the 4<sup>th</sup> of February the worship leader began with the song “Tembea, tembea Yesu, tembea tukuone” (Translation: move, move Jesus, move that we may see you). The essence of this song is calling on Jesus or invoking His name that He can move (manifest Himself) so that they may see Him. This “seeing Him” is “experiencing His miraculous power”.

On another occasion, 25/2/2007, the worship leader began on the slow note by singing “Hakuna, hakuna, hakuna kama wewe” x2

Translation: No one like you x3

There is no one like you x2



**Photo 3: Congregation worships in the 2<sup>nd</sup> service  
Date of photo: 18/07/2007 by the Researcher**

This draws the congregation to God in awe of Him as a great God equal to none. The song leads the people into a short spontaneous worship where everybody participates for about five minutes. The above photograph well illustrates the congregation in this introductory spontaneous worship. When this introductory phase is over the pattern of fast moving songs picks up.

The session of fast paced songs usually has two to three choruses as indicated, which may be prolonged depending on the availability of time. On the 25<sup>th</sup> February, this fast paced chorus was sung:

*Hakuna Mungu kama wewe x3*  
*Hakuna na hata kuwepo x2*

Translation: *There's no one there's no one like Jesus x3*  
*There is no one; there is no one like Him. x2*

This song employs other lines that sing, “I have walked everywhere, gone around everywhere, I have not found any God like you”.

On this particular day in the service, another song followed: “Simba wa Yuda nani kama wewe (Lion of Judah, who is like you). The song exalts Jesus as a lion who is able to do all things – emphasizing the ability to do miracles. Interestingly a third fast song is done “Bwana wa majeshi leo ainuliwe” (May the Lord of hosts be exalted today). At this song the congregation goes “wild” into shouting, whistling, ululations and dances. Before long this is followed by a slow paced chorus that is focused on adoration of the great God. The songs are such as “Lord of Lords we worship you” x2, “Ee we Massiah twakuabudu” (Eeh you Messiah we worship you”), and “Twakuabudu Bwana, Twakuabudu Bwana (we worship you Lord, we worship you). This leads to spontaneous worship once again by the congregation.

### ***Pastor’s Role in Congregational Worship***

When the congregation is corporately worshipping and in praise, adoration, the Pastor steps in and takes over from the worship leader. At this juncture he lifts up his voice above the congregation and uttering words like “Thank you Jesus”, “Yes Lord”, leads in another worship or dedicatory song. On this particular day he leads “Ni wewe tu Bwana, ni wewe tu” (translation: It is only you Lord, on whom I depend. As he leads in the song he tells the congregation “wakati nina shida ni wewe” (“Whenever I have problems, it is just you to help me”) “wakati sina chakula ni wewe” (“When I have no food it is just you”). Pastor is relaxed with time and picks on another chorus: “Moyo wangu wakutamani” (“My heart is yearning for you”), which he leads for ten minutes.



**Photo 4: Pastor leading in worship before preaching  
Date of photo: 18/03/2007 by the Researcher**

It is typical of the Pastor to take over from the worship team and finalize the worship with slow paced songs before the prayer session as the above photograph shows (Pastor in suit at the pulpit). In the midst of worship you can hear Pastor's voice saying, "There are miracles – miracles all over." Then he leads in another chorus "Tenda mujiza Baba nikuone – miujiza yako baba inanita moyo ("Work a miracle Father that I may see you for your miracles encourage me").

This final session of worship by Pastor sometimes happens when he is finishing the service after preaching. The observer found out that there is further singing – slow paced by Pastor at the end of preaching before conclusion of the service.

***Prayer:***

This is an important aspect of all the services at RGC Quarry as the researcher observed. Prayer, especially for the sick and needy, is an integral part of this church. The observations I relate are only those that have to do with the services and pertain to miracles.

The researcher's observations in the services were that prayers for the needy and sick are common. The prayers are mainly done by the Pastor of the church or the preacher in that particular meeting.

Right from the first meeting the researcher attended where there was a guest speaker from the U.S.A., Rev. Raymond, there was prayer for the people. At the end of the message from the guest, the Pastor made an altar call for salvation but no one showed up. However, when he called for those who wanted the anointing that "will bring family members unto the kingdom of God" about 100 people stepped forward. Pastor asked the congregation to pray corporately and loudly, and Pastor prayed loudly on the microphone, saying, "They are coming into the kingdom of God now – you are bringing them into the kingdom now – you are able".

***Manner of Prayer***

The Pastor is not tied to any one method but varies. From the observation he can pray for the needs before the preaching, that is after the worship, or after the preaching.

Frequently he asks the sick and needy to come forward for prayer, "If you are sick in your body come forward". The Pastor leads and lays hands on the people. No matter the number of people coming forward for prayer, Pastor prays for them individually. In the first place he prays for the spiritual needs by asking those who want to be saved to come forward. No one shows up but when he talks of other needs

like sickness, several hands shoot up. Authoritatively Pastor prays, “You sent your word and healed them”. He commands the people to receive healing; the family that is without peace should receive it. Moreover he adds “women who are barren – Father let their wombs be opened and let them receive children”.

Quite often after the preaching or the worship Pastor leads in a song before prayer. As he prays you can hear him say repeatedly, “Receive victory in Jesus’ name.” Another observation the researcher made is Pastor’s directive to the sick to “put the hand where the sickness is” as he prays. On the same day in the third service he leads the prayers of intercession. He does this by asking the congregants to hold each other’s hand to “pray for your neighbour”. At the end of the prayers he tells them to celebrate.

### ***Preaching***

Preaching is an asset in this church that is used regularly and deliberately to disseminate miracles. Throughout the services the researcher attended one would not miss a hint or a whole emphasis on God’s miraculous deeds. This is dominant whether in the preaching of the Pastor or the guests that minister at this church.

### ***Guest Preachers***

At RGC Quarry guest ministers are common as the researcher came to observe. This is confirmed by the researcher’s impromptu visits to the church on Sundays. Later the researcher came to learn that it is a policy for the church to have a monthly revival week in the church that is facilitated by guest minister.

On the first Sunday of participant observation, 14/1/2007, there was a Pentecostal minister from the U.S.A., Pastor Raymond Shockley. He had come for a “one week prophetic revival event” at this church that was to commence on Monday

15<sup>th</sup>. To get a feel of the meetings he had began by preaching in the three Sunday worship services. The researcher heard him preach in the second and third services. It was essentially the same message from Genesis 5:21-24 entitled “Walking with God: Walking to heaven”. Judging from the message in the second service there was no mention of miracles at all. The emphasis was on atonement – salvation as a prerequisite of walking with God.

Pastor Shockley’s preaching was different in the third service. As Pastor introduced him he asked him to share a testimony of his miraculous healing. So he began by giving this testimony how he was diagnosed with a heart problem (Aorta) and scheduled for a very expensive surgery. Having no medical insurance the doctor offered to operate him freely. The hospital bill was US \$239,000, which he was unable to raise. But after the operation the hospital sent him a letter asking him how much money he had and after declaring the hospital wrote back “they had forgiven me the debt”. As he shared this testimony the congregation clapped and shouted. After that he preached the same message as in the second service only that he gave many testimonies of how his family had come to faith miraculously.

### ***Rev. Angela Lynch***

Before the researcher listened to this visiting Canadian Pentecostal preacher he had heard of her through the in-depth ethnographic interviews as told by interviewee RGCQ.19. At one time God had used her to heal a paralyzed woman in RGC Quarry.

Amazingly on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007, in my last participant’s observer service, I stumbled upon Rev. Lynch as the guest speaker. She was speaking in the second and third services. The researcher was introduced to Rev. Lynch by the Pastor in his office just before proceeding to the second service. The researcher mentioned to her

that he had been told by interviewees of a healing miracle of a paralyzed lady through her prayers. She confirmed this excitedly as she recalled how the church was stirred with that miracle.

