

PAN-AFRICA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

TOWARD A BIBLICALLY SOUND PENTECOSTAL PERSPECTIVE OF
SPIRITUAL DELIVERANCE: AN EXAMINATION OF PENTECOSTAL
CHURCHES IN JOS, NIGERIA

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Presented by
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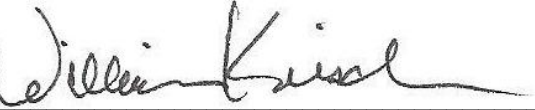
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DEDICATION

I humbly dedicate this work to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who is forever praised. I dedicate the work also to great fathers in the faith and servants of God, who labored tirelessly to contend for the faith by upholding sound biblical preaching and teaching.

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	x
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	xiii
TABLES	xvii
ABBREVIATIONS	xix
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF PROBLEM	1
Introduction	1
Problem Statement	2
Purpose Statement	3
Research Questions	3
Significance of the Study	4
Limitations and Delimitations	5
Definition of Terms	5
Deliverance	6
Demonized	6
Oppressed	6
Pentecostals	6
Assumptions	7
Summary	7
2. BIBLICAL-THEOLOGICAL LITERATURE	8
Introduction	8
Preliminary Word Study	8

Spirits and Angels.....	9
Satan and Demons	15
Theological Understanding of Spiritual Deliverance	27
Defining Spiritual Deliverance.....	27
Purpose of Spiritual Deliverance.....	31
Practices of Spiritual Deliverance	33
Spiritual Deliverance and Demon Possession.....	36
The Christian and Demon Possession.....	47
The Beneficiary of Spiritual Deliverance	61
Exegetical Analysis of Three New Testament Passages	61
Exegesis of Matthew 8:16–17 on Spiritual Deliverance.....	62
Exegesis of Matthew 12:43–45 on Spiritual Deliverance.....	65
Exegesis of Luke 13:10–16 on Spiritual Deliverance.....	70
Summary	73
3. SOCIAL SCIENCE LITERATURE	78
Introduction.....	78
Anthropological Perception of Spiritual Deliverance.....	78
Spirit Possession and Behavior among Different Societies	80
Spiritual Deliverance among Different Societies	85
Psychological Perception of Spiritual Deliverance	86
Spiritual Deliverance in African Culture and Traditional Religion	90
Spiritual Deliverance in Nigerian Culture	95
Summary	97

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	99
Introduction.....	99
Methodological Framework.....	99
Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments	105
Data Collection Procedures.....	105
Research Question 1	105
Research Question 2	107
Research Question 3	107
Research Participants.....	108
Informed Consent Protocol.....	110
Instrumentation.....	111
Focus Group	112
Semi-structured Interview	112
Questionnaires	113
Data Analysis Procedures	114
Summary.....	116
5. RESULTS	117
Introduction.....	117
Analysis of Data	117
Research Question 3	117
Research Question 3A.....	118
Research Question 3B.....	125
Questionnaire Report in Response to Research Question 3.....	127

Semi-structured Interview Response for Church Leaders in Jos.....	139
Summary.....	152
6. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	155
Introduction.....	155
Summary of Findings.....	155
Research Question One.....	156
Research Question Two.....	157
Research Question Three.....	159
Conclusions.....	163
Intentional Biblically Sound and Contextually Relevant Theology of Spiritual Deliverance in Jos, Nigeria.....	169
Components of a Biblically Sound Theology of Spiritual Deliverance.....	169
Model Theology of Spiritual Deliverance for Pentecostal Christians in Jos.....	178
Implications.....	185
Recommendations for Further Study.....	186
Carry Out a Comparative Study of the Works of Demons and Works of the Flesh.....	186
Developing an Intentional Alternative Training Program for Pentecostals in Jos.....	187
Development of a Discipleship Program for People Delivered from Demons...	188
Formulation of Intentional Awareness Program for Pentecostal Christians in Jos.....	189
Summary.....	189
Appendix	
A. TABLES OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY OPTIONS.....	192

B. SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE.....	194
C. FOCUS GROUP GUIDE	197
D. INFORMED CONSENT FORM.....	199
E. SURVEY OF OPINIONS ON SPIRITUAL DELIVERANCE IN PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES OF JOS, NIGERIA.....	201
F. DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL REVIEWER BY THE RESEARCHER	205
G. FOCUS GROUP TRANSCRIPT	206
H. PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF FOCUS GROUP TRANSCRIPT	217
I. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDY PARTICIPANTS OF SURVEY OPINIONS ON SPIRITUAL DELIVERANCE	224
J. RESULT OF SURVEY OPINIONS ON SPRITUAL DELIVERANCE IN PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES IN JOS, NIGERIA SHOWING ITEMS, RESPONSES, AND MEAN SCORE.....	225
K. LIST OF DENOMINATIONS FOR CHURCH LEADERS INTERVIEW	227
BIBLIOGRAPHY	228

