

NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE  
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

*The Pastor's Contribution to the Christian Spiritual Growth  
and Development of Pupils at Nairobi Pentecostal  
Church Academy, Woodley*

BY  
PHIDEL ADAH BARAZA

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

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Student's Declaration

**THE PASTOR'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE CHRISTIAN SPIRITUAL  
GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF PUPILS AT NAIROBI  
PENTECOSTAL CHURCH ACADEMY, WOODLEY**

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 here are not necessarily those of the Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology or the Examiners.

(Signed) \_\_\_\_\_  
Phidel Adah Baraza

July, 2006



## ABSTRACT

This study sought to describe the pastors' contribution in the spiritual development of primary school learners by exploring the role of the pastor in a selected primary school. Data were gathered through interviews with twelve members of the school under study as well as through several site observations. The data were analyzed using the grounded theory procedures outlined by Strauss and Corbin (1998).

Two theories emerged from the data. The first theory was that, children's ministry relies greatly on 1) one's perception of "spirituality," and realization that children are capable of spiritual development, 2) one's consciousness of the factors that would lead to the pupils' spiritual growth, and 3) one's role in developing them spiritually. The second theory was that the pupils' level of interest in spiritual activities determined positive or negative responses to the pastor's interventions.

The study ascertained that the school is a major contributing factor in the spiritual development and growth of pupils, and pastors play a major role in setting the tempo for pupils' spiritual development and growth. Hence, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, instruction in the Word of God, worship of God, fellowship with one another, and service to the community and the entire society are significant components that need to be integrated together for a balanced program for the pupils' spiritual development and growth.

After the integration of the literature, the writer recommends that the NPC Academy should have full time pastors in charge of the spiritual life of children, and that the children be divided up during the attendance of the chapels to enable the pastor to minister adequately to the children, bearing in mind the unique characteristics of particular age groups.



**To**

This work is dedicated to my parents Jason and Truphena Baraza, my siblings, Nelly, Lydia, Annalice, Anne, Gerald, and Brenda, whose support and encouragement are without measure.



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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Spirituality is often a neglected element in our churches today. Few are the individuals that can be pointed out within our congregations who stand out as models in spirituality. In most cases people live their Christian lives way below their capacity. Lovelace comments about this phenomenon saying, “spirituality is in many ways treated as the neglected stepchild of the Christian movement, often reduced to emotional frosting spread over the surface of other parts of Christianity” (Lovelace 1979, 12). Lovelace goes on to say that in parts of the Church a fairly shallow spirituality is the bread and butter of daily experience, but it is almost invisible as a matter of serious concern among church leaders because it is taken for granted (Ibid). There is a need to emphasise that spirituality is the foundation of all other Church happenings and without it the Church is doomed to fail in many areas.

Spiritual formation is a maturing faith and deepening relationship with Jesus Christ, through which people become more like Christ in the living of their everyday lives in the world (Stonehouse 1998, 21). The task of facilitating spiritual growth and development is apparent in biblical mandates. The spiritual life is formed and developed through practices that open and lead the person to have a vertical relationship with God. Spirituality involves the whole person relating to God and is a life-long process. From infancy, the personality is forming, involving a person’s spiritual, physical, mental, and social life. To neglect spiritual formation during childhood is to ignore the very foundations of the spiritual life.

The inspired Word of God should fulfil its functions of “teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16-17, NIV). Children are not exempt from the above works of the Word of God. In fact, children form a large percentage of the world’s population. They should not be ignored when it comes to their spiritual growth and development. It is no wonder the book of Proverbs recommends teaching children when they are still young for them to gain the values to guide them in the rest of their lives. I concur with Wilhoit and Dettoni as they quote Ward that “every developing person is capable of communion with God because of the created characteristics of God’s own ‘breath’ within, signifying a spiritual essence within the flesh and blood” (1995, 12).

If correctly nurtured and directed, children may live in obedience to God’s commands. Otherwise, if they are left to live in the messes of life without the modelling, instruction, correction, and guidance in the Lord’s ways, it may be difficult for them to yield to the Lord. It is in recognition of the need for spiritual growth in the lives of children that the Christian spiritual mentoring program was put in place at Nairobi Pentecostal Church (henceforth NPC) Academy, Woodley. With that in mind, my intention was to find out what the pastor at the mentioned school did to make a positive contribution to the Christian spiritual development of pupils in that school. I specifically looked at:

1. The pastor’s weekly instructional and counseling sessions with the pupils.
2. The pupils’ weekly worship services.
3. The pupils’ services to the school community.
4. The pupils’ social fellowship sessions.



## Problem Statement

Human beings have many needs in life. It is right that when we minister to people, we address all their needs. Jesus ministered to people holistically. His approach is an example for everyone that intends to minister to people. Pastors need to understand their role in the spiritual development of children in the schools and encourage growth into Christ-likeness through the instructional, worship, service and fellowship programs.

I was aware that Nairobi Pentecostal Church Academy had a pastor in charge of the Christian spiritual welfare of the pupils. But I was not certain of the things that he did to contribute to the Christian spiritual development of pupils in that school. This study sought to discover and explain the relevance of the pastor to the Christian spiritual development of pupils in NPC Academy during the instructional, worship, fellowship/interactive and service sessions.

## Purpose of Study

The purpose of this grounded theory study was to discover the pupils' and teachers' perception of the role of the pastor in the Christian spiritual development of primary school learners. The study explored the role of the pastor in the Christian spiritual growth and development of learners in a primary school. The findings of the study are intended to give Chaplains/Pastors in primary schools the awareness of the positive and negative elements in the children's ministry programs as they seek to minister to the pupils and meet their spiritual needs. It is therefore important to understand the pupils, pastor and the teachers' perception of the things that the pastor does that would be regarded as the factors that promote or hinder the pupils' Christian spiritual development.

## Significance of the Study

The study sensitizes pastors to the importance of spiritual development of the pupils with the intent of helping the pastors to bring the children into maturity in Christ. It also informs the scholars on the evaluation of the spiritual formation programs in primary schools wherever needed. Finally, it informs the academic community concerning the development of materials for spiritual formation of pupils in schools and Christian education departments in Church and Para-Church organizations with the aim of nurturing the children spiritually and seeing spiritual growth in their lives.

## Research Questions

In respect of the above stated problem, I formulated one central research question followed by three sub-questions.

### *Central Question*

What was the contribution of the pastor to the Christian spiritual development of pupils at NPC Academy?

### *Sub-Questions*

- R.Q.1** What did the pastor say he did to contribute to Christian spiritual growth and development of pupils?
- R.Q.2** What did the pupils see and note as the pastor's contribution to their Christian spiritual growth and development?
- R.Q.3.** What did the teachers see and note as the pastor's contribution to the Christian spiritual growth and development of the pupils?



## Research Objectives

In response to the research questions, the researcher sought to:

1. Establish the relevance of biblical instructional teachings to the spiritual growth and development of pupils.
2. Ascertain the perception of pupils toward the worship styles implemented for their spiritual growth and development
3. Determine the teachers' perception of the strategies put in place for the spiritual growth and development of pupils and their effect on the pupils' behavioral change.

## Limitations and Delimitation

This study was limited to the input of the pastor, pupils, and teachers of the NPC Academy but could be potentially useful to other contexts. Due to the limited period of time for the research, the study was further limited to those people who had been in the selected school for the last six months. The researcher believes that six months is enough time for the pupils to begin putting into practice the truths that they have been taught by their pastor.

The study did not consider other necessary factors for the spiritual development of children such as the contribution of their churches, parents and peers.

## Definition of Terms

**Spiritual Growth and Development:** The term is used to refer to the positive changes that occur in the children's lives judged in the light of their level of application of what they have learned from their pastor.

**Spirituality:** Character conforming to a spiritual approach to life.

**Instruction:** Act of teaching.

**Worship:** Reverent honor and homage paid to God.

**Fellowship:** Friendly communion of pupils with common interests in the Word of God.

**Service:** An act of helpful activity to the community as a servant.

**Pastor:** The term refers to the Christian workers that minister to the spiritual lives of the pupils.

**Pupils:** The term is used to refer to the primary school children of ages 9-12 in the selected school.

**NPC Academy:** Nairobi Pentecostal Church Academy, Woodley.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURES**

I conducted a field study to explore the role of the pastor in the spiritual development of pupils ages 9-12 at NPC Academy. The research was descriptive in nature, requiring pupils of varying ages and sex as well as their teachers and pastor to respond to a number of questions about their perspective on the contribution of the pastor to the pupils' spiritual development. This chapter discusses the specific research methods employed in this study.

#### **Assumptions and Rationale for the Design**

Research methodology can be understood in two ways; theoretical and practical. From a theoretical perspective, research methodology would be regarded as a discipline of studying critically various research methods and techniques (Peter 1994, 89). I used the qualitative grounded theory method in this research.

Qualitative methods do not give results that are statistically derived. By definition, qualitative research is “an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants and conducted in a natural setting” (Creswell 1998, 1-2).

I was interested in exploring the development of the pupils and understanding their pastor's contribution to their spiritual growth. Thus, a qualitative design was the most effective approach for discovering and understanding the strategies the pastor implemented in his ministry for the



spiritual development and growth of pupils in the school. According to Strauss and Corbin, such a qualitative design “can be used to gain novel and fresh slants on things about which quite a bit is already known and can give the intricate details of phenomena that are difficult to convey with quantitative methods” (1998, 19).

My rationale for using a qualitative design resulted from my desire to study the participants in their natural setting and build a complex, holistic picture out of the analyzed words and detailed views of informants (Creswell 1998, 17). The nature of the central research question also lent itself to a qualitative research design while the objectives and the purpose of the study necessitated a grounded theory approach.

### Grounded Theory

There are several qualitative research traditions including ethnography, phenomenology, ethnomethodology, symbolic interaction, and grounded theory. According to Strauss and Corbin, the grounded theory approach is research that is inductively derived from the study of the phenomenon the study presents. It is discovered, developed, and provisionally verified through systematic data collection and analysis, and theory is stated in reciprocal relationship with each other. As such, one does not begin with a theory then prove it, rather, one begins with an area of study and what is relevant to that area is allowed to emerge (1998, 23).

Nachmias and Nachmias inform us that the goal of field research is to develop grounded theory using the method of analytic induction. The researcher constructs analytic categories from the data and develops propositions based on the relationships between categories. Both the analytic categories and the propositions are revised and refined as the research progresses by comparing positive and negative cases (1996, 300).

I employed grounded theory methods so as to have the participants in the selected school narrate their experiences and give detailed information needed for the research. I intended to discover and understand the contribution of the pastor in the Christian spiritual growth and development of pupils. The study included in-depth interview and ongoing participant observation in an attempt to capture the whole picture that showed how the pastor contributed to the spiritual growth of the pupils. This process used multiple stages of data collection and refinement of the information.

### Entry Procedures

I began the research work by obtaining a letter of introduction from the NEGST Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic Affairs' office to enable me gain access to my population group and seek permission to carry out this study. I made a formal visit to the school and met with the school's headmistress to seek her approval to carry out the research. During that visit I explained the purpose of the study and the methods and procedures for data collection. I requested the headmistress to request the members of the school to willingly participate in the research process if called upon for an interview. I then visited the school on an informal basis twice during the working days and participated in the pupils' worship services to develop rapport and friendship with the individuals within the school during which time I also collected data through the observation process.