After the sessions of worship at 10.00 a.m., Pastor Chavaseki introduced Rev. Angela as she is popularly known, “not as a stranger to us” for she has ministered in the church before. She spoke from 10.10 to 10.40 a.m. on the topic “Jesus is Our King”, drawn from Matthew 21:1-11. Throughout the service the message was tied to the text building on the Lordship of Jesus Christ. She said Jesus has a throne, He rules in righteousness, He is supreme and His reign is eternal. There was no reference to specific miracles but just on the Lordship of Jesus and ended by challenging the congregation whether “Jesus is King of your life?”

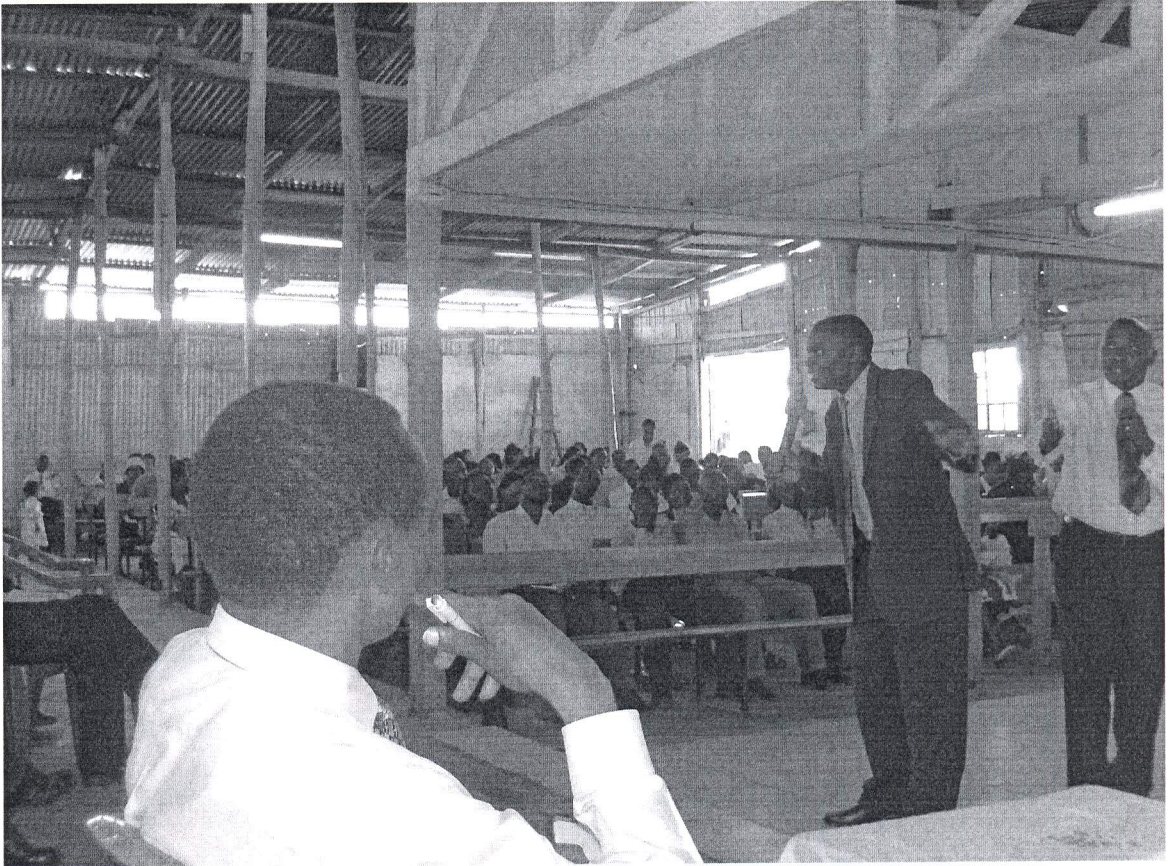
In the third service, she preached the same message but emphasized to a great extent on the lordship of Jesus Christ in our lives. She reiterated walking with Christ and “allowing him to be king in our personal lives in every area”. Again no emphasis on miracles at all.

### ***Pastor (Rev.) Brown Chavaseki’s preaching***

The fact that the pulpit is the reserve of the Pastor and those he allows cannot be overstated. This then means that what the Pastor himself speaks on that pulpit sets the trend on what is preached by others that follow him whether guests or members.

As a participant observer, I was privileged to hear the Pastor preach on three different Sundays: 4/2/2007, 25/2/2007, and 18/3/2007. Below is the Pastor (in suit) preaching and emphasizing the power of God as he moves around in the congregation.





**Photo 5 : Pastor preaching with interpreter in the 3rd service  
Date of photo: 18/03/2007 by the Researcher**

On the 4<sup>th</sup> February 2007, Rev. Chavaseki preached in all the services on the topic: “Growing in Patience” from Colossians 3:12-14 and Psalm 40:1-3. When the researcher arrived at 8.15 a.m. the Pastor was already preaching and was through by 9.10 a.m. His teaching was focused on the topic for the period of 20 to 30 minutes with no mention of miracles. However, he removes the monotony of silence by shouting “Hallelujah, mpigie bwana shangwe (“Hallelujah give a shout of praise to the Lord”) and the congregation applauds. As he goes to the conclusion of his message with the final point of waiting on God, he tells the members, “God has a time table for you, for your life. Don’t be in a hurry... keep waiting for your Isaac. Because God has a timetable for your job is coming, your husband is coming; keep waiting. God is coming ...” Those words are spoken boldly with much emotion with

a section of about 100 people shouting back in acceptance and expectancy of something. It is at this juncture in the service the Pastor says, “I can’t finish this, let us stand up”. He leads in a Swahili dedicatory song that prepares the congregation for the altar call for salvation, healing, and other needs.

In the second and third services, the preaching followed the same trend as the first one, without reference to miracles or the power of God. However, the service takes a different tone as he comes to finishing. Like in the third service he says, “You may be sick, or have no job, wait on God. God has a timetable. He will not be late”. He then invites the people for prayer and a host stands milling their way to the front.

The service of 25/2/2007 had Pastor Brown speaking in the second and third services while one of his “Timothy’s” who is a theological student at East Africa School of Theology preached in the first. The message of ‘his Timothy’ was on “Rising Up and Taking Possession of our Inheritance” based on Numbers 13:30 – 14:1ff. This was one of the amazing things for I had interviewed the speaker, Vincent Musau Musaa only the previous day, and was moved by his narration on how he had miraculously been saved from a life of drunkenness and prospered by the Lord. His main point of the sermon was whether they were following the Lord because of the miracles He had done?

Rev. Brown Chavaseki preached on “The Christian Call to Courage in the second and third Services with Ephesians 6:10-19 as the main text. In both services Pastor gave a solid word teaching. On the 18/3/2007 Rev. Chavaseki was ministering in all the services. The researcher attended part of all the services. He spoke on the topic “Drawing Strength from the Source” based on Psalm 144:1, 2. In the third service Pastor had taken over from the worship leader at 12.20 p.m. and led the

church in intercession and prayers for the sick and needy which goes on till 12.40 p.m. It is after this that the Pastor settles into preaching.

The message was heavily miracle and power based: Opened with words such as “I know many of you came weak and without strength”. Thank God you are now strong and healed. In the preaching, emphasized things that “we need to do”. First, the need to change our perspective. He told the members they “need to see miracles, see a job, see promotions”. Also said our “convictions must be different from others”. Emphasis was on the name of Jesus saying, “In the name of Jesus there is power and healing. In that name we have victory”. As he draws toward the end of the sermon he says, “We need to get total victory over satan, sickness disease, poverty”. At this stage he invites the congregation to stand and those who need total victory to come. Many file their way to the altar as the Pastor leads in a worship chorus “Tawala maisha yangu” (Lord reign in my life). Close to 60 people come forward arranged in rows.