ABSTRACT

Spiritual deliverance is a growing trend among Pentecostals in Jos, Nigeria. This growing trend has attracted questions from several people, including the academy. They want to know what Pentecostals in Jos practice regarding spiritual deliverance, and if it is acceptable in light of Scripture. They are asking, can a born-again Christian be demon possessed, and do they need deliverance?¹

The problem under investigation was: What are the current beliefs, perceptions, and self-described practices of Pentecostal pastors and laity in Jos, and how do they compare with a biblically sound and contextually relevant theology of spiritual deliverance? This dissertation was, therefore, a response to the need² for a biblically sound and contextually relevant theology of spiritual deliverance for Pentecostals in Jos. A mixed methodology approach called *triangulation* was employed, which allows for a blending of quantitative and qualitative data within a study to provide a broader deep perspective. The various approaches combined for the study, therefore, are: exegetical-

¹Umar Habila Danfulani, “Pentecostal and Children at the Centre of Witchcraft Accusations: Balancing between the Violation of Rights and the Quest for Spiritual Health in Nigeria” (paper presented at the conference of the Nigeria Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies University of Jos, Divine Love Retreat Conference Centre Lugbe, Abuja, Nigeria, May 25, 2012).

²James Ameh, “NCPCS Conference 2012 Call for Papers” (conference schedule of the Nigeria Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies University of Jos, Divine Love Retreat Conference Centre Lugbe, Abuja, Nigeria, May 25–27, 2012).

hermeneutical study, Integrative Critical Analysis, survey research study, focus group, and interviews, through which data was elicited from theological/precedent literature and from leaders and members of Pentecostals in Jos.

The study reveals that, although scholars differ in their beliefs regarding the demonization of a Christian, there is no reference in the Bible that a born-again Christian was possessed and/or delivered from demons. The study also reveals that most scholars are plagued with the problem of nomenclature in describing *demon possession*, a gap which is begging for scholarly attention. The current perceptions, beliefs, and self-described practices of spiritual deliverance among Pentecostals in Jos vary from pastor to pastor. Some of these self-described practices are Bible-based, while others are influenced by African Traditional Religion (ATR). A majority holds the belief that a born-again Christian cannot be possessed by demons, except backsliders. A majority of Pentecostal pastors in Jos do not have theological training for ministry.³ This has affected their perceptions, beliefs, and self-described practices of spiritual deliverance.

The researcher formulated a model theology of spiritual deliverance for Pentecostals in Jos which is intentional, biblical, and contextual. The model should work effectively in an interactive framework among Pentecostals in Jos through a culture of training for ministry. The model will bring about the desired outcomes of making known the biblically sound and contextually relevant theology of spiritual deliverance in Jos, and correcting the unscriptural teachings and practices going on in the church. The model is not expected to be the only tool for solution to the problem of spiritual deliverance in Jos. However, it is one that is likely to have a significant effect in correcting the unscriptural perceptions, beliefs, and practices of spiritual deliverance among Pentecostals in Jos.

³Ibid.

These desired outcomes would be achieved if the implementation of this model theology becomes a part of the training culture among Pentecostal ministers in Jos. When that happens, the leaders will develop in content as well as in character the relevant perceptions, beliefs, and practices of biblically sound and contextually relevant theology of spiritual deliverance. The implications of these findings will hopefully be relevant to the academy and the church in the training and/or re-orientating Pentecostal pastors and lay leaders in Nigeria and Africa.

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TABLES

5.1.	Demographic characteristics of participants' age.....	128
5.2.	Demographic characteristics of participants' educational qualification.....	129
5.3.	Demographic characteristics of participants' primary ministry position.....	130
5.4.	Responses to survey opinions statement 1	130
5.5.	Responses to survey opinions statement 2	131
5.6.	Responses to survey opinions statement 3	131
5.7.	Responses to survey opinions statement 4	131
5.8.	Responses to survey opinions statement 5	132
5.9.	Responses to survey opinions statement 6	132
5.10.	Responses to survey opinions statement 7	133
5.11.	Responses to survey opinions statement 8	133
5.12.	Responses to survey opinions statement 9	134
5.13.	Responses to survey opinions statement 10	134
5.14.	Responses to survey opinions statement 11	135
5.15.	Responses to survey opinions statement 12	135
5.16.	Responses to survey opinions statement 13	136
5.17.	Responses to survey opinions statement 14	136
5.18.	Responses to survey opinions statement 15	137
5.19.	Responses to survey opinions statement 16	137

5.20.	Responses to survey opinions statement 17	138
6.1.	Components of model theology of spiritual deliverance for Pentecostals in Jos	179
A1.	Research Question 1	192
A2.	Research Question 2	192
A3.	Research Question 3	193
A4.	Demographic characteristics of study participants	224