### Description of the Population

This study's population is comprised of the pupils of NPC Academy. The number of children in this school was about 776 pupils; 606 were in the primary school while the remaining 170 were in the nursery school. The category of individuals that participated in this study was pupils of 9-12 years of age and having schooled at NPC Academy for the last six months and were viewed as capable of giving the required information. The total number of pupils in this category was 436 pupils averagely.

### The Researcher's Role

A researcher has a wide range of roles and responsibilities in conducting educational research, the main responsibility being to conduct the research ethically and reflectively. In carrying out an inquiry, a researcher may play a role that relates to one or more of the metaphors given by Wellington to describe a researcher and his role in the course of research. The metaphors include, "the researcher as a participant; observer from a distance; market researcher; 'rambler' through an unknown terrain; detective; experimentalist; gardener; undercover policeman; and investigative journalist" (2000, 66).

According to Creswell, in qualitative research, the study occurs in a natural setting and the researcher is the instrument of data collection, gathering words or pictures, analyzing them inductively, focusing on meaning of the participants and then describing a process that is expressive and persuasive in language (Creswell 1998, 14). The researcher is core in conducting in-depth interviews with the respondents. Borg and Gall say that the researcher is very important in the process of interviewing because he "plays a more central role in the elucidation and interpretation of the



behaviors observed” (Borg and Gall 1989, 240). Putting it in Borg and Gall’s words, “the researcher influences, disturbs and affects what is being researched in the natural world, just as the physicist does in the physical universe” (Ibid).

### Sampling Procedure

I used a non-random method to select the informants, and hence, the informants were picked based on their availability, the recommendation of the class teacher, and their capacity to provide the required information. This approach is called theoretical sampling because the researcher samples events and incidents and looks for indicators (events or happenings) representative of theoretically relevant concepts, and then compares these events or happenings for their properties and dimensions, always looking for dimensional range or variation (Strauss and Corbin 1998, 215).

### The Instrument Design

I used interview guides to give direction to my open-ended, semi-structured interviews. Different interview guides were used on different participants depending on whether the participant was a pupil, teacher or pastor. I carried out several interviews for the sake of attaining fuller description of the situation on the ground.

A sample of the interview guides is included in the appendix section but the questions changed during the process of research to reflect an increased understanding and allow room for serendipitous discovery of the things that the pastor did that could be described as his contribution to the Christian spiritual development of pupils at NPC Academy. The instrument had three sets of interview guides, one for the pastor (Appendix A), one for the pupils (Appendix B), and one for the teachers (Appendix C). The interview questions for the pastor, the pupils and the teachers sought answers that responded respectively to the three sub-research questions given in chapter one

and the responses summed together in light of the central research question and research objectives given in the same chapter.

I also used the observation method to gather the data. In this method, I specifically noted what was happening in the instruction, worship and interaction processes between the pastor and the pupils. I also noted my thinking, feelings, experiences, reflections and perceptions of what I saw and analyzed the data in light of the research questions and research objectives.

### Validation and Verifications of Strategies

Best and Kahn (1989, 203) point out that, in qualitative research, effectiveness is to be ensured in establishing rapport so that the significant information needed is elicited. To ensure the reliability of the information gathered, I sought to set aside my own bias of having gone through a theological college and read widely concerning pastoral work. I also used a peer de-briefer who reviewed and asked questions about the qualitative study so that the information gathered resonated with someone other than me (Creswell 2003, 196).

### Data Collection

Grounded theory employs observations, interviews, letters, books, and photos in the process of data collection, data being all the information that a researcher gathers for his study (Mugenda and Mugenda 1999, 12). The interviews include open-ended and semi-structured questions. The interviewer asks questions or makes comments intended to lead the respondent towards giving data to meet the study objectives (86).

In this study, data was collected primarily through active observation and interviews. The participants were chosen based on their capacity to contribute to a

conceptual understanding of the issues that inform the study on the contribution of the pastor to the spiritual development of pupils in the given school. I tape recorded the responses as well as recorded the details of my observation in a notebook and kept diary of my own thinking, feeling, experience, reflections and perception throughout the research process.

My purpose was to generate a theory using the category approach. Categories are concepts that stand for phenomena (Strauss and Corbin 1998, 101). Quoting Strauss and Corbin, Creswell says that a category represents a unit of information that is composed of events, happenings and instances (1998, 56). Category study includes in-depth interviewing and continual and ongoing participant observation of the situation. The process includes constant comparisons of data with emerging categories and theoretical sampling of different groups to maximize the similarities and differences of information. The importance of the whole process of grouping concepts into categories is that it enables the researcher to reduce the number of units he works with, and also categories have the potential to explain and predict (Strauss and Corbin 1998, 113).

I used interviews in the process of data collection from 8 pupils, 3 teachers and a pastor from the selected primary school. The pastor was interviewed on the specific things he had done that had contributed to the spiritual development of pupils in the given school. I phoned the pastor of the NPC Academy, explained to him the purpose of the research and made an appointment with him on when to meet and where to meet regarding the research interview. I also interviewed the teachers and 8 pupils ranging from age 9-12 about the things they had noted their pastor do during the counseling and instructional sessions, the worship sessions, the social interactive sessions and service ministry to contribute to the pupils' spiritual growth.



The interviews were conducted on a one-on-one basis, while recording the information using a tape recorder. The information from the initial interviews led me to carry out further interviews with the people that I had talked to before or those that I had not thought of interviewing earlier by giving me hints on who else to interview. These led to adjusting my research questions better in the course of the study.

The data was also collected through participant observation. The initial interviews with the participants led me to know better what to observe. I observed the pupils' weekly worship and instructional sessions on two occasions to find out what goes on in these meetings, and I noted down my observations. In these observations, I focused on the relevance of biblical instructional teachings vis-à-vis the spiritual development and growth of pupils, and the worship styles implemented for the pupils' spiritual growth. As such, I observed the Bible passages read, the pastor's interpretation and explanation of the passages to the pupils, the pupils' understanding of the passages, the application of the passages to the pupils' lives, the worship styles put in place such as songs, prayers, and any other ways that the worship was carried out.

I also noted my own thinking, feelings, experiences, reflections and perceptions of what was on the ground. The data gathered was subjected to continual analysis in light of the research questions and research objectives given in chapter one, leading to more interviews and observations as need arose, in order to clarify meanings before the eventual overall analysis.

### Data Analysis

Data analysis in qualitative research is an integral part of the whole research process and must be undertaken early. Data analysis "seeks to make general

statements on how categories or themes of data are related” (Mugenda and Mugenda 1999, 203). It brings order and sense into the data collected. Strauss and Corbin say, “Doing a micro-analysis is an important step in theory development. It is through careful scrutiny of data, line by line, that researchers are able to uncover new concepts and novel relationships and to systematically develop categories in terms of their properties and dimensions” (1998, 71).

The process of noting what is interesting, labeling it and putting it into appropriate files is called “classifying” or “coding” data (Seidman 1998, 107). In grounded theory, analysis is done until theoretical saturation is achieved (codes and categories are sorted, compared, and contrasted until no new codes or categories are produced). The process of data analysis includes open, axial and selective coding. Open coding is the analytic process through which concepts are identified and their properties and dimensions are discovered in data. Axial coding is the process of relating categories to their subcategories, termed “axial” because coding occurs around the axis of a category, linking categories at the level of properties and dimensions. Selective coding is the process of integrating and refining the theory (Strauss and Corbin 1998).

Open coding enables the researcher to reduce the large amount of data into manageable information by either analyzing sentence by sentence, analyzing a whole paragraph, or the entire document to understand the details of the information (Ibid). Wellington, quoting Miles and Huberman refers to this process as data reduction, where the researcher selects and condenses the data. In this stage, the data are collated, summarized, coded and sorted out into themes, clusters and categories (2000, 134).

In axial coding the researcher “begins the process of reassembling data that were fractured during open coding...looks at how categories crosscut and link” (Ibid, 124). Here data are organized and assembled, then displayed in pictorial, diagrammatic or visual form. According to Strauss and Corbin (1998), the main purpose of axial coding is to systematically develop and relate categories as the theory is developed. This leads to selective coding, which employs many techniques such as storyline, making use of diagrams, and reviewing of memos either by hand or by computer program to facilitate the identification of the central category and the integration of the concepts before the final analysis. Selective coding allows the researcher to conceptualize the data, leading towards interpretation and conclusion drawing.

In this study, data analysis involved a continued reflection about the data, asking analysis questions, and asking general questions from information supplied by the participants. I employed the open, axial and selective coding modes discussed above and generated categories of information and measured them against a theoretical model that finally helped me make a story of their interconnections. Open coding involved labeling of events and actions that I identified as significant in the data. The purpose of such labeling was to enable me group the ideas that were similar under a common classification in the categories of instruction, fellowship, worship and service. The categories I had developed had the potential to explain and predict and that enabled me to recall the properties of any idea based on which category it belonged to and also to categorize new ideas.

Open coding involved line-by-line analysis in which phrases and words were subjected to scrutiny in order to develop categories. Sentences and paragraphs were analyzed in order to code them according to already discovered categories. The data



collected from the research was analyzed with the aim of providing responses to the research questions and research objectives given in Chapter One of this study.

Asking questions helped me to make meaning of events or happenings that otherwise seemed obscure to me. For instance, without asking questions for clarity, it was difficult for me to make sense and classify the phenomenon that the pupils referred to as “*peer counseling*” and classified as fellowship. Asking questions also helped me in making decisions on whom to interview next. That helped me clarify the obscure information gathered earlier and emphasized the process of data collection and data analysis to work simultaneously in the qualitative research.

In axial coding, I sought to relate categories to each other and to their subcategories. The questions I asked during axial coding were; *why, how, when, where, for what reason, with what results?* These questions enabled me to understand both the structure and the role of the pastor in the Christian spiritual development of pupils at NPC Academy.

Selective coding involved choosing a central category that enabled me to pull the other categories together and form an explanatory whole. The criteria for choosing a central category was based on its centrality in relation to all other categories, frequent appearance in the data, emergence from the logical and consistent relating of categories, level of abstraction sufficient for the development of more general theory, and its development of the concept through integration of other concepts making the theory deeper and more explanatory (Strauss and Corbin 1998, 90). The central category in this research was that Instruction emerged as the main emphasis for the spiritual development and growth of pupils at NPC Academy. Using diagrams, the central category was related to other categories. The final diagram given on page 38 aided in the development of the theory.



The emergent theory was then subjected to refinement by “reviewing the scheme for internal consistency and for gaps in logic, filling in poorly developed categories and trimming excessive ones, and validating the scheme” (Ibid, 156). Once the theory had been refined, the findings of the research were integrated with the literature review on children’s spiritual nurture and then recommendations were made for use at NPC Academy and for further research. The findings were analyzed, discussed and fully elaborated in chapter three. From the data analysis, interpretations were made and conclusions drawn regarding the contribution of the pastor to the spiritual development of pupils at NPC Academy

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH FINDINGS**

This study sought to discover the role of the pastor in the Christian spiritual development of pupils at NPC Academy, Woodley. Twelve people were interviewed; eight pupils, three teachers and the pastor of the mentioned school, representing the category of primary schools having the Christian chaplaincy system in operation. Data also were collected through deliberate observation.