### ***Testimonies.***

For the five Sundays I participated in as an observer in eight services, I realized testimonies are not a regular pattern of the Sunday worship services. It was only on one occasion that I listened to one of the members testifying.

After preaching on 25/2/2007 in the third service and praying for the people Pastor asks those in the congregation with a testimony to “come forward and give”. A lady dressed in trousers and a blouse shoots forward and begins by singing, “Hapo nimefika ninasema wewe ni Ebenezer” (“Where I have reached I say you are Ebenezer). Her testimony went like this, “Last Sunday Pastor said there was a man who wanted to commit suicide, and then he prayed and asked the congregation to pray. I prayed for my family and bound the spirit of suicide from the family. Then on

Wednesday I got a call from home – that my uncle – dad’s brother – had drunk poison. I asked whether he had died but they told me he had been admitted in hospital. He is now healed”.

After all the foregoing on the participant observation in the Sunday services, the following can be concluded: Miracles are emphasized in the worship through music as witnessed by the songs sung. Most of the emphasis on miracles is evidenced in the prayers for the sick and needy that are a way of life in the church. Though the preaching may not so openly declare miracles the Pastor emphasizes healing in some portions of his preaching and always in the prayers following preaching. Testimonies are rare in the Sunday services.

### ***Lunch Hour Meetings***

The Lunch Hour meeting usually runs from 12.45 p.m to 1.45 p.m. However, practically they begin at about 1.15 p.m. and end at 1.55 p.m. On 15/3/2007 when the researcher attended the meeting there were ten people, all of them youth. The worship was short mainly featuring the chorus “Hakuna Mungu kama wewe” (“No God like you”).

The speaker was the same one who led worship. The first words from him were “God is able”. Spoke from Exodus 14:11-15 entitled “How God gives us Strength”. No much talking about miracles except for one statement at the end “Mungu ni Mungu wa ajabu” (“Our God is a God of wonders”). At the end prayed for needs of people but where they were standing.

### ***House Bible Churches (HBCs)***

For the HBC the structure in worship, prayers, and preaching is after the one of the Sunday services of the church.

From the interview the researcher had with the coordinator of HBCs in the church, the coordinator said they have 13 HBCs. Due to the limitation I had in time I was only able to attend one and only once. Though this may seem to give a slanted view of the scenario of HBCs there should be some general trends that should be visible in any of their gatherings. The HBCs meet on Thursdays in one of the members' houses for an hour – 6.00 p.m to 7.00 p.m. The researcher attended the Mwatate HBC that meets in a corridor in one of the flats. Meeting started at 7.15 to 8.20 p.m. with an attendance of 13 people.

The songs sung were clearly miracle oriented: “Galilaya Yesu alitembea juu ya maji. Hata leo sisi tunaweza kutembea kwa maji; hata sisi leo tunaweza kutembea kwa shida (Translation: In Galilee Jesus walked on water. Even us today we can walk on water. Even us today we can walk on problems (sickness/disease/poverty)”. This is a very clear emphasis on God’s power that is available to believers. That just as Christ walked on water in Galilee so are they able to walk on problems, sickness, which signifies power over these things.

The preacher was a lady who spoke from 7.50 p.m – 8.15 p.m. on the “Ten Virgins” drawn from Matthew 25:1-13. She is also the HBC leader. She said the oil the virgins put in their lamps is the Holy Spirit. She emphasized on the need for believers to continually ask God to fill them with the Holy Spirit. She added if we open ourselves God will “fill us up with the Holy Spirit; He will fill us with His blessings”. This is a clear indication that miracles of divine provision are expected as people ask God to fill them.

At the end of the message, there was a session of prayer involving the whole congregation – in response to the message. Following this she asked one of the

members to conclude by praying for all. There was no specific prayer for the sick and needy in the service: People were not asked to relate their needs.

### The Pastor's Perspective on Miracles and Church Growth

There is a common saying that everything falls or rises with leadership. Jesus asked "Can the blind lead the blind? Shall they not both fall into the ditch?" (Luke 6:39). This shows the leader's role, is very critical.

Much has already been written as the researcher has interviewed the members. Overwhelmingly they said that their Pastor is a key person as far as the happening and emphasis of miracles is concerned in their church. The observation of the researcher during the services he attended confirmed this without doubt – as I witnessed him preach on miracles and always pray for the sick and needy in the services. Toward the end of the research the researcher felt it was time to interview the Pastor himself. This was done on 15/3/2007 and 19/3/2007 at the church office and in Nairobi town in restaurant.

### ***Background and Training of the Pastor***

Rev. Brown Chavaseki who is in his late thirties was born and raised up in Western Kenya. He was saved while in High School in 1986 and responded to the call to ministry by going to train at East Africa School of Theology (EAST) from 1991 to 1994. Later he returned to EAST for a degree program in 2003-2005.

Rev. Chavaseki said he came from a background of poverty. His grandmother was a brewer in the village and so was exposed to people drinking from their compound daily. However, things changed when his father got saved and became a Pastor with the "Maranatha Church." That is the time miracles began to happen. His

grandmother, the brewer, also got converted. Today they are two sons in fulltime ministry as Pastors in addition to their father.

In seeking to understand the impact of miracles on church growth at RGC Quarry, my interview with Pastor Chavaseki centered around these questions on Appendix IV:

9. What was the church like when you came?
10. Describe the initial emphasis of your preaching, teaching, and practical ministry (1998 – 2000).
11. Has there been any shift of emphasis in your ministry since 2002?
12. How does the performance of miracles relate to the growth of RGC Quarry?
13. How would you describe your role/part in the performance of miracles in your Church? What do you do?
14. List some of the outstanding miracles that have happened in your church and how they have impacted growth.

### ***The Situation of RGC Quarry When Rev. Chavaseki Came***

When Rev. Chavaseki came in 1998 January, the church had just been split by its Pastor who had left to form his own organization, leaving the Redeemed Gospel Church Incorporation (RGC Inc.). The church had disappointments, mistrust, and wounds and did not have a Pastor. “I came right in the midst of the problem”.

The population of the church was 40 people and they were unsettled. The income of the church was very low as most of the people were jobless, casual labourers, and with low salary. The church income was KSh. 12,000/= per month and was in rent arrears of KSh. 79,000/=. The church meeting Hall was having a capacity

of only eighty people and was poorly maintained with water flooding it whenever it rained. The church was surrounded by a bar and disco Hall that were active.

### ***Initial Emphasis of Ministry (1998 – 2000)***

The Pastor said he spent the first six months of his coming in building relationships, teaching, and preaching on biblical doctrines patterned after the Early Church.

Emphasis during that time was on evangelism, baptism of the Holy Spirit, water baptism. After the six months, the church grew from 40 to 150.

This phase was followed with a lot of revival meetings and crusades. Rev. Chavaseki says he “brought in other ministers to minister with different giftings”. He adds that these “ministers who came were a great booster to the work”. The revivals had dynamic teaching and demonstration of miracles of the power of God. People attended from other churches and some remained”. It is during this phase Pastor introduced House Bible Churches (HBCs) and began focusing on the training of leaders within the church.

Something Pastor Chavaseki mentioned is that in this period they had free monthly medical camps that brought a lot of people (1999 – 2000). “Free medical camps led to an upsurge in growth. We could have as many as 800 in attendance and after that 50 would come to church. The church grew from 150 to 300 (1998-2000).”

### ***Prayer Ministry***

Pastor Brown was very categorical that “prayer has led to the transformation of the place.” He was very clear that prayer is central in his church and a foundation of what is happening.



The closure of the bar and disco Hall was as a result of prayer as Rev. Chavaseki reports. During this period he introduced a number of prayer meetings. First there are the daily morning prayers, Christened morning glory” which run from 6.00 a.m – 7.00 a.m. Then there are weekly overnight prayer meetings on Fridays, and monthly leaders’ overnight prayer meetings held on a Tuesday. In the in-depth interviews some of the members have mentioned that Pastor encouraged them to “pray so that the place – environment can change and this miraculously happened in answer to prayer”.