This section discusses my research findings. In keeping with the grounded theory data analysis methods and the purpose and objectives of this study, I used the open, axial and selective coding to analyze the data provided by the pupils, teachers and the pastor to respond to my research questions and generated a theory.

#### General Information about People and Events in the Research Setting

The pupils' population in the NPC Academy was seven hundred and seventy six. Six hundred and six pupils were in the primary school while the rest were in the kindergarten. The pupils aged 9-12 years were four hundred and thirty-six. The student informants were selected from this age bracket. Most pupils interviewed had joined the school as early as age five and had been in the school for five to seven years.

The school had a total of thirty-six teachers, twenty-seven of whom taught in primary school while the rest served in the kindergarten. I interviewed three primary school teachers. Pastor John Wesley Nguuh, the senior pastor of the Nairobi Pentecostal Church,

Woodley is the pastor in charge of the Christian spiritual development of pupils at NPC Academy.

The events put in place for the spiritual development of pupils in the school included Tuesday chapel at 7:30- 8:00 a.m., Bible clubs held every Wednesday, discipleship and baptism classes, counseling sessions and deliverance ministry as needed. I carried out interviews and observations to discover what the pastor did using those events to contribute to the Christian spiritual development of pupils in the given school.

I noted that the Tuesday chapel worship service for the pupils began with a note of welcome from the teacher in charge of the spiritual life of pupils in the school. This was then followed by singing of gospel songs, instruction in the Word of God, application of the Word to the pupils' lives, then prayer before dismissal of pupils to their classes. The praise and worship team came early before the rest of the pupils and went to the stage in preparation for the worship time. The instrumentalist pastor had also to be present on stage with the praise and worship pupils.

The rest of the pupils came to the chapel under the supervision of their class teachers. All teachers were to be present and in charge of their class pupils. Their presence helped maintain discipline and quietness in chapel. The head-teacher was usually present to reinforce the importance of the events, and check on discipline of the pupils.

The patron of the spiritual lives of children usually opened the chapel fellowship with praise and worship before handing over to the pastor. The pastor reminded the pupils of previous lessons, reinforcing the theme of the term "*The Purpose Driven Life*." He, then, took the pupils through the current events in the

nation, which were known to almost all the pupils due to mass media. The pastor usually connected the common things known to the pupils to his lesson of the day, then read through the scripture and explained the scripture to the pupils before helping them to apply the Word to their lives.

The children usually were involved during the whole period of worship and instruction in the Word of God. The pastor used the question and answer method in his instruction in the Word of God. One thing that motivated the pupils to participate more was the compliments that they got from the pastor whenever they participated in the discussions and lessons in general. The pastor rewarded pupils with good remarks such as “well done,” “keep it up” and “God bless.” He also kept asking the rest of the pupils to appreciate the participants through gestures such as clapping their hands, snapping the fingers, and saying good remarks to them. Generally, the pastor used actions a lot while with the children, so the children got to hear, see, and act out during the worship and instruction sessions. He used repetition in driving home the main points to the learners. The pupils were involved in praying for the nation, school and other needs. Prayers were both individual and communal. Individual pupils were called upon to pray and the rest would agree together with the person praying.

### Study Findings

I interviewed the pastor, the pupils and the teachers on the pastor’s point of action in regard to instruction, worship, fellowship, and service programs of the pupils’ spiritual growth and development. The marks of spiritual development included: the pupils’ cognitive understanding of the Word of God, good fellowship with one another, voluntary service to the school and the community around such as cleaning of the classrooms, clearing the dustbins, collecting of dirt in the area, and reaching out to the needy in the surrounding community. Worship activities such as



praying, reading and meditating on the scripture, and being obedient to the scriptures were also included.

The data revealed that the pupils' spiritual development was influenced primarily through the teaching they got in the Word of God. That could have been through the school pastor, and their church backgrounds, even though I did not go into detail to find out how far their Church life had influenced their spiritual lives. The pupils' spiritual lives were demonstrated to a lesser extent in the fellowship and service ministries compared to the instructional and worship ministries.

### *Pastor's Response*

**R.Q.1** What did the pastor say he did to contribute to Christian spiritual growth and development of pupils?

This section sought to establish whether or not the pastor contributed to the Christian spiritual growth of children at NPC Academy, with the above research question as the critical point of reference. The aspects that were looked at in establishing the pastor's contribution to the Christian spiritual development of the pupils were instruction in the Word of God, worship of God, fellowship with one another, and service to the community and society. The pastor's response to the above aspects is elaborated below.

#### Instruction

The pastor understood pupils' spiritual development as children coming to a point of personal knowledge of Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. As such, the pastor termed the Instructional ministry as the main contributing factor to the spiritual development and growth of pupils. The teaching was carried out intentionally by the pastor on Tuesday mornings during chapel time. During that time the pastor read the Scripture and explored the Word of the Bible at a lower level for the pupils to

understand before making application to the pupils' lives. He worked toward a long-term impact of the pupils as he chose one topic to explore throughout the term. That topic was explored over and over again using different approaches to help the pupils gain thorough understanding of the meaning being explored in the Scripture, and then apply it to their lives.

The teaching methodologies put in place included question and answer, repetition of words and phrases, word acronyms such as CAS (Character, Academic, Spiritual life) and illustrations such as use of stories. In addition, both verbal and non-verbal rewards were used to motivate the learners. The verbal remarks involved words such as "well done" and "keep it up," while the non-verbal remarks included snapping of fingers and clapping of hands.

Under instruction, the pastor emphasized a number of things including the spirituality of the teachers, the chaplaincy team, coherent curriculum, teaching/learning themes, the motto of the school, the Pastoral Instructional classes from the Ministry of Education, and Bible clubs. Looking at each of them independently first, the pastor emphasized the spiritual maturity of the teachers because he believed that the spiritual development of the pupils heavily relied on the spiritual level of their teachers. As such, the pastor saw the need to equip the teachers. He carried out parallel meetings with the teachers because he felt that the teachers were the ones who met on a daily basis with the children and some of the teachers were involved in the pupils' Bible clubs. The pastor believed that by equipping the teachers spiritually, it would have positive impact on the children. As a result, he embarked on thorough ways of reaching the children through the teachers. For instance, he employed dialogue and Bible studies and Pastoral Program Instructional classes. All these work positively towards spiritual formation of the pupils.

Second, the pastor put in place a chaplaincy team made up of himself (the senior pastor), the pastor in charge of Christian Education, the pastor in charge of children ministries, the guidance and counseling committee in the school, the teachers who were involved in Bible clubs, together with the head-teacher and the deputy head-teacher. This team used workshops as they sought for ways of coming up with a plan on how they were to use the available time for children – both for instruction and worship, since they only had about 20 minutes for the two during the assembly on Tuesday mornings.

Third, there was no curriculum for the spiritual growth and development of the pupils at the school. This lack gave the teachers a difficult time in their Bible club meetings and the discipleship classes. Teachers struggled to come up with the lessons to teach and, most of the time, considered it a strenuous work. The chaplaincy team being spearheaded by the pastor in charge of Christian education had begun working on the curriculum because they realized they needed a curriculum in place to provide a point of reference for assessing pupils' exposure. The curriculum in process would cover the materials needed for the Tuesday chapel assembly, the Bible clubs and the Pastoral Instructions. The new curriculum hoped to address teaching methodologies including skits, role-plays and dramas, in order to facilitate communication.

Fourth, the pastor and his chaplaincy team realized the need for a unified annual theme. They had put in place a term-long theme of "*The Purpose Driven Life*." The team was looking into ways that the Bible club leaders would put the theme of the term across to the pupils when they met with them on a weekly basis. The pastor also was organizing a plan to work with other pastors to emphasize "*The Purpose Driven Life*" theme during the assembly. They were equipping the teachers also on the theme so as to run an elaborate program together for the children.



Fifth, the motto of the school “*Pressing on toward the Mark*” was emphasized in the Instructional program. There were times that the pastor did the exposition of the motto of the school and made it clear to the pupils that they were supposed to be pressing on toward the mark in the school. The mission of the school was to educate the whole child – educationally, physically, and spiritually. At the beginning of the term the pastor made it clear to the pupils that they were to press on toward the mark in three areas: character, academics and spiritual life (CAS). He did that by handling each one of the three from a biblical point of view. Pupils were taught how they could excel in their spiritual lives. They were taught what they needed to do in their devotional lives, prayer life, and study of the Scriptures. The pupils were also to be taught under “*The Purpose Driven Life*” theme on how to be purpose driven in various areas such as bearing witness, growing, and ministering with the gifting that they had as individuals.

Sixth, the Pastoral Instructional syllabus designed by the Ministry of Education also was considered beneficial for the Christian spiritual development of pupils if well and carefully handled by the school. In the past, the teachers at NPC Academy struggled with how to implement the curriculum from the Ministry of Education on the Pastoral Instruction within the school. The pastor had taken it upon himself to groom the teachers on how to expectedly implement that curriculum and to ensure that they adhere to it.

Seventh, the pupils were taught in the Bible clubs where they met in small clusters and learned under the instruction of their Bible Club teachers. The Bible clubs were of great help to the spiritual growth and development of pupils. Here the teachers did follow-up and disciplined learners who had recently given their lives to Christ. The teachers also taught the pupils on deeper levels about the Word of God



and answered the learners' personal questions and struggles in life, making the instruction more learner centered.

### Worship

Under worship, the pastor reported that his role was to help the pupils to come to a deeper level of communion with God. He said he did so by participating in singing and praising the Lord with the pupils, reading the Bible and encouraging pupils to read, praying and encouraging the pupils to pray, dancing for the Lord, playing the instruments during devotional times, performing songs and, plays during festive activities such as Christmas, and memorizing and reciting Scripture verses. As such, the pastor served as a mentor to them and helped them by the example of his own lifestyle and actions, as well as verbally encouraging them.

### Fellowship

The pastor admitted that reaching out to the pupils in fellowship ministry was a challenge to him since he had so much to deal with at the church apart from the school. He tried getting to them at class levels though it proved difficult. He ended up meeting only two classes: standard seven and eight. On such occasions, they discussed matters concerning the pupils' lives. Such matters included boy-girl relationships, where the pupils discussed openly how they related with one another and then were directed in the scriptural way by the pastor. In such cases, the fellowship served as an eye opener whereby the pupils, as they interacted with one another, realized common points of struggles and together discussed and resolved their issues with the help of the pastor.

## Service

Under service the pastor said he had not come up with the program yet. When interviewed concerning service matters the pastor said, “There are no particular standards of performance put in place to see to it that the children practice what they have been taught.” The pastor’s understanding of service ministry among the pupils was that the pupils needed to have programs such as outreach teams to reach out to other schools and have activities in the community, such as going out to help the weak in the society, visiting the Children Homes, Old People Homes, Hospitals, and maybe The Center for the terminally ill. As such, he was working to initiate such activities.

### *Pupil’s Response*

**R.Q.2** What did the pupils see and note as the pastor’s contribution to their Christian spiritual growth and development?