### ***Relationship of Miracles to the Growth of RGC Quarry***

Rev. Chavaseki was quite clear that miracles are playing a leading role in the growth of RGC Quarry. The researcher was keen to find out this in relation to Appendix IV No. 13.

The Pastor said that life in the slum, where they are, is very hard and miracles come in to meet the needs of the people. He admits that in his meetings he “encourages people that this is a miracle believing church”.

When people receive a miracle after prayer they “go to their neighbours and tell them to come to our church so that Pastor can pray for them”. He added that a number of their members go out and bring others so that “they can be prayed for to receive a miracle”.

The impact of miracles happening at the church is felt in the community. Pastor Brown says that people come from other churches to be prayed for and saying I know you only can pray for me”. Pastor adds that miracles have attracted many to church. He mentions of many barren women he has prayed for and received children

who go telling other barren women in the community to go to the RGC Pastor "to pray for you to get a child: Even non-believers bring other unbelievers."

### ***Closing and Acquisition of the Bar and Disco Hall***

As far as Pastor Brown is concerned the closing down of the disco Hall and the bar and their subsequent acquisition by the church was like the last straw in the camel's back. This was a notable miracle that sent "jitters to the community."

Pastor narrates that when the disco Hall upstairs closed and they acquired it, the bar that was downstairs found it difficult to operate. They were not comfortable with the church (Hall) up. The presence of God's power in the Hall was a testimony and conviction. So the bar closed and this brought in a harvest. Pastor says the bar was a landmark in the place and most people could not believe that it had actually closed. "People came from everywhere to see what had happened. One of the bar maids got saved. This drew people into the church. The owner of the bar got saved and began to go to Pastor Muiru's *Maximum Miracle Centre* (Church in town).

### ***Pastor's Emphasis on Miracles***

The Pastor mentioned two ways in which miracles are emphasized in his church.

The first is through his pulpit ministry. Mainly this is by preaching the word of God. He tells people the first and greatest of miracles is that of salvation. Common words he uses in his preaching are: "What is impossible with man is possible with God," "Delay is not denial," "Your background does not dictate where you will be tomorrow but your faith in God is a key to what you want to be and where you want to go". He adds that he has a ministry of encouragement.

Secondly, prayer for the sick and the needy has had a tremendous impact on the growth of RGC Quarry. He says that “our services are characterized by that” (meaning prayer for the sick. On the manner of prayer he says that it depends on how the Lord leads him since he is “really open to the Lord. I can do the unexpected”).

Regarding some of the outstanding miracles that he has witnessed at his church he listed them as follows: The closing of the bar and disco Hall already mentioned stood as the greatest and a living practical testimony of God’s power. Then there was a healing miracle of a paralyzed lady in a revival in church by Rev. Angela Lynch from Canada. Cases of barren women getting children – at least ten of them. One of them had stayed for 12 years childless, another seven years and “one now is expecting.” He adds that “I have an anointing for that” (meaning for barren wives to get children). Talks of a barren lady who came to the church for prayer to get a child and “now she has three kids.”

**Photo 6: Pastor praying for the sick and needy in the second service**

**Date of photo:  
18/03/2007**



The above photograph is one of the many occasions that Pastor prays for the sick and needy in the Sunday Services at the Church. He said it is the answers to these prayers that were causing the attendees to invite other people who do not come to RGC Quarry.

### ***Conclusion***

Rev. Chavaseki's ministry is quite pivotal in precipitating miracles in RGC Quarry. His strong leadership and emphasis of miracles have a great influence on the attraction of people to RGC Quarry.

The preaching and prayer ministries of the Pastor in the church has been a catalyst that God has used to work miracles in the church and cause growth. His

belief and proclamation in the services that their Church is “a miracle believing church” puts the church on a pedestal and beacon that lights everywhere pulling to it those who are in need. But behind this miracle happening is the prayer foundation and exercise of the church which God is using to do miracles. The role of the Pastor in this miracle performance with resultant church growth is that of a facilitator – providing an environment through his leadership, prayer, and preaching for God to work.

#### Quantitative Analysis (Questionnaire Based)

The quantitative analysis methodology was used as part of the mixed method procedure. It was done as the last phase of the data collection so as to correlate its findings with those of qualitative procedures, either affirming or contradicting.

The findings analyzed quantitatively are based on the study population of 115 who filled the questionnaire (Appendix V). The general population of the church is between 700-800 based on what the Pastor, some leaders, and members told the researcher and which, in the estimation of the researcher, is reasonable.

The central question being studied was the impact of miracles on church growth. This was done by considering such issues as what attracted the attendees to RGC Quarry (Q. 2); whether they had received any miracle in RGC Quarry between 1998-2007 (Q. 7); the role miracles played in their joining RGC Quarry (Q. 10); whether miracles in RGC Quarry contributed to their joining RGC Quarry (Q. 11); whether they had invited anyone to attend RGC Quarry to receive a miracle (Q. 12); and whether any of the people they had invited were attending RGC Quarry (Appendix V).

The forms were given voluntarily to 115 people. All the forms were returned. One form, no.44, was discarded due to failure or serious wrong checking of Questionnaire nos.1, 5. Some discrepancies may appear in the tabulation of results - not tallying – because some participants left some of the questions either deliberately or unknowingly like those that were at the back of the form. However, such questions left out were negligible since they represented a very tiny fraction of the respondents or questions hence its impact on the results is insignificant.

The findings indicate that miracles are playing a vital role in the life of RGC Quarry. But much more than that preaching stood out as the greatest factor in church growth attraction to RGC Quarry when judged among four variables including miracles.

**Table 1: RGC Quarry general miracle information: 1998- 2007**

	Received or Witnessed a Miracle in RGC Quarry	Invited People to Receive a Miracle at RGC Quarry	Invited Persons Coming to RGC Quarry	If Miracles in RGC Quarry Led to Salvation
Yes	107	94	52	18(85.76%)
No	7	14	49	3(14.29%)
Total	114	108	101	21

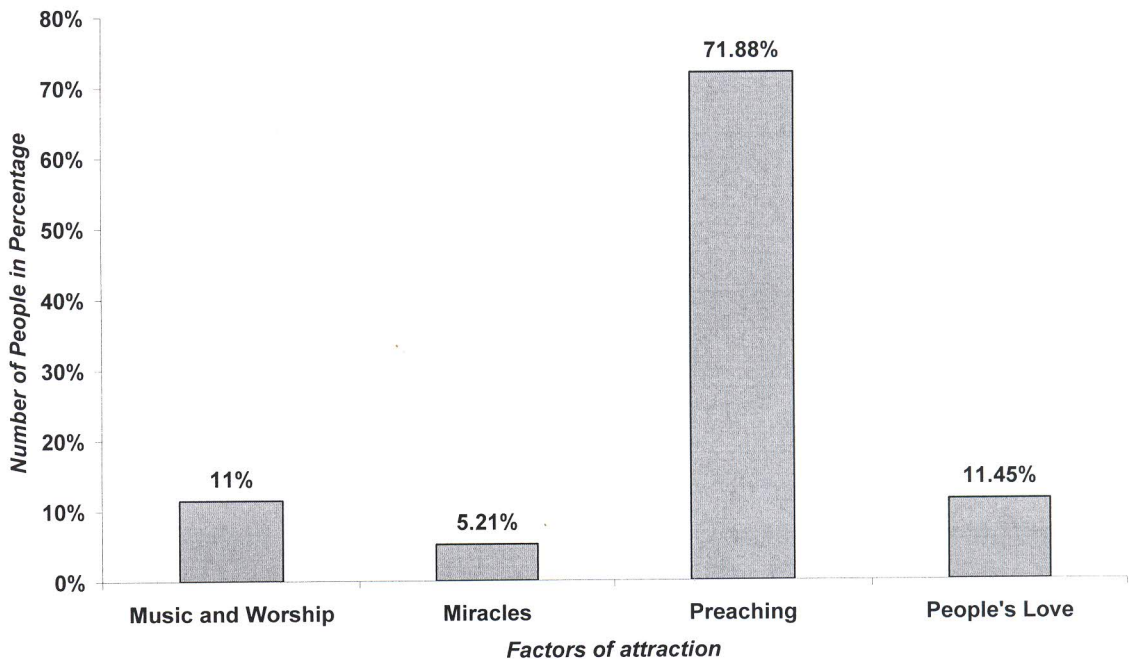
The above table shows that those who witnessed or/and received a miracle in RGC Quarry between 1998 and 2007 March were 107 against 7. This shows prevalence of miracles within RGC Quarry (Q. 7). Members surveyed on whether they had invited people to RGC Quarry to receive a miracle, 94 against 14 said they had invited. This suggests heavy evangelistic activity – publicity of miracles by those

that have been exposed to them. According to the table, 52 of the participants that had invited people to church said some of those they had invited were attending the church whereas 49 said none of the ones they invited were attending. The impact of miracles on salvation within RGC Quarry is more telling than anywhere else. Of all the 21 people saved through the ministry of the church in the period 1998-2007, 18(85.76%) of them said miracles in RGC Quarry led to their salvation (Q.9) while only 3(14.29%) said miracles did not contribute to their salvation in that church.

**Table 2: Main attraction to RGC Quarry**

	Item	No of People
1.	Music and Worship	11 (11.46%)
2.	Miracles	5 (5.21%)
3.	Preaching	69 (71.88%)
4.	People's Love	11 (11.45%)
	Total	112(100%)

**Bar Graph 1 of Table 2**



The members were tested on what mainly attracted them to RGC Quarry.

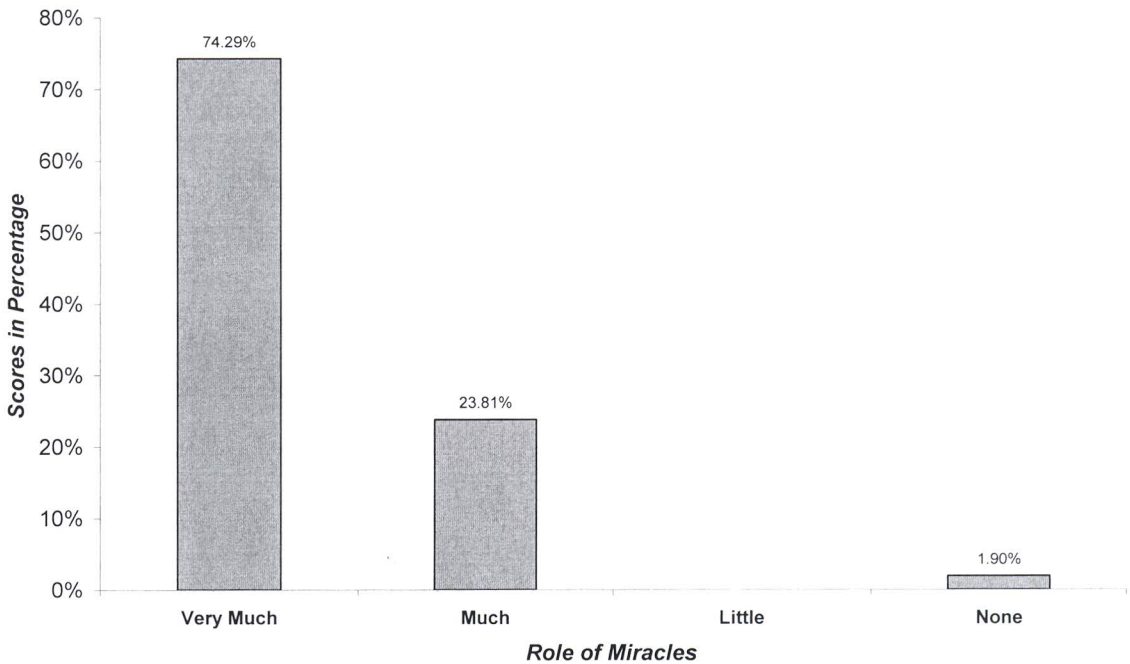
11(11.46%) of them checked music and worship, 5(5.21%) of them miracles,

69(71.88%) preaching, and 11(11.45%) people's love. It is surprising that only 5 people said miracles mainly attracted them to this church. What emerges from this is that preaching has its favourites here. However, when you compare Table 2 with table3 below it may look contradictory. On Table 3, 78(74.29%) said miracles played very much role in their joining RGC Quarry.

**Table 3: The role of miracles in joining RGC Quarry**

	Amount	No. of People
1.	Very Much	78 (74.29%)
2.	Much	25 (23.81%)
3.	Little	Nil (0%)
4.	None	2 (1.9%)

**Bar Graph 2 of Table 3**



What might be the explanation: What is in the preaching? How would the same people say on one hand that miracles had little attraction to them in comparison to preaching, and that it had very much to do with their joining RGC Quarry on the other hand? May be miracles in themselves without the word of God (preaching)

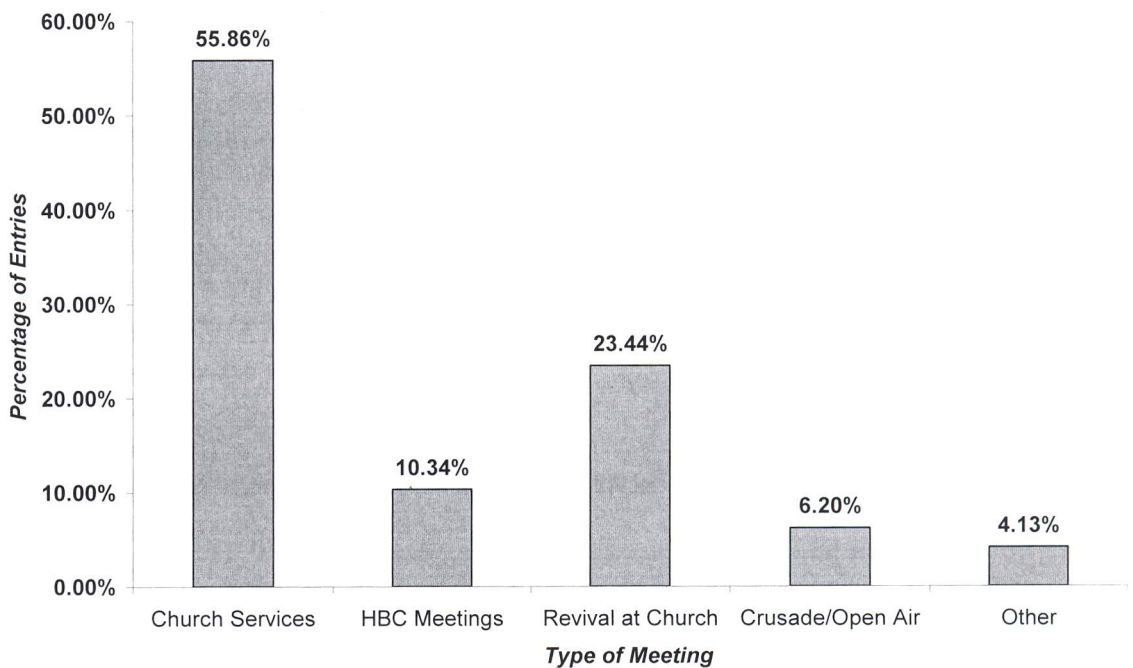


have no meaning? Or are miracles entrenched in the preaching? This riddle can be solved with the ethnographic interviews, which said that preaching emphasized miracles. So a keen examination of the two tables shows that miracles positively influence the decision to join this church.