I sought to establish the pupils’ perception of the pastor’s contribution to their Christian spiritual development in terms of instruction in the Word of God, worship of God, fellowship with one another and service to the community and society in general. The above question was the critical point of reference. The pupils’ responses are given below.

### Instruction

Five of the children interviewed said that their understanding of spirituality involved having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as their Savior and communing with God on a daily basis through prayer. One pupil said that spirituality was all about knowing God and believing in Christ. When asked how the pastor helped them in their spirituality, they said that the pastor taught them the Word of God. The pastor read and explained the Bible to them in ways they understood. They

also got the opportunities to ask the pastor Bible questions if they had any. The pupils also noted that the pastor taught them on particular themes such as “Purpose Driven Lives” and “Pressing on Toward the Mark.”

A number of pupils said that their spiritual development and growth took place as they heard the Word of God read to them and as the pastor took time to explain it to them at their level of understanding. From that they decided to have a personal relationship with Jesus as their Savior. One pupil said, “I got saved after the pastor taught us how Jesus came on earth so that whoever believes in him should not perish but have an everlasting life.” The pupils also said that the pastor helped them apply the Word in their lives, and most of the time this led them to respond to God when an altar call was made, to give their lives to Christ. Five of the pupils had given their lives to Christ and admitted that they were saved. They said they received Christ after they felt convicted of their past lives through the teaching of the Word of God and decided to make a change. However, the pupils also admitted that their Church programs had played a major role in the growth of their spiritual lives. Their Church’s contribution was outside the scope of this study.

The pupils also said the pastor encouraged them to attend Bible clubs where they were taught using question and answer method, repetition of words, involving of the pupils, and positive rewarding of the pupils. One of the pupils said “the pastor explains to us verses of the Bible. For example, the pastor explains to us that God loves us and we should not do wrong. The pastor also tells us about Jesus and tells us to continue praying and reading the Bible everyday for a good foundation.”

## Worship

The pupils said the pastor encouraged them to worship God by talking to them and telling them the positive aspects of worshipping God. One pupil said, "The pastor tells us that God's reason for creating us was that we worship Him. So it is proper that we live for the reason God created us." The pupils knew that they had to live their lives at all times in a manner that glorified God. One pupil said, "I can't give up on worshipping God because, we need to be close to Jesus as we cannot know the hour, the minute, or the second that Jesus could be here and we might go to hell. I don't want to go to hell."

The pupils also said the pastor participated passionately in the pupils' worship activities by singing, praising God, dancing for the Lord, praying, and memorizing the Word of God together with the pupils. The pupils narrated the circumstances that led to their growth in spiritual lives while at school. They said they had the praise and worship time where they sang, clapped hands, danced, and did other actions. They played the instruments, prayed, and made presentations and recitation of memory verses. When asked whether their worship only happened when they attended the chapel and Bible clubs, the pupils said their worship was not only in the chapel, rather, they kept on meditating on the Word of God wherever they were in class, in the school compound and even while at home where their parents helped them to grow closer to God. I did not go into details to find out what their parents did to help them grow spiritually.

The pupils said that even though the pastor helped them know about worship and participated in their worship activities, they were aware that the Holy Spirit made their spiritual life a reality. Five pupils quoted the Word of God often and admitted



that they did not struggle with devotional lives and prayer. All of the pupils interviewed said they read the Bible every day.

Prayer was frequently mentioned by the pupils as instrumental in their worship as Christians. Most of the time individual prayers had been most applicable but communal prayers were treasured as well.

### Fellowship

Two of the pupils noted that there was a standard seven and eight fellowship that existed in the school. Six of the pupils agreed that the pastor did not interact with them freely and that made them not to be so confident in approaching him for personal needs. The six said they would love to have clubs or small-group fellowships, with the aim of having spiritual, intellectual, and moral impacts in the pupils' lives. They also said they would want in such clubs to practice transparency and trustworthiness amongst themselves.

One of the pupils said their teachers had stepped in to assist the pastor with the part of pupils' fellowship activities even though it was to a lesser extent. The pupil went on to say, "On Wednesdays the boys are separated from the girls and we meet with the teachers. We listen to the teachers as they say the Word of God and if anyone has a question we ask and continue to discuss the Word of God." But the pupils admitted that meeting with their teachers was not enough as some feared their teachers and there were some things that they could not ask their teachers freely. Such pupils admitted that it would be helpful if they had small groups of about twenty pupils meeting with the pastor over a lengthy period of time to establish confidence in him and be able to confide in him.

## Service

When interviewed on what the pastor does to help pupils contribute to the school through service work, one pupil said, “We are not so much involved in doing activities such as cleaning up the compound, collecting the dirt, or making the compound clean because we have workers in the school. But as a child who loves the Lord and I am saved, if I see dirt around and there are no workers in the vicinity, I will not pass by, I will clean up.” The pupils’ understanding of service ministry was their participation in cleaning the classrooms, the dustbins, and keeping the compound clean. The pupils also admitted that the pastor always encouraged them to keep the compound and the classrooms clean because cleanliness was next to godliness.

## *Teacher’s Response*

**R.Q.3.** What did the teachers see and note as the pastor’s contribution to the Christian spiritual growth and development of the pupils?

I sought to establish the teachers’ perception of the contribution of the pastor to the Christian spiritual development of pupils at NPC Academy in terms of instruction in the Word of God, worship of God, fellowship of pupils with one another, and pupils’ service to the community and society. I used the above research question as the point of reference. The teachers’ responses are given below.

## Instruction

The teachers interviewed said their understanding of their pupils’ spiritual development was children having personal relationship with Christ and practicing Christian virtues such as praying, reading the Scriptures and caring for others after being taught and guided by the pastor as their mentor. Teachers noted that the pastor read and explained the Bible to the pupils. One of the teachers interviewed said, “The pastor normally reads the Bible, then explains to the children what is in the Bible

before applying it to the pupils' lives.” The teachers also said the pastor equipped teachers on how to teach pupils in Bible clubs, supervised the discipleship classes, handled the baptism classes, and oversaw the chaplaincy team in developing the curriculum. He also checked on the overall Christian education of the learners.

The teachers said the pastor taught the children on how to set biblical goals in their lives and that had been helpful to the children both spiritually and academically. The children had learned how to trust God in their academics and so they knew that apart from working hard, they also had to trust in God.

The teachers reported too that apart from using learner-centered methods in his teachings on Tuesday and Wednesday chapel and Bible club, the pastor usually took up a particular topic and then took the pupils through it. The topics were varied and the examples given included “Pressing on toward the mark,” and “Purpose Driven Lives.” The teachers admitted that the particular topics that the pastor took the learners through had positive impacts on the learners' lives. One teacher reported, “With the particular topic that he teaches, the pastor keeps on speaking on it and as he goes through it the whole term, it really sinks deep down in the learners on what they are supposed to do.”

Teachers also considered the counseling sessions to be very helpful. The teachers said that the pastor took pupils through counseling sessions whenever there was need. One particular teacher said the teachers in the school no longer neglected children who needed spiritual counseling since the pastor was always available and ready to help in that area. The teachers said the pastor was well equipped in counseling the pupils holistically, looking at their spiritual, social, emotional and physical lives. The impact of counseling was great because the teachers reported some positive changes in specific pupils after they went through counseling sessions under



the school pastor.

## Worship

The teachers reported that the pastor participated in the worship services and sang along with the pupils, he encouraged the pupils to worship God and talk to Him as their Father. The pastor also helped pupils memorize and recite Scripture verses. The teachers went on to report that pupils had been greatly motivated by the pastor, who was a role model to the pupils through his worship life and participation in the pupils' worship experience. One teacher said, "The pastor sings, dances, reads the Word of God and preaches. That motivates the learners to emulate him. He also prays for the children with various needs. He participates in the praise and worship with the pupils, motivating them and being an example to them." Another teacher said, "You can always read it on the pupils' faces that they are motivated and encouraged when the pastor worships with them, it has quite a positive impact on them."

Apart from teaching the children on how to commune with God and participating in their worship activities, the teachers also reported that the pastor carried out the discipleship, baptism and the deliverance ministries among the pupils. The teachers reported that the pastor usually led the children to Christ and then handed them over to the teachers for discipleship before he could take them through the baptism classes. Once the pupils were fully equipped and ready for baptism, the pastor took them through the baptism as a sign of dying to their past lives of sin, resurrecting in Christ and leading lives of worship in God.

In the deliverance ministry, the teachers reported that the pastor sought to help the children both spiritually, socially, emotionally and physically. When asked whether all the children in the school were saved and had been transformed from their former ways of life, one teacher said that not all the children were saved, but those



that were saved had remarkable changes in their lives. One teacher said, “We had a case in standard one where a pupil kept falling and we did not know the cause. We sent her to the pastor to be counseled and the pastor prayed for her and she calmed down.”

When asked whether the worship styles that the pastor used at the school helped children develop and have growth in their spiritual lives, all the teachers responded positively. One teacher said, “One thing I have noted in this school is that we have children who are able to worship God on their own. We have children who can read the Bible, they can memorize the Scripture on their own, and we also have children who are able to help one another even in small things. They are courteous. But of course these children come from Christian homes too, and that also contributes a lot to their spiritual lives.”

#### Fellowship

On the fellowship ministry, the teachers said the pastor interacted with the pupils occasionally. The few times they had seen the pastor interact with pupils the teachers were impressed. They felt the boy-pupils found that to be more meaningful in their lives as they regarded the pastor as their mentor. Two of the teachers admitted they were not quite sure though of what the pastor did regarding this ministry level to help children grow spiritually.

#### Service

The teachers had very little to say concerning what the pastor did to help pupils in service ministry. All the teachers interviewed admitted that service ministry entailed the pupils reaching out to the surrounding community with actions of charity and love. The teachers reported that the former pastor had helped the pupils reach out

to the surrounding community through distributions of clothing to the needy people in the community, but the present pastor had not yet engaged in such activities. They did not know what this pastor had in his plan regarding the service ministry.

### *Pupils' view of the Pastor*

Generally, the pupils viewed the pastor in high regard. They liked his personality and sense of humour. All the same, there were some few pupils with a different opinion. One learner interviewed could not see the relevance of the pastor's contribution to his spiritual life. When asked what he did individually during his own private life that could contribute to his spiritual life he brushed his shoulders and said he couldn't tell. Five of the learners interviewed affirmed that they always took time to read the Word of God, pray, tell others about the Word of God and live according to what the Bible said. Such pupils also acknowledged that they respected and valued what the pastor was doing in their midst, and as such would readily respond positively if the pastor called upon them for anything.

Two pupils said that they found matters of Christianity to be boring, even though they claimed to be Christians. When asked if they ever got time to read the Bible on their own, one said he did once in a while, while the other said that he only read when his dad reminded him to. Concerning prayer, one said he always prayed along with the other pupils in school and in church but not as an individual. The second one said he prayed before his meals and once in a while before bed time. When I interviewed them on the importance of what the pastor was doing in their midst for their spiritual development, one said he was not sure while the other said he did not appreciate the pastor's work much because he felt it did not suit him. When asked what he thought would be the best way for the pastor to make his activities suit him, the pupil said, "Let him (the pastor) be there for me and freely interact with me

as a friend. Let him get to know me and understand me, then his words will be more relevant to me.”