**Table 4: Meetings where miracles were witnessed**

Meeting	No. of Entries
Church Services	81(55.86%)
HBC Meetings	15(10.34%)
Revival at Church	34(23.44%)
Crusade	9(6.20%)
Other	64.13%)

**Bar Graph 3 of Table 4**



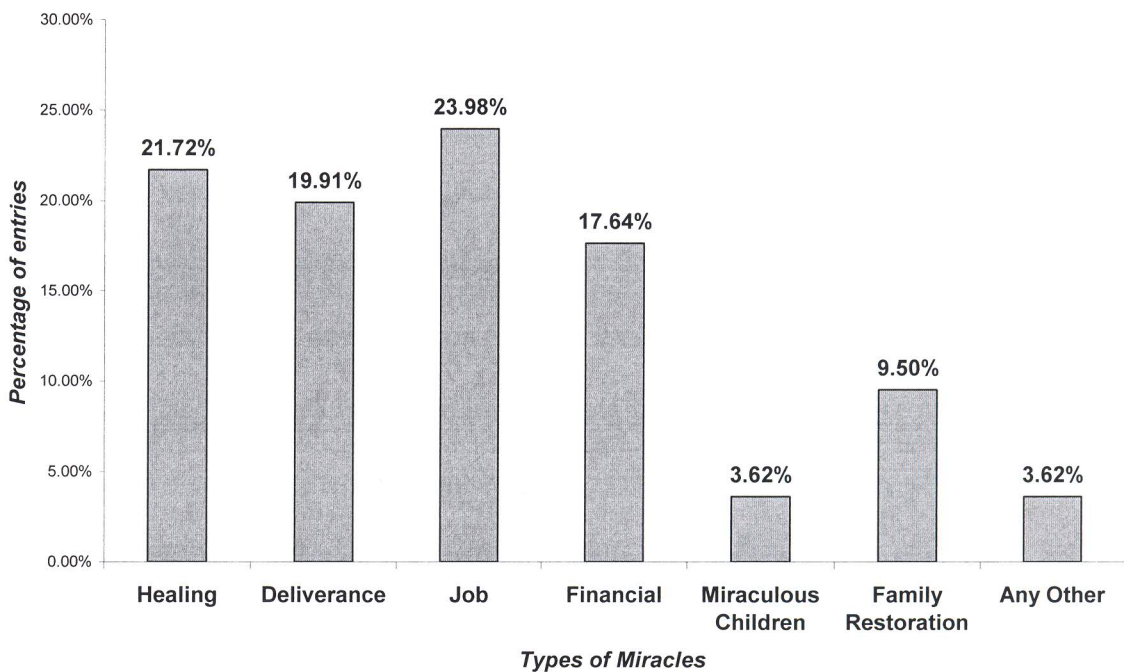
In this Q. 9, respondents were to check as many as applied. Church Services and Revivals at Church had the highest numbers at 55.86% and 23.44%. Possibly this is due to preaching in church and Revivals which is usually by the Pastor. In addition,

crusades are fewer compared to church services and less attended whereas church services are many and attended by many more people.

**Table 5: Kinds of miracles received**

Type of Miracle	Healing	Deliverance	Job	Financial	Miraculous Children	Family Restoration	Other
No. of Entries	21.72% (48)	19.91% (44)	23.98% (53)	17.65% (39)	3.62% (8)	9.50% (21)	3.62% (8)

**Bar Graph 4 of Table 5**



Standing high are job, healing, and deliverance miracles with 23.98% (53), 21.72% (48) and 19.91% (44) respectively. This has implications for ministry in the church or community or similar circumstances: People need to be attended to as far as health and job situation is concerned. Whoever is doing ministry in this setting must seriously address the issue of ministry to the sick and oppressed and employment.

### *Meetings where miracles were received*

On the issue of where miracles are witnessed or are prevalent most respondents checked church services (55.86%). However, it needs to be understood the respondents were allowed to check as many places (boxes) as applied on that question no. 9.

In this case the percentages and numbers are worked out on the number of respondents but based on the number of entries on that question no. 9(145) entries in total. Following in rank as far as frequency of miracles is concerned are the Revival Meetings.

Possible explanations: Church Services may have more miracles witnessed because many of the people “are regular attendees at church services and the possibility of seeing a miracle is higher. Secondly, Revival Meetings and others except HBCs are held irregularly – at most once in a month compared to Church Services that are weekly and thrice on Sunday, excluding the ones that may be held on weekdays. HBC may be understood in recording few miracles because only about 25% of the church’s population attends HBCs. The HBC coordinator, whom I interviewed (RGCQ. 18), said they have 13 HBCs each with an average of 12 members, which averages 156.

The fact that a high percentage is given for miracles witnessed at church services in no way diminishes the occurrence of miracles in the other meetings. It is only that more than half of the church attendees do not attend the HBCs and possibly Revivals, and evangelistic meetings.

In addition, the combined effort of longer period of worship and preaching, as the findings of ethnographic interviews show, add up to concentrate miracles in the Sunday Services.

**Table 6: Growth table of RGC Quarry: 1998 - 2007**

Year	Saved in RGC Quarry	Came in RGC Quarry Saved	Total
Before 1998	1	8	9
1998 – 2000	3	11	14
2001 – 2003	7	18	25
2004 – 2006	7	32	39
2007	3	6	9

The table shows the steady growth of RGC Quarry from 1998 to March 2007. Most of the growth is from people joining RGC Quarry from other churches with many of them coming when they are already saved. New conversions seem to be few though they are steadily rising.

What might be causing this high influx of saved people from other churches to RGC Quarry? Only assumptions can be made!

That they are attracted from other churches – especially neighbouring ones. The attraction, according to the findings of Q. 2, is mainly the preaching at 71.88% followed by worship at 11.46%, with miracles at 5.21%. On the other hand miracles seem to be playing a leading role in people's decision to join or stay in RGC Quarry as indicated by the 74.29% judged on the scale of: very much, much, little, and none.

#### Summary of Quantitative Questionnaire Findings

Based on the information gathered from the attendees of RGC Quarry, this summary can be drawn.

Miracles are prevalent and most of the members have been exposed to them by either receiving or witnessing them or both. The findings also revealed that most people have been attracted to the church mainly by the preaching. Moreover as much as miracles may seem to rate low in terms of attraction to church measured along side

preaching and worship, they still rate extremely high in terms of the role they play in helping people decide to join, or be members of, or stay at RGC Quarry.

On the type of miracles and the place they are mainly experienced, the following findings need to be considered. Job, healing, and deliverance miracles were on the highest. This may have an implication of ministry suggesting health and employment needs being prevalent in that community. For the frequency of miracles in the particular meetings of the church, church services stood out with the highest entries. This was explained that it no way minimizes the quantity of miracles witnessed or received elsewhere. Reasons might be that since most of the people are in church services and for more times than in other meetings of the church, they are likely to see those miracles in the church where they are.

The unsaved people in the church. The number is significantly low. Only two filled forms. This could mean that those who were there were afraid to fill forms as unsaved and look the odd ones out. This may still be healthy for this church that the people are well evangelized in Church. Interestingly the two unbelievers have been in the church briefly since 2006 and 2007 respectively. Both were among the few people who said they had not a miracle in RGC Quarry and were not attracted to church by miracles. However, one of them said he had invited other people to church to receive a miracle.

Another finding was that an overwhelming number of the attendees of RGC Quarry invited other people to come to RGC Quarry for miracles (87:04%). In this group of witnesses was one (1) of the two unbelievers. 51.49% of this group said the people they had invited were attending the church.

This leads us to the conclusion that miracles are playing a crucial role in the numerical growth and attendance of RGC Quarry.

### Summary Conclusion of Findings

Having been a participant observer at RGC Quarry during the research period of January to April 2007, and through the ethnographic interviews and quantitative questionnaire interviews, the researcher can make the following conclusions:

1. Miracles are emphasized and experienced at RGC Quarry. This emphasis is largely through the ministry of the Pastor in the Sunday Services clearly evidenced in the preaching and prayers led by him. Worship through music is an essential arm through which miracles are emphasized and experienced at the church. All this was confirmed through participant observation, the in-depth ethnographic interviews of the members and the Pastor, and supplemented by the self-administered quantitative questionnaire.
2. Members of RGC Quarry are not only actively involved in the ministry of disseminating miracles in the environs beyond their church compound but are deliberately going out of their way to advocate for, “advertise” miracles and invite non-attendees of their church to “come for a miracle” in their church. This has led to some of the numerical growth of people either from other churches or simply new conversions.
3. Most of the new attendees of RGC Quarry are coming already saved from other churches.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS, MISSIOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to investigate “The Impact of Miracles on Church Growth” with specific reference to the Redeemed Gospel Church (RGC), Quarry, Nairobi, in the period 1998-2007.

The study was guided by three research questions as enumerated in chapter 1 under “Introduction”. Both Qualitative and Quantitative methodologies were used in the quest to answer these research questions as evidenced in chapter 3.

The findings from the research were very interesting. There was overwhelming evidence from both the anthropological and quantitative research approaches that miracles are playing a great role in the numerical growth of RGC Quarry Nairobi.

All the participants in the ethnographic interviews admitted that miracles are not only emphasized in RGC Quarry through preaching, worship, prayers, and testimonies but are also common among their members. The participants were unanimous in the pivotal role that their Pastor, Rev. Brown Chavaseki, plays in the facilitation of the miracles. It was very clear that the members of the church are actually engaged in inviting others, who are not attendees, to come to their church and experience miracles. This is helping the church grow. The Pastor’s ministry to the sick and needy, and his preaching on miracles with the demonstration of the power of God, has been a great factor in causing RGC Quarry to grow.

The findings of the quantitative research correlate with what was discovered in the qualitative study. The majority of the members – 93.87% have either received or seen a miracle or both at the RGC Quarry. 87.04% of their people have gone ahead to invite non-members to RGC Quarry for a miracle with 55.32% of them saying that some of the people they had invited were (are) actually attending church. And of all the people who got saved in RGC Quarry between 1998- 2007, 85.76% of them said miracles led to their salvation. This tells the practical contribution of miracles to church growth at RGC Quarry.

It cannot be overstated that preaching is the major cause of church growth at RGC Quarry. Since the members and the Pastor admit that preaching emphasizes miracles, it can be safely concluded that miracles are a vital link in the growth of RGC Quarry.

The research also revealed that among the miracles performed, most of them were on job, healing, and deliverance. In addition, most of the miracles were witnessed or received in the Sunday church services (55.06%), and the Revival meetings (29.44%) with the rest at less than 20% each.

#### Broad Generalizations.

One of the purposes of doing research-using samples is for the researchers and those who may have commissioned the research to be able to make certain generalizations of the particular population and other similar situations. On this Sogaard comments, “The ability to generalize from the subset is based on mathematical formulas. We can say that a sample, properly chosen, will be able to provide an accurate picture of the larger group within measurable error” (1996, 111).



The researcher has not followed the statistical formulas that lead to scientific generalizations based on standard deviations.

On the issue of generalizations, Kidder (1981, 78) affirms that, “In choosing a study population, we try to choose the research subjects so that they are representative of the population to which we wish to generalize the research conclusions.” Though making such mathematical generalization is may be acceptable with quantitative data, anthropological studies are different as Seidman writes: “ A conventional way of defining the issue is to ask whether what is learned from the interview sample can be generalized to the larger population”(1998,44).

- (i) For the Redeemed Gospel Churches and Charismatic Churches. It may be safely assumed that if the churches belonging to these organizations are studied, the findings are likely to show there is emphasis of miracles in their preaching and practice. In addition if such churches are found to be growing, then a larger contribution to their growth could be miracles.
- (ii) For ministry in the slums or in the poor urban to semi- urban residential areas church growth is likely to be affected by the way the churches address the issues of health, and job or employment. These felt needs to a larger extent determine, hinder, or help in the church growth.

### Missiological Implications

Much has been observed and told concerning the performance of miracles at RGC Quarry and their subsequent impact on the growth of the church. Such results call for the following implications:

1. Evangelism: Those involved in this noble venture need to emphasize on the power of God to work miracles to transform people. As one of the

respondents said of their evangelistic campaigns “Hiyo inakuwa kali kuliko kanisa” (“That [evangelism] is usually hotter than the church”), there needs to be greater manifestations of such miracles out where the people are. Winning souls will not be easy without such “mighty signs and wonders” to make the unbelievers “obedient, by word and deed” as the apostle Paul declares (Romans 15:18, 19). Another of the respondents reinforced this by saying that Open Air evangelism needs God’s power in double way since there are many problems in the slum (he is a former addicted drunkard miraculously saved and delivered in one of the crusades).

2. The place of members in church growth: The ordinary members of the church have a pivotal role in the growth of the church by announcing and “advertising” what Jesus Christ can do for people through their local church. They need to be encouraged, trained, and motivated what they can naturally do in the course of their life and work.

#### Recommendations for Ministry and Further Research

1. RGC Quarry needs to take advantage of the open hunger for miracles and multiply their outreach program, especially crusades and Open Air meetings. Among the outcries from a number of the interviewees, including those miraculously saved through crusades, is that their church has slowed its pace in evangelistic campaigns in the last two years. RGC Quarry needs to go back to this “former love” and let God work miracles in such meetings as they proclaim His word that emphasize miracles.

2. **Theological Training:** Since here is where we raise those who serve in our churches and communities we will do well to incorporate, on the large scale, courses on the place and value of miracles in ministry today. The students will need to be exposed both in class and in the market place to the working of miracles as a way of training them. This should be a pattern in all theological or ministerial training schools.
  
3. **Mission Agencies and Church Planting Organizations:** There is need to review and evaluate their methods in missionary and church planting ventures. Some of their current workers may need retraining in “miracle ministry” while the new ones taken through some thorough exposure to such ministry.
  
4. **Further research needs to be done on the need of providing Education and Health facilities that are amenable and affordable to the community.** There seem to be no schools in the populous and growing slum.

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## APPENDIX I

### The Impact of Miracles on Church Growth at the Redeemed Gospel Church (RGC) Quarry

#### Questionnaire 1. Potential candidates for interview by Bernard Amianda

Please fill in or tick the information that applies to you and hand it back. Date...

1. Names.....Telephone No.....
2. Male/Female
3. Married... Single... Widowed... Divorced... (Tick one)
4. Age: 10-14...15-19...20-24...25-29...30-34...35-39...40-44... Over 44...
5. When did you begin attending RGC Quarry?.....
6. Are you saved?..... If yes when?.....
7. Level of education reached: Primary... Secondary... College... Other...
8. Are you employed?.....Your own business? ..... Student?...House wife...
9. Have you received any kind of a miracle?.....Can you share about this?.....
10. Can you be available on a Saturday?.....If yes, what time(s)?  
If no which other day and time?.....
12. Is it all right for you to be interviewed at the church office?.....  
If no, which other place is good for you?.....

## APPENDIX II

### The Impact of Miracles on Church Growth at the Redeemed Gospel (RGC) Quarry Qualitative Interview Questions for the Attendees

#### **Based on Research Question 1: What are the understandings of a “miracle” by the members/attendees of Redeemed Gospel Church (RGC) Quarry?**

1. What do you understand by the term/word miracle?  
  
What would you consider to be a miracle? Explain giving types of miracles.
2. In the light of your understanding of a miracle describe any miracle you have received or witnessed in the church or through the church.

#### **Based on Research Question 2: To what extent does the RGC Quarry/emphasize miracles?**

3. Does the church emphasize miracles in its services?  
  
How do they do it? Explain.
  - a) Sunday Services:  
  
Does any body talk about miracles in the services? Who?  
  