A summary of the study findings is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

<b>CONTEXT OF SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>WHAT PASTOR SAYS HE IS DOING</b>	<b>WHAT PUPILS SEE THE PASTOR DOING</b>	<b>WHAT TEACHERS SEE THE PASTOR DOING</b>
<b>WEEKLY INSTRUCTION</b>	Yes -Taught the Bible -Used learner-centered teaching methodologies. -Used illustrations -Explored the Bible -Led pupils in discussions - Emphasized the teachers' spirituality -formed a chaplaincy team, coherent curriculum, teaching themes, Pastoral Instructional Classes, and Bible Clubs	Yes -Read and explained the Bible to pupils -Answered pupils' questions - Taught pupils on particular themes such as “Purpose Driven Lives” and “Pressing on Toward the Mark”.	Yes -Read and explained the Bible to pupils - Equipped teachers on how to teach pupils in Bible clubs, - Supervised the discipleship classes, and handled the baptism classes - Checked on the overall Christian education of the learners
<b>WEEKLY WORSHIP</b>	Yes -Encouraged pupils to read the Bible and Pray. -Encouraged pupils to participate in worship activities.	Yes - Encouraged pupils to worship - Participated in pupils' activities - Led pupils to Christ and helped them know what salvation meant	Yes -Participated in the worship services, - Helped pupils memorize scriptures and recite the scriptural verses - Led pupils to salvation - Carried out baptism and

			deliverance ministry among the pupils
<b>PUPILS' SERVICE TO SCHOOL/ COMMUNITY</b>	Yes - Had plans of coming up with the programs in future to help build outreach teams among the pupils to reach out to other schools and the society at large. • There was no context of observation	Yes -Encouraged pupils to be clean and keep the school clean.	No -Had happened in the past under the previous pastor. -Pupils were not sure of what the pastor did to help them under the service ministry
<b>SOCIAL/ FELLOWSHIP</b>	Yes -Had begun a standard seven and eight fellowship group	Yes -Had helped the standard seven and eight pupils have a fellowship group -Once in a while he interacted with pupils during their break times	Yes -Occasionally, he interacted with the pupils during their break times but the pupils were equally unsure of what else he did in this category.

Figure 1: Summary of the study findings

### Theory Development

Two theories emerged from the data. The first theory was that, children's ministry relies greatly on one's perception of "spirituality," and realization that children are capable of spiritual development, one's consciousness of the factors that would lead to the pupils' spiritual growth, and one's role in developing the children spiritually. The second theory was that the pupils' level of interest in spiritual activities determined positive or negative responses to the pastor's interventions.



While the interviewed pupils and teachers of NPC Academy accepted the role of the chaplains/pastors in their midst as worthwhile, their understanding and the pastors understanding of the term “spirituality” played a key role in their perception of the pastor’s role in contributing to the pupils’ spiritual growth and development. The data analysis enabled me to come up with the first theory that children’s ministry relies greatly on our perception of “spirituality,” our realization that children are capable of spiritual development, our consciousness of the factors that would lead to their spiritual growth and our role in developing the children spiritually. While the pastor viewed spirituality as having personal knowledge of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, the teachers and pupils viewed spirituality as having a personal relationship with Christ.

The teachers agreed that our definition of “spirituality” plays a key role on deciding factors that would lead children to their spiritual growth and development of pupils. There were some slight differences on the respondents’ views of what the pastor was to do to effectively minister to the pupils in the given school. The pastor saw teaching as the main way of reaching out to the pupils. With instruction, the pastor said the children could be taught about the Word of God and how to effectively apply it in their lives. That would create room for children to know what God expected of them and as they learned about worship, fellowship and service, they would know how to apply and practice what they had been taught.

The pastor’s understanding of service ministry among the pupils was that the pupils needed to have programs such as outreach teams to other schools and have activities in the society, including going out to help the weak in the society, visiting Children’s Homes, Old People’s Homes, the Hospitals, and maybe the Center for the

Terminally III. As such, he was working toward establishing such programs, before the pupils could be said to participate in service ministry.

The teachers' perception of "spirituality" and spiritual development involved having a personal relationship with Christ and practicing Christian virtues such as praying, reading the Scriptures and caring for others. They agreed that the pupils at NPC Academy were capable of spiritual growth and development because they had seen some of them get saved. The pupils could pray, read the Scriptures on their own and obey the Scriptures according to their developmental level. Teachers reported that the pupils needed mentorship to help them grow in their relationship with the Lord. Mentoring the pupils would call for more than instruction in the Word of God. It would also include developing friendship/relationship with the pupils and being there for them at all times and in all their needs and struggles in life. Teachers viewed mentorship in terms of the pastor being a role model; someone the learners could look up to.

The teachers felt too that if the pastor became a mentor, rather than just a teacher to the pupils, he could do an awesome work. Mentorship would lead him to reach out to the pupils holistically, meaning that instruction, fellowship, service and worship, would be addressed simultaneously, resulting in spiritual growth. When asked how the spiritual development occurred in the pupils' lives, one teacher said, "spiritual development begins by the learners being taught the Word of God, but then cognitive development needs to be transferred to other areas of the learners' lives, and that is where the pastor needs to be there as a mentor in pupils' social lives, worship life, and service life so that what he instructs them ceases to be just head knowledge." The teachers' understanding of service ministry was that the pupils needed to be reaching out to the surrounding community with actions of charity and love.

The pupils' view of "spirituality" and spiritual development was having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as their Savior and communing with God daily through prayer and the like. The pupils admitted that they were capable of having a relationship with Christ and some of them were saved. However, the pupils noted that they needed someone to teach them first so that they could comprehend who Christ is and how to develop a relationship with Him. After learning the Scriptures, the pupils said spiritual growth occurred when they communed daily with God and read His Word, being obedient children, and practicing what the Bible says. They found these activities greatly enhanced at home through their parents and at Church through other programs that had been put in place. The pupils' understanding of service ministry was cleaning the classrooms, the dustbins, and keeping the compound clean. However, the learners felt they would want the pastor to be more of their friend than just a teacher.

The pupils' view that the pastor should be more of a friend rather than just a teacher led me to examine the effect of the pastor's activities on pupils. That led to the emergency of the second theory that the pupils' level of interest in spiritual activities determined positive or negative responses to the pastor's interventions. The pupils who practiced spiritual disciplines regularly appreciated Christianity more than those who did not practice the spiritual disciplines. Consequently, the pupils that appreciated Christianity also valued the contribution of the pastor in their lives more than those who did not value Christianity.

The theories above enable me to agree with Raman that God has ordained the disciplines of the spiritual life as the means by which we are placed where He can bless us. Such disciplines are divided into three: 1) inward disciplines which include meditation, prayer, fasting, and study, 2) outward disciplines which include



simplicity, solitude, listening to God, submission, and service, and 3) corporate disciplines such as confession, worship, guidance, and celebration (Raman 2006, 6). I see the divisions of the spiritual disciplines scattered here and there in the views of the respondents on what the pastor ought to do to help the children develop and grow spiritually. Figure 2 below shows similarities and differences of understanding of spirituality and factors that would lead to spirituality among the pastor, teachers and pupils of NPC Academy.

	SPIRITUALITY	FACTORS LEADING TO SPIRITUALITY	PASTOR'S ROLE
PASTOR	-Having personal knowledge of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.	- Teaching the Bible - Worship of God -service to other schools and society at large	-have a good curriculum and teach the Word of God -help children worship God - Create outreach programs
TEACHERS	Having a personal relationship with Christ and practicing Christian virtues such as praying, reading the Scriptures and caring for others.	-Teaching the Bible -Mentorship -Worship -Fellowship -Service	-teach the Scriptures -mentor, be a role model, be a friend to the learners -interact with learners -help learners reach out to the needy in the immediate community with actions of charity and love.
PUPILS	Personal relationship with Jesus Christ as Savior.	-Learning Scriptures -Worship -Fellowship/Small	- teach the pupils Scriptures



	-Believing in Christ	groups -Service	-be a friend, spend time with the pupils - Help them commune with God daily through prayer, reading the Bible, evangelizing. - Help them participate in cleaning the classrooms, the dustbins, and keeping the compound clean.
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Figure 2: Similarities and differences in understanding of spirituality and factors that would lead to spirituality among the pastor, teachers and pupils of NPC Academy

#### Pupils' Spiritual Lives in Relation to their Behavioral Transformation

All the respondents generally agreed that having a pastor on the school grounds was very good because the pastor was catering for the children's spiritual needs. In that regard, the pupils' discipline level had been ranked to be quite high compared to other schools in Nairobi region due to the spiritual nourishment they received. Some teachers agreed there was a remarkable change in the children's behavior from when the school did not have a pastor to when they began having pastors. That particular teacher said,

I cannot despise the pastor's role in our midst because even though we have children from Christian homes, I have been in this school since 1991 and I have seen remarkable changes in the pupils' behaviors from when the school

did not have pastors in charge of the children's spiritual matters and from when we began having them.

Apart from the children's disciplined behavior in the school, the pupils were also disciplined in other environments outside of the school. The pastor said,

The good report I have received is that wherever the pupils from this school go for High School education, we get good feedback that their character is good. We had the Headmaster of Alliance High School come and say that he would want to get boys from here because the ones that he had, had proved to be very good in character, because they had been taught about spirituality and character issues.

The pupils often attributed their obedience to what they had learned from the pastor and the Word of God rather than from the disciplinary measures put in place within the school. The teachers also affirmed that they do not struggle so much with the pupils in this school on matters concerning discipline. Generally, the teachers said the worship styles that had been put in place for the spiritual development of pupils were good, and the pupils knew what they needed to do both in school and in the society as individuals who knew God. But the teachers felt there was still room for more strategies to be implemented to enhance the pupils' spiritual development and growth.

### Summary of the Findings

The data presented and analyzed in this chapter allowed for the making of the following statements to answer the central research question stated in chapter one.

What was the contribution of the pastor to the Christian spiritual development of pupils at NPC Academy?

The pastor contributed to the Christian spiritual development mainly through the instructional ministry. Through the teaching ministry, the foundations for spiritual development of children were laid. Other spiritual disciplines such as praying, fasting, worship, solitude, authenticity, submission and service to the community were

secondary to the teaching/study of the Word in the manner of the pastor's prioritization.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **LITERATURE INTEGRATION**

Literature review in a qualitative research serves the role of comparing and contrasting the findings of a study with the published literature. The roles of the pastor to the Christian spiritual growth and development of children at NPC Academy are here compared with the literature on the spiritual nurture of children. The key points of comparison were: 1) the necessity of spiritual development in children, 2) God's plan for children, 3) necessary factors for the spiritual development of children, and 4) the role of the pastor in instruction, worship, fellowship, and service. These points of comparison refined the recommendations contained in chapter five of this study.

#### **The Necessity of Spiritual Development in Children**

Scholars have agreed that there are many reasons for the spiritual development of children. Wawire notes the following: 1) the Bible emphasizes the value of children, 2) It is a command from the Lord, 3) children need the Gospel, and 4) children are the future of the church (Wawire 1995, 1-4).