Music: What kind of songs do they sing? What is the message or content of the songs? Are they songs that talk about a miracle?  
  
Prayers: In the services at church, is there prayer for people with needs and the sick?  
  
How do they pray for them?  
  
Testimonies: Are there testimonies in the church services where people testify of miracles?



Preaching: In the preaching, is there any emphasis on the power of God or miracles? Explain.

b) Home Bible Churches (HBC):

Are you a member of any HBC?

Explain the activities of a HBC service:

Is there prayer for the sick and needy?

Are there people you know who have received a miracle through HBC and have come to church?

c) Evangelistic Outreaches – Open Air Meetings:

Have you ever attended any outdoor evangelistic meetings?

Describe what happens in the meeting:

- Music
- Preaching
- Ministry to people

4.
  - a) Do you as an individual member of RGC Quarry talk about miracles?
  - b) What is your experience in praying for the sick and needy?
  - c) What is the experience of members of RGC Quarry concerning (b)?

**Based on Research Question 3: In what way does the receiving of/or witnessing of miracles influence conversion and the decision to join Redeemed Gospel Church (RGC) Quarry?**

5. Describe how the miracle you received/witnessed influenced your salvation?  
Can you say that the miracle played any role in your joining RGC Quarry?
6. How does your witness of or receiving miracles influence your testimony?
  - a) Do you tell other people outside your church and invite them to attend your church for miracles?

Are there people who have come and joined the church following your miracle report?

- b) Are there people you know who came to church and got saved after receiving/witnessing a miracle? Explain how it happened.

Describe

### APPENDIX III

#### The Impact of Miracles on Church Growth at the Redeemed Gospel Church (RGC) Quarry

#### Qualitative Interview Questions for RGC Quarry House Bible Church (HBC) leaders

1. Are there any relationships between the performance of miracles and salvation in the growth of RGC Quarry?

Explain the relationships:

- How do people who receive miracles or witness them respond to Christ?
- Are there people who have joined RGC Quarry from other “churches” in search of miracles?

Give details of these people.

2. Do you emphasize miracles and how do you do it in your church or through it? Relate this to preaching, teaching, leading of the Services.

What about your music? Does it relate to miracles?

3. Are there people in your group (department or HBC) who you know that have received or witnessed a miracle? Explain.

## APPENDIX IV

### The Impact of Miracles on Church Growth at the Redeemed Gospel Church (RGC) Quarry

#### Qualitative Interview Schedule for the Pastor of Redeemed Gospel Church (RGC) Quarry

Date.....

1. What is your name?
2. What is your age?
3. What level of education have you reached?
4. When were you saved (born again)?
5. Where and when were you trained? Length of training?
6. Do you have any background of miracles in your life?
7. When did you come to RGC Quarry as a Pastor?
8. Were there any unique circumstances (situation) at RGC Quarry when you came? Explain.
9. What was the church like when you came?
  - a). Numbers – population and distribution
  - b). Finances
  - c). Physical infrastructure – buildings
10. Describe the initial emphasis of your preaching, teaching, and practical ministry (1998 – 2000).
11. How was the growth of your church like in the period 1998 – 2002?

12. Has there been any shift of emphasis in your ministry since 2002? If yes, what is it?  
  
In what way has the shift impacted the growth of your church?  
What is the number today?
13. How does the performance of miracles relate to the growth of RGC Quarry?
  - a) At Church services – Sundays and weekday meetings.
  - b) In House Bible Churches (HBCs).
  - c) Open Air/Crusade meetings.
  - d) Acquisition of physical property/structures by the Church.
14. How would you describe your role/part in the performance of miracles in your Church? What do you do?
  - a) Preaching: What is your emphasis?
  - b) Prayers: - Do you pray for the needy and sick?
    - How do you pray for them?
    - What happens during prayer time?
15. List some of the outstanding miracles that have happened in your Church and how they have impacted growth.

## APPENDIX V

### The Impact of Miracles on Church Growth at the Redeemed Gospel Church (RGC) Quarry

#### Self-Administered Quantitative Questionnaire for RGC Quarry ‘Attendees’

Bernard Amianda, a student at Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology, is doing research on “The Impact of Miracles on Church Growth”. Please fill this form very truthfully and return it to him or the church office

Mark (—) only one of the boxes except where you are told to mark (—) more than one:

1. When did you start attending RGC Quarry (month and year).....
2. What mainly attracted you to this church?  
 Music and Worship    Miracles    Preaching    People’s Love
3. Were you regularly attending another church before joining RGC Quarry?  
 Yes    No
4. Are you born again (saved)?    Yes    No
5. If saved (born again), which year?..... Which Church.....
6. If saved (born again) in RGC Quarry, in which meeting?  
 Revival in church    HBC Meeting    Crusade / Open Air  
 Other .....
7. Have you ever received or witnessed a miracle in RGC Quarry between 1998 – 2007?    Yes    No
8. If yes, what kind of a miracle was it?    Healing    Deliverance    Job  
 Financial    Miraculous Children    Family Restoration    Any Other..... (Mark as many as you have received or witnessed)
9. In which of the RGC Quarry meetings did you witness or receive the miracle?  
 Church Services    HBC Meetings    Revival at Church    Crusade or Open Air    Other ..... (Mark as many as apply).

10. What would you say is the role miracles played in your joining RGC Quarry?  
 Very Much    Much    Little    None
11. Did miracles in RGC Quarry contribute to your salvation (lead to your salvation)?  
 Yes    No
12. Have you ever invited people to come to RGC Quarry to receive a miracle?  
 Yes    No.
13. Are any of the people you have invited to come still attending church today?  
 Yes    No.
14. What is your age?    12-15    16-20    21-25    26-30    31-35  
 36-40    41-45    46-50    51-55    56-60  
 Over 60
15. Marital status:    Single    Married    Widowed    Divorced  
 Separated
16. Status:  
 Student    Employed    Jobless    Own Business  
 Housewife
17. Level of education reached:    Primary    Secondary    College  
 Other.....
18. Sex:    Male    Female

APPENDIX VI

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION FROM HOD, NEGST MISSIONS  
DEPARTMENT



**NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY**

P.O. Box 24686 - 00502 Karen, NAIROBI, KENYA

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DR. STEPHEN M. SESI  
MISSIONS DEPARTMENT  
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January 13, 2007

Rev. Brown Chavaseki  
Redeemed Gospel Church, Quarry  
P.O. Box 10178-00100  
Nairobi, Kenya

Dear Rev. Chavaseki,

**RE: INTRODUCING BERNARD AMIANDA:**

This is to introduce Rev. Bernard Amianda as one of our students doing the Master of Divinity in Mission studies. In order for him to graduate he needs to do academic research and write a thesis as partial requirement for the MDiv Missions.

In order to accomplish this academic requirement, he has chosen to study: "The Impact of Miracles on Church Growth: A Case Study of Redeemed Gospel Church, Quarry."

Any assistance you may give him in his research towards his educational goals will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you in advance for your gracious consideration in this matter.

Sincerely in His Service,

Stephen M. Sesi (PhD)  
Chairman and Head of Missions Department  
Cc. Dr. John Ochola  
Academic Dean  
N.E.G.S.T.



APPENDIX VII

AUTHORITY LETTER FROM RGC QUARRY PASTOR



**Redeemed Gospel Church International**  
**Quarry Center**

P.O. BOX 72731 - 00200 NAIROBI, KENYA - E. AFRICA

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DR. STEPHEN M. SESSL.  
MISSIONS DEPARTMENT.  
NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY.

**REF: REASERCH FOR BENARD AMIANDA**

Thanks a lot for introducing Benard Amianda to us. I want to let you know that the leadership of our church and the congregation has warmly received the above-mentioned student to do his research at our church.

We shall give him maximum co-operation and moral support during his reaserch. Thanks and may God bless you.

Sincerely in His service

Rev Brown Chavaseki.  
For Redeemed Gospel church Quarry