#### ***The Bible Emphasizes the Value of Children***

One cannot avoid noticing from both the Old Testament and the New Testament that children are special to God. In the Old Testament parents are commanded to train their children in the way of the Lord so that when they grow up they may not depart from it (Proverbs 22:6). Children's ministry is based solidly on



God's Word. God expects parents and children's workers to help the children. He has created them to naturally respond to Him, but they need adults to explain God in their own language

The teachers and pastor at NPC Academy agree that children are capable of spiritual development and as such should be nurtured in the Word of God. Isoka quotes Alice and Robert Fryling saying, "our children need to see us read the Bible for what it is worth, live by God's rules, love unconditionally, forgive genuinely, exercise faith unsparingly, and solve whatever problems we may have biblically" (Isoka 1999, 17). It is noteworthy that Pastor John Wesley read the Bible and explored its meaning to the pupils. Children at NPC Academy, like any other children, had a right to the Word of God and their spiritual workers needed to faithfully deliver this Word to them in meaningful ways.

### ***It is a Command from God***

Matthew 28:19-20 gives us the Great commission of making disciples of all nations. Children are part of "all nations." The Great Commission says, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (NIV Bible). Discipleship is meant for all. This is one part of the ministry that was appreciated and included in the children's spiritual development program at NPC Academy. After leading the pupils to the Lord, the pastor handed them over to spiritually mature teachers for discipleship. This enabled the children to understand the decisions they had made in giving their lives to Christ.

The Bible in Ephesians 4:13-16 instructs us to nurture children to attain to the unity of the faith, knowledge of Christ, maturity of manhood, and to measure up to the stature of the fullness of Christ as we equip them for the ministry. One way of

equipping the children for the ministry is to reach out to them while they are in school. Christian schools such as NPC Academy can implement Ephesians 4:13-16 if the pastor runs a Bible oriented program that opens the pupils to personal experience, rich in worship, and reflective of their devotional lives as they serve the community around them. To a large extent, the NPC Academy pastor had exposed the pupils to ways that would help them grow and develop spiritually. But there was still room for more improvement.

### ***Children Need the Gospel***

Romans 3:23 suggests that children, too, have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Children are not angels without folly, they need Christ. Mattah quotes Meier as saying, “All persons are made up of body, soul and spirit and ...the development of the child’s spirit is the most important of all since it is what gets into an eternal destiny either in hell or in heaven” (2001, 11). Children are born in slavery as seen in Gal. 4:3. Colkmire in *Youth and Christian Education Leadership*, quotes Barna, “Know that the foundation of the war for people’s souls, minds and hearts is waged against children... And you, as a parent or spiritual leader, bear the primary responsibility for how that battle turns out” (2004, 24).

Moreover, there is a need to be concerned with the children’s spiritual growth just as we are concerned with their physical growth. It is in that sense that Packer says that 3 John 2 alerts people to the twin truths that personal health is more than physical well-being, and that health of soul (mind and heart) is ultimately more important than the well-being of the body (1992, 158). As such, children ought to be taught the following truths outlined by Richards (1983, 347):

1. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God who came on earth to die for our sins.

2. The necessity of being born again by the Spirit of God by receiving the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. Growth in the Christian life depends on fellowship with God through reading the Bible, prayer, and service.
4. Each Christian should not, and need not, live his life under the dominion of sin.
5. A Christian should purpose to yield himself wholeheartedly to God, a sustained sacrifice, obeying all of his will.
6. The Bible is the Word of God and is practical and important in our daily lives.
7. All of life must be related to God if we are to comprehend the true meaning of life.

The pastor at NPC Academy ensured that the above truths were followed in helping the children spiritually. Not everything may have been successful, but it was clear that he tried to ensure that the seven truths were part and parcel of his ministry to the children in the school.

### ***Children are the Future of the Church***

Children are both the church of today and tomorrow. Children are part of Christ's church; open to God, able to respond to God and be saved at present (Buconyori 1993, 81). As the church of tomorrow children will be the church leaders in the near future. Wawire affirms,

The Church always stands only one generation away from extinction. The children we evangelize and disciple today are the Church's passport to the future. Their lives are the messages we are sending to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Should our Lord delay his coming, these boys and girls will lead the Church in a time where we will not go (1995, 4).

There is no doubt that children need to be taught the ways of the Lord and be led in the way of righteousness as they lay the foundation for their future lives. The children at NPC Academy demonstrated that they had the innate God given capacity to learn about God. They were receptive to the Word of God. We learn from them that can and



should be nurtured spiritually as they develop in other aspects of life. In fact, Choun and Lawson say, "God accepts the trust of a child... Scripture says that we adults must be childlike in our faith in order to enter the kingdom... There is a quality to a child's awe of God and trust in his protection that is difficult to find in adult conversions" (Choun and Lawson 1993, 31-32). It is indisputable that children should be taught the Word of God, be nurtured to grow in their faith and live according to the Lord's ways. By leading the children to Christ and taking them through discipleship classes, the pastor and teachers at NPC Academy did a commendable work. Pupils' faith and commitment to the Word of God should never be ignored as God respects a child's faith.

#### God's Plan for Children

Children are God's creation. The Bible states clearly that God made man in His own image. "In the image of God... male and female he created them" (NIV, Gen. 1:27); children included. Children are entitled to fellowship with God, to walk with Him and serve Him. When we have a look in the Old Testament, we find examples of children that God used despite their tender ages. Samuel grew in favor with the Lord and with men as seen in I Samuel 2:26, and in 3:1. Samuel ministered to God before Eli the priest. We are also told of the child Joash who reigned at the age of seven years for 40 years and did what was right in God's sight (II Chronicles 24:1). In II Chronicles 34:1-3 we learn of Josiah who reigned at the age of eight, did what was right in God's eyes, and sought after the God of David.

In the New Testament we have Jesus as our primary example of God using a child. Luke 1:27b points out that Jesus as a baby was brought to the temple. In Luke 2:52 we are told that Jesus grew strong and increased in wisdom, stature and in favor with God and man, and in Luke 2:46 we see him as a young boy in the temple sharing



with adults. We also have the example of Timothy whom we are told had a sincere faith (2 Timothy 1:5), and knew Scriptures from his childhood (Timothy 3:15).

Mattah (2001, 9) says that children can be born-again and quotes Swindoll, who notes, “God’s plan for humankind always included children. Young ones were neither postscripts nor the result of a curse on Adam and Eve. God’s command to “be fruitful and multiply” (Gen 1:28 RSV) came Prior to the fall.” Children are God’s creation and, therefore, included in God’s plan for the redemption of mankind. We had examples of children who gave their life to Christ at NPC Academy. I believe that such children were not out to please their teachers or pastor, rather, they had given themselves to Christ and were out to serve Him if directed in the right ways. Some children were already serving in the pupils’ worship team, sharing the Word of God to the body of unbelievers, and exercising faith by praying, reading the Bible and meditating on the Word of God.

#### Necessary Factors for the Spiritual Development of Children

Cully says, “The development of the spiritual life includes both education and nurture” (1984, 125). Teaching embraces many kinds of processes and activities. There are various factors that play key roles in the teaching-learning process. These include 1) the availability of a dedicated teacher, 2) availability of a well-developed curriculum and teaching materials, 3) availability of rewards and punishment in the teaching-learning process, and 4) the availability of an environment conducive to learning.

A teacher plays a very important role in the education process. In the case of the NPC Academy, the pastor, then, is the teacher of the Word of God to the pupils. He acts as a catalyst, actively stimulating learning. As a facilitator, he has the responsibility to help learners interpret and understand the materials available for

them. As such, Milton says that the teacher should know that which he should teach and he should teach what he knows (1954, 28). Therefore, a teacher should always do his research ahead of time and thoroughly understand the content of his work before he begins teaching the learners. He also needs to be sensitive to the learners' abilities, interests and needs. That calls for the teacher to spend some time with his learners.

We could read from the NPC Academy pupils' views that they lacked proper interactions with their pastor, even though the pupils felt the need of such interaction to take place. Some pupils felt that the pastor did not know who they were, and as such they were not confident in sharing with him their struggles. That could be a hindrance to the pastor's ministry to children at NPC Academy. The pastor needed to have divided his time well between classroom interaction and outside interaction with the pupils.

Children need to be unconditionally accepted. A teacher may express this in a classroom demeanor, the way the pastor at NPC Academy did through expression of kind and affirming words. Yet, a deeper level of relationship requires out-of-class involvement in the learners' lives to integrate total personality necessary for spiritual formation (Herbamas 2001, 239). It is from such interactions that the learners would learn from the pastor and know how to apply the truths of the Scripture in their lives as they interact with the wider society.

Education should prepare the learners for the joy of service in this world and the joy of wider service in the world to come. The competent teacher needs to know how people develop, how they learn, how teaching relates to learning, and how to become personally effective in the classroom and outside the classroom, helping the learners to develop physically, mentally, emotionally, socially and spiritually. The pastor at NPC Academy did a commendable job in terms of teaching. But, bearing in

mind that the children at the school were at different developmental levels, it was evident that there were times when the pastor struggled in communicating some principles in ways that the pupils could all understand. It was necessary to have grouped pupils according to their developmental levels for the pastor to be able to reach out to them effectively. It is quite clear that learning activities need to be age appropriate, and that calls for the children's worker to have a good sense of what is appropriate to a particular age group.

A good curriculum is also necessary for the guidance of the teacher. Curriculum is the starting point in planning the Christian education program for children (Clark, Brubaker and Zuck 1986, 362). It is a good thing that the pastor at the NPC Academy together with his chaplaincy team had discovered the need of having a good curriculum. All the same, it is important to note that a good curriculum should lead children to Jesus Christ as their Savior from sin, guide children in continued growth toward Christ-likeness, and equip them for effective service in the will of God. As the curriculum for spiritual development of pupils at NPC Academy is being put in place, the pastor and his chaplaincy team should note that the school serves children with a variety of backgrounds; from healthy, spiritually vibrant settings to non-Christian, dysfunctional homes. As such, the group working on the curriculum should be aware that treating all the children with the same curriculum may place the latter group at a significant disadvantage (Herbamas 2001, 236).

Another good thing is the idea of recognition and reinforcement. There are usually two categories of reinforcement: verbal reinforcement and non-verbal reinforcement. We fail our children if we do not recognize them when they act appropriately. Attention to positive character traits is necessary. The pastor at NPC



Academy used both verbal and non-verbal rewards to motivate the learners, and that was commendable.

I did not hear any pupil mention gifts, but I should add that gifts can also be good rewards and an encouragement to children in the case of good behaviour or performance. However, Downs (1994, 152) says that there is a place for punishment in nurturing children. He says, “Even the heavenly Father punishes his children, and this is a sign of love” (Prov. 3:11-12, NIV). Downs’ point is that God does not ignore negative behaviour and so parents and children’s workers should not ignore it either.

A good, warm, loving, clean, and well-ventilated environment is also necessary for good learning. This will make a learner feel free to learn and share his experiences. Considering that education is a process that enables individuals to adjust to the environment, we have to keep in mind that the environment needs to be conducive to learning. In this case, school pastors, and children workers, have a very special role to play to see that pupils develop spiritually. The pupils of NPC Academy were aware that cleanliness is next to godliness and they knew that learning was to take place in clean environments.

#### Role of School Pastors in the Spiritual Development of Children

Kuert affirms that a pastor has the same responsibility to his class as he has to his congregation. The NPC Academy pastor’s duties, therefore, include leading the children, feeding the children and protecting the children (1997, 17). Acts 20:28 says, “Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the Church of God, which He bought with His own blood” (NIV Bible).

The pastor is first and foremost a spiritual leader who must lead by example, make wise decisions, and be a motivator to the flock. Even though he is a leader, his



spirituality is very important. Nouwen says ministry and spirituality can never be separated because ministry is a way of life. Second, the pastor must give the Word of God to the children (1971). Third, he should be available to all children and seek to protect them from the vices of the enemy. That calls for a balanced program that will help children mature in Christ.

Once a child goes to school his world broadens. He is surrounded not only by family members, but also teachers, peers and probably church members. All these people may be classified as factors influencing the spiritual development of children, but, specifically, the researcher is dealing with the necessary elements to be included in educational programs for children. These elements are: instruction (knowledge), worship, fellowship and service. As much as instruction is important, it should be complemented with fellowship, service and worship as these are essential elements of the Christian education curriculum of any age-group.

Choun and Lawson (1993, 25) give us the biblical example of Samuel (1 Samuel 2:11-3:8). They say Samuel ministered to the Lord before Eli (service), he grew before the Lord (worship), he grew in favour with God and men (fellowship), and God spoke directly to the child Samuel (instruction).

### ***Instruction***

Instruction is intentional teaching for holistic development and progress of children so that they can grow up in every way into the likeness of Christ as seen in Eph. 4:13. It is effectively communicating with children so that Christ is formed in them, and so that they can continue to grow (Deut. 6:7; Col. 1:28 – 29). The search for insights into the spiritual growth and development of children begins with an exploration of Scripture. It was noted several times that the pastor at NPC Academy

always had a moment of exploring Scripture for the children. That helped the learners to have an intellectual knowledge of the Word of God. Some children would raise questions, hold deeper convictions, and seek for answers to the challenges in their lives. In such incidences, the pastor needed to be keen not just to impart information about God, but also to help such pupils become lifelong disciples of Christ.

Children form their image of God in the context of relating to their parents and other significant adults. As such, role modelling is very important. Ericksen says that it is good for a teacher to work toward a long-term impact on the learners and suggests the constructive effects of three measures for good teaching: 1) identifying knowledge as having enduring value, 2) leading students to gain thorough understanding of the meaning of this knowledge, and 3) generating and sustaining the motivation to learn and remember (1984, 11).

On identifying the knowledge, Ericksen quotes Erasmus as saying that it is essential that from the outset the child be made acquainted with only the best that is available (13). The master should be able to recognise the best in the mass of erudition open to him.

Concerning leading learners to gain thorough understanding of the meaning of knowledge, Ericksen quotes Quintilian as saying,

Let him everyday say something, and even much, which, when the pupils hear, they may carry away with them, for though he may point out to them, in their course of reading, plenty of examples for their imitation, yet the living voice, as it is called, feeds the mind more nutritiously, and especially the voice of the teacher, whom his pupils, if they are but rightly instructed, both love and reverence (27).

The pastor did an excellent job by coming up with the themes of the term in the instructional program. Every pupil interviewed was aware of the theme of the term and would easily quote it due to the repetition and emphasis that had been placed on it

by the pastor. The use of acronyms also helped the pupils to remember the major points of their lessons.

Ericksen quotes Emeritus as saying, on generating enthusiasm to learn, “the teacher who is influential, who is remembered will succeed by the power of contagion, by transmitting to his pupils directly, in many different ways, his seriousness about his subject, his enthusiasm for it.” His secret will chiefly be in the daily demonstration that nothing on earth means more than living the life of the mind, in learning, searching, testing, and proving, in developing delicacy of perception and the habit of disciplined thought (41) . The hindrance to pastor Wesley’s work in this area was the fact that he was a very busy pastor. His time had to be divided between the school ministry and the Church ministry. Consequently, he was not much available for the pupils within the school. As a result, the children were limited in learning from him.

### ***Worship***

Brubaker and Clark define worship as, “the honor and adoration which are rendered to God, by reason of what he is in himself, and what he is for those who render it” (1981, 15). Worship is a focus on God, a response of the heart, the inner being, in adoration, praise, thanksgiving, and love to God. It is both a celebration involving the emotions, and an expression involving an act of the will (Freese 1982, 41). Periods of worship are not the time to teach about God but rather to contemplate God and His actions and their meaning in our lives (Rev. 4:11; 5:9-10, 12-15). Worship calls for sharing sacred stories and parables with the audience. Cully suggests worship may also call for silence, letting the Holy Spirit of God minister to the children (1984, 148-149).



In the Old Testament the whole community of faith, including children, was counted as the people of God. The people of God were called to remember God's gracious acts toward them as a nation, and the recollection of such acts formed the centerpiece of worship. Children were not left out. The Old Testament material shows us the Israelites spent time journeying in the wilderness as a time of closeness to God, God's guidance, and Israel's dependence on God. The people remembered their time as a pilgrim people and kept the tradition alive through their worship that included all the members of the family (Bridger 2000, 194).

The children at NPC Academy were aware of God's presence in their lives and knew that God created them for the purpose of worshipping him. They knew that worship involves communicating with God and God communicating with them. The pupils practiced both corporate worship when they came together to worship God on Tuesday mornings, and individual worship wherever they were. They practiced reading of the Bible, meditation on the Word of God, praying, praise and adoration.

### ***Fellowship***

Fellowship is the sharing of life with life. People need to feel accepted, to belong, and to enjoy the company of God's people. All of these will help them grow in Christ. Spiritually, people should know that all life is God-given and should be lived out according to God's love and law. In the parable of the Good Samaritan Jesus pointed out that, anybody who comes in contact with someone who is in need is a neighbour, including those who might normally be one's enemies. Loving others then is imitating Christ's love by participating in his loving outreach toward the needy, including his enemies and ours (Lovelace 1985, 37).

Socially, people ought to have an atmosphere for development by sensing that they are highly valued; physically, have activities to develop their muscles; and



cognitively, use their creativity and imagination in making connection with what they are taught. The NPC Academy pupils expressed the lack of fellowship groups within the school. I would highlight that such fellowship groups are necessary because spiritual maturity grows deeper and stronger through the community of small groups. It is in such small groups that the children will be able to allow their lives to change and develop as they fellowship with one another. The fellowship sessions should include Bible stories, prayer moments, and recreational activities such as picnics, and physical exercises for children to have fun with each other.

### *Service*

Service can be defined as doing good works for others. Service is the place in which learning can take place on a cognitive, social, affective, spiritual, and behavioral level. It should not be seen as a choice, but an obligation. Matt. 5: 16; Mark 10:43-44; Eph.2: 10.

The biblical way of life is decidedly centered on others. Christian service, though, is a pathway of great joy and not one of self-annihilation... All Christian service starts by acknowledging God's claim on all our property, talent, and time. We serve God in our worship, in our giving, in our study, and in our concern for others. Springing from a heart given to God, service always involves doing. The doing may be kind words, time spent with another, sacrificial giving, and teaching; but in event, the servant, like Jesus, goes about doing kind and good deeds (Wilhoit 1986, 24).

Children are not left out in the ministry of service. Children need be offered activities appropriate to their ability. For children at NPC Academy, service would have instilled a sense of responsibility such as sweeping the rooms, picking-up rubbish, and cleaning the compound. Donating clothes and other valuables to the needy people within the school and the surrounding community would be a good way to encourage the children that are willing to be involved. Service is any intentional

participation that would help the children to have a “hands-on” experience as they study the Word of God.

In light of all the instruction, worship, fellowship and service, I also should add that the Holy Spirit is very important and should be allowed to work within the four elements as illustrated in figure 3 below. No matter how gifted or spiritual a minister may be, learning and growth towards Christ-likeness will not take place unless a learner allows the Holy Spirit to work within his or her heart (Anthony 2001, 127). A figure showing a suggested balanced children’s program is given in appendix D.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study sought to discover the pupils' and teachers' perception of the role of the pastor in the Christian spiritual development of primary school learners with a view of discovering the contribution of the pastor to the Christian spiritual development of pupils at NPC Academy. This chapter gives a summary of the findings, the children's spiritual growth and nurture principles that emerged, possible implementations and significant recommendations from the study to the academic community and the community studied.

Scholars have argued that part of the process of spiritual growth and development involves a balance between instruction in the Word of God, worship of God, fellowship with one another, and service to the community and society at large. The literature integration in chapter 4 revealed it is only when we have a balance of the four that we would ensure the holistic growth of children into Christ-likeness. The issue was, in a Christian community like NPC Academy, to what extent does the pastor implement these factors to contribute to the Christian spiritual development and growth of pupils?

This study used interviews and observations to explore the role of the pastor in the spiritual development of primary school learners. It sought to find answers to three sub-questions which explicated the central research question, "What was the contribution of the pastor to the spiritual development of pupils at NPC Academy?" The research sub-questions were;

**R.Q.1** What did the pastor say he did to contribute to Christian spiritual development of pupils?

**R.Q.2** What did the pupils see and note as the pastor's contribution to their Christian spiritual development?

**R.Q.3.** What did the teachers see and note as the pastor's contribution to the Christian spiritual development of the children?

With the above research questions I sought first to establish the relevance of biblical teachings to the spiritual development and growth of pupils. Secondly, I wanted to ascertain the perception of pupils toward the worship styles implemented for their spiritual growth, and finally, determine the teachers' perception of the strategies put in place for the spiritual growth of pupils and their effect on the pupils' behavioral change.

The study revealed the role of the pastor in the Christian spiritual development and growth of pupils in primary schools. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Instruction in the Word of God, Worship of God, Fellowship with one another, and Service to the community and the entire society are significant components that need to be integrated for a balanced program for the pupils' spiritual development and growth.

### Conclusions

1. The greatest influence the pastor had on the children was in the area of instruction.
2. The area of fellowship and service was least emphasized.
3. On regularity in the practice of lessons learnt on Tuesdays during Chapel times and Bible clubs, the pupils' worship was found to be very strong, their



understanding of the Word of God was high, while their fellowship with one another and service to the community were weak, compared to the former two.

4. The participants' perception of the role of the pastor in the spiritual growth and development of pupils heavily relied on how one entertained the term "spirituality."
5. The pastor and teachers seemed to have a different view of service ministry from what the children knew and that made the pastor and teachers unsure of whether the children were involved in service ministry or not.
6. The pupils felt the need to create small group fellowships to help them learn from one another.
7. The teachers felt the need for a pastor to serve as mentor to the pupils.

#### Possible Implications

In view of the literature integration, it is apparent that successful nurturing of spiritual growth and development in children entails multiple factors. Children's ministry relies greatly on our perception of spirituality and our realization that children are capable of spiritual development, our consciousness of the factors that lead to their spiritual growth and our role in developing the children spiritually. These factors argue in favor of a children's Christian program model that integrates instruction, worship, fellowship, and service.

Lack of keenness in what we do with the pupils may be a major draw-back in the process of enhancing the spiritual development of children at school. The following principles are suggested for the pupils' Christian program at NPC Academy:

1. Clear goals: the children's program should have clear goals that define the role of the pastor.

2. Instruction: Instruction in the word of God is a key factor in laying a foundation for the spiritual development of children. A good curriculum enhances instruction and facilitates assessment.
3. Small groups: Fellowship works well in small groups where the learners are able to learn from one another. Fellowship may be as simple as the pastor taking time to interact with pupils outside (e.g., during their leisure time, break time, and games time). It also may involve the pupils being encouraged to form activities within their Bible clubs where they learn from one another. A good example noted at NPC Academy was the fellowships of the standard eight and seven classes, where the pupils, under the supervision of the pastor, learned from one another about their boy-girl relationships. Such a forum allows the children to receive support from one another as well as from the pastor.
4. Service: Children need to be offered activities appropriate to their abilities to help them have a “hands-on” experience as they study God’s Word. A service program for children includes activities such as cleaning of the compound and even wiping the chalkboard. Children should be complimented when they do such activities.
5. Worship: Children should be encouraged intentionally to have a vertical relationship with God through prayer, reading of the Scriptures, and other worship activities.
6. Mentorship: Mentorship program should be there for both girls and boys. The pastor may work hand in hand with his wife to bring up the pupils in godly ways. His wife would be an ideal role model for the girls.

Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Instruction in the Word of God, Worship of God, Fellowship with one another, and Service to the community and the entire society are significant components that need to be integrated for a balanced program for the pupils' spiritual development and growth in any setting.

#### Recommendations

1. There is a need for full-time chaplains in Christian schools to work on a day-by-day basis with the pupils. The task of nurturing 700+ pupils is too big for one pastor who has many other responsibilities. On that note, it would be wise for NPC Academy to have full-time pastor/chaplain(s) who would work under the supervision of a senior pastor since this is an NPC-sponsored school.
2. There is need to put specific and accurate measures in place as to where the school is coming from and where it is headed in terms of developing the spiritual aspect of the pupils. Such goals and measure would involve constant evaluation of the school's Christian spiritual development and growth curriculum. The evaluation would include looking into the extent to which instructional, worship, service, and fellowship ministries are incorporated for the spiritual mentorship of the pupils.
3. The pastor should take time to interact with the pupils apart from the devotional sessions on Tuesday mornings. Such interaction is important for him to establish friendships with the pupils and get to know them on a personal level. It also will make it easier for the children to confide in the pastor as a friend and openly share their struggles in the Christian walk.
4. The study revealed that there is need for more research on:
  - The teachers, pupils, and pastors' perception of "spirituality", and need of pastors/ chaplaincy in schools

- The effectiveness of the Ministry of Education's Pastoral Instruction curriculum on the spiritual growth and development of pupils in primary schools.
- Factors affecting the spiritual maturity of children such as their parents, family background, Church background and peer counseling.

Such studies will strengthen the work of discipleship and nurture the spiritual development of pupils in primary schools by allowing the work to be more effective and relevant to the pupils. In that respect, I would recommend further studies in the above mentioned areas.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: Pastor's Interview Guide

#### Part One: For Rapport

1. What does the idea of spiritual development of children mean to you?

#### Part Two: His Perception of what he does for the spiritual development of pupils

2. What do you do during the weekly instructional and counseling sessions with the pupils that help develop the spiritual growth of the pupils?  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What activities are included in the worship services at school to help the pupils develop and grow spiritually? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. What activities/services do you do to help the pupils get involved within the school or surrounding community that would exhibit their spiritual development and growth? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. How do you contribute to the pupils' social life within the school to maintain and exhibit their spiritual growth and development? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. What have you noted in the behavior of the pupils that suggests to you that the children are growing spiritually?  
\_\_\_\_\_



## APPENDIX B: Pupils' Interview Guide

### Part One: For Rapport

1. How do you like being a pupil at NPC Primary School?

### Part Two: What the pupils perceive as their pastor's contribution to the spiritual development of pupils

2. What is your understanding of the term spirituality? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What have you seen your school pastor do during the weekly instructional and counseling sessions that has helped you learn more about God and be the kind of children that God wants you to be? \_\_\_\_\_
4. In what ways does your school pastor encourage you to worship God? Please give me examples of the things that he tells you to do in relation to worship. \_\_\_\_\_
5. How do the things that you have mentioned in regard to worship help you grow in your spiritual life? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Do you have small groups or fellowship groups in school where pupils meet to interact with one another regarding spiritual matters? Please mention some of those groups if you have any. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What exactly does your pastor tell you to do in these small groups? \_\_\_\_\_
8. How do the things that the pastor tells you to do in the small groups help you grow spiritually? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Has the pastor ever encouraged you to offer service to your school and its environs? \_\_\_\_\_
10. What exactly does he tell you to do? \_\_\_\_\_
11. How do the things that the pastor tells you in regard to service to the school help you grow spiritually?
12. How has the pastor interacted with you during your free-time or games-time?  
\_\_\_\_\_

13. What specific behavior changes can you point at in your life that show you are growing spiritually? \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX C: Teachers' Interview Guide

**Part One: For Rapport**

1. How do you perceive the whole idea of having a pastor in charge of the spiritual life of children in this school?

**Part Two: His Perception of what he does for the spiritual development of pupils**

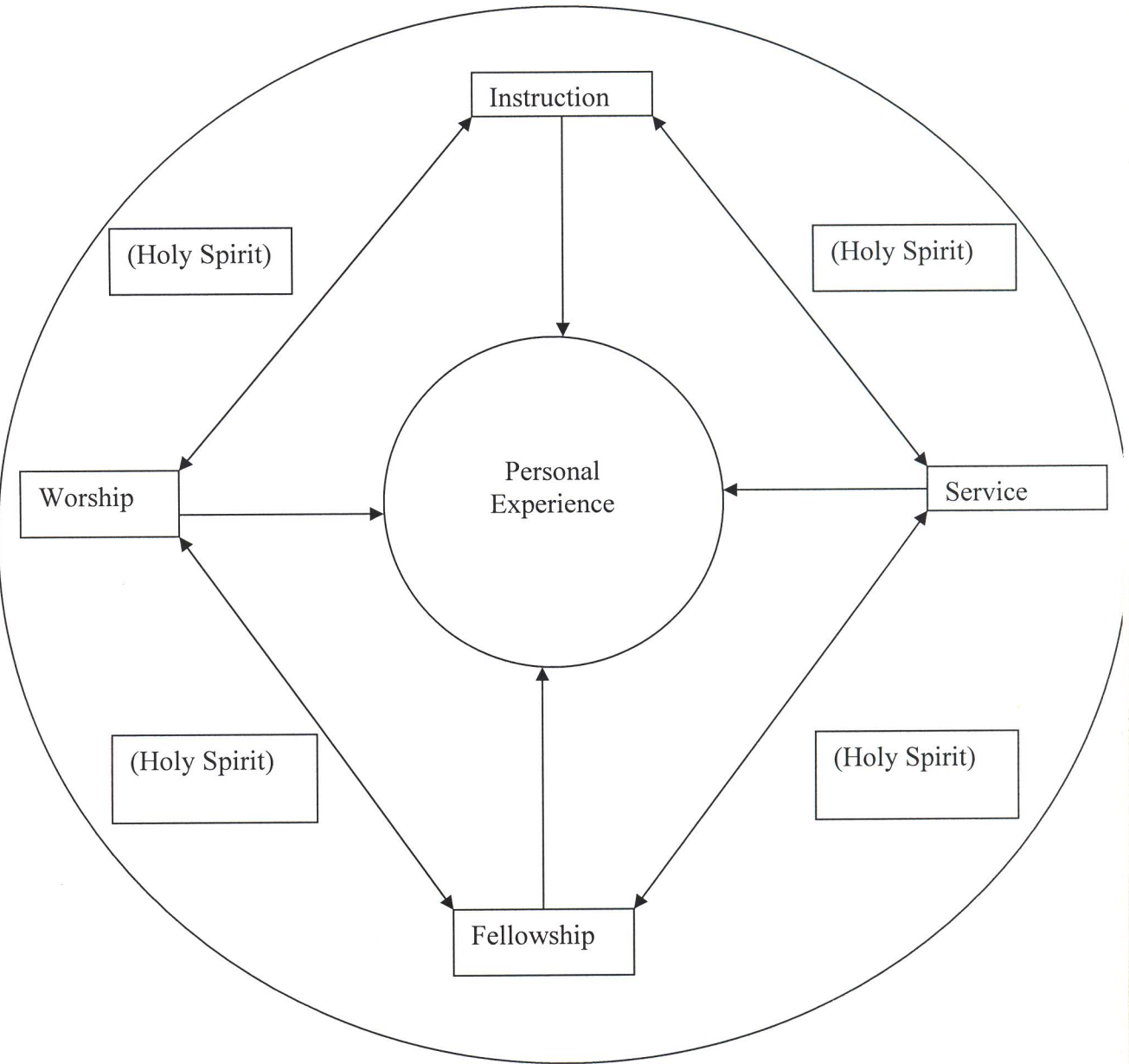
2. What is your understanding of the term spirituality? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What have you noted the pastors do during the weekly instructional and counseling sessions with the pupils that help develop the spiritual growth of the pupils? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Does your school pastor ever encourage children to participate in worship activities within the school? Please give me some of the examples of the worship activities he tells the pupils to participate in.  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. How do the things you've mentioned contribute to the spiritual growth of pupils?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Name any examples of small groups that exist in the school where pupils might meet to interact with one another in the word of God.  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What has been the pastor's view of children meeting in such small groups? Does he encourage them? What exactly does he tell the pupils regarding the pupils meeting in such small groups?  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. How do the things that the pastor tells children to do in small groups help children to grow in their spiritual lives?  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Which are some of the ways the pastor helps the school to serve the immediate community?  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. What are some of the examples of the things the pastor tells pupils to do in regard to service to the school community and its environs?  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. How do those things you have mentioned in regard to service help pupils grow spiritually?

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APPENDIX D: Suggested Balanced Program Model for Children's Ministry



## APPENDIX E: Letter of Introduction



### **Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology**

P.O. Box 24586 - 00502 Karen, NAIROBI, KENYA

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Fax: 254 (0)20 882908  
Email: info@negst.edu  
Website: www.negst.edu

6<sup>th</sup> January 2005

#### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

#### RE: RESEARCH WORK

The bearer of this letter, Miss Fidel Adah Baraza is a student at Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology (NEGST) and is doing research towards the completion of the Master of Arts in Christian Education degree. The research is on "The Pastor's Contribution to the Christian Spiritual Development at N.P.C. Academy"

Any assistance that you can give to Miss. Baraza will be much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Dwight Jessup, PhD.  
Ag. Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs

## APPENDIX F: Curriculum Vitae

### PERSONAL DETAILS

Name: Phidel Adah Baraza  
Date of Birth: 14<sup>th</sup> January 1979  
Gender: Female  
Nationality: Kenyan

### ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

2003-2006 : Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology (NEGST)  
1998-2002: Kenya Highlands Bible College (KHBC)  
1994- 1997: Moi Girls High School, Nangina

### WORK AND FIELD EXPERIENCE

DECEMBER 2004 – APRIL 2005: Communication Assistant with the NEGST Admissions- Extension Program  
JANUARY -NOVEMBER 2004: Communication Assistant with the NEGST Admissions Office- Regular Program  
2002 – 2003: Teacher, Nassa Theological College -Mwanza, Tanzania  
AUGUST 2001: Volunteer Worker with Life Challenge Africa.