ABBREVIATIONS

ATR	African Traditional Religion
ICA	Integrative Critical Analysis
PFN	Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Introduction

In recent times, the subject of spiritual deliverance has become a major concern in Christendom worldwide.¹ A growing number of people are becoming interested in the issue of deliverance, so much so that even a mere mention of the word *deliverance* can spark debate on the issue. This growing trend is evident among Pentecostal Christians in Jos. It has also attracted the attention of the academy. For instance, Umar Danfulani, a professor of religion at the University of Jos, Nigeria, observes that most Pentecostal preachers today use their deliverance ministry to make merchandise. Danfulani also asks why the poor, children, and women are usually the clients, and if these clients are truly Christians.²

Similarly, many Pentecostal Christians in Jos tend to feel insecure if they fail to seek deliverance after conversion. The implication is that many people are asking if Jesus, whom they yielded their lives to at salvation, is really willing and capable of delivering them from the shackles of the enemy, especially from demonic control. The situation becomes more confusing as pastors themselves are not exempt. The researcher

¹Richard Aligaitah, "Pentecostal Phenomenon and Koro Traditional Religion" (paper presented at the conference of the Nigeria Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies University of Jos, Divine Love Retreat Conference Centre Lugbe, Abuja, Nigeria, May 24, 2012).

²Umar Habila Danfulani, "Pentecostal and Children at the Centre of Witchcraft Accusations: Balancing between the Violation of Rights and the Quest for Spiritual Health in Nigeria" (paper presented at the conference of the Nigeria Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies University of Jos, Divine Love Retreat Conference Centre Lugbe, Abuja, Nigeria, May 25, 2012).

has witnessed a situation where pastors went to deliverance ministers to be delivered, even from demons, as a result of accepting controversial teachings and practices on spiritual deliverance in Jos.

The researcher is a member of the Jos chapter of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN). He is also a member of the Nigerian Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies at the University of Jos. These two groups have indicated interest in the need to understand the beliefs and practices of Pentecostals regarding spiritual deliverance.³ Thus, the researcher considers it a worthwhile venture to embark on this study, to discover the perceptions and practices of Pentecostals regarding spiritual deliverance using scientific research methods. Moreover, as a Bible school teacher in Jos who teaches Power Ministry, among other courses, the researcher is able to access relevant data that can help him respond in a scholarly manner to the need voiced by both organizations mentioned above.

Problem Statement

There seems to be a general misunderstanding among Pentecostal believers in Jos regarding spiritual deliverance. This issue continues to stir up controversy and confusion among them. Therefore, the problem under investigation is: What are the current beliefs, perceptions, and self-described practices of Pentecostal pastors and laity in Jos, and how do they compare with a biblically sound and contextually relevant theology of spiritual deliverance?

³James Ameh, "NCPCS Conference 2012 Call for Papers" (conference schedule of the Nigeria Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies University of Jos, Divine Love Retreat Conference Centre Lugbe, Abuja, Nigeria, May 25–27, 2012).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this research is to examine the perceptions and practices of Pentecostal Christians in Jos, Nigeria regarding spiritual deliverance and to compare those findings to biblical teaching on the subject. This is to ascertain the points of agreement and/or departure between the beliefs and practices of Pentecostal Christians in Jos and biblically acceptable beliefs and practices on spiritual deliverance.

Research Questions

The following research questions are formulated to address the problem of the study:

1. What does the biblical-theological literature reveal about spiritual deliverance?
 - A. What does Matthew 8:16–17 reveal about the deliverance of a Christian from a demon?
 - B. What does Matthew 12:43–45 reveal about the deliverance of a Christian from a demon?
 - C. What does Luke 13:10–16 reveal about the deliverance of a Christian from a demon?
2. What does the relevant social literature reveal about spiritual deliverance?
 - A. What does the precedent related/relevant literature reveal about Christians and deliverance from demonic possession?
 - B. What does African culture and traditional religion teach about deliverance from demonic possession?
3. What are the perceptions and practices of Pentecostals in Jos North regarding spiritual deliverance?

- A. What are the perceptions and practices of Pentecostal leaders in Jos North on spiritual deliverance?
- B. What are the perceptions and practices of pastors in Jos North on spiritual deliverance?
- C. What are the perceptions and practices of church members in Jos North on spiritual deliverance?

Significance of the Study

Misunderstanding has long lingered in the body of Christ over the issue of deliverance. Considering issues such as the damages done to the fold, disunity among members of different denominations because of doctrinal differences, and the ever-increasing fears among Christians whose security in Christ seems to be under threat unless they undergo deliverance, this study is significant in many ways.

Assuming the Christians in Jos read this research work, this study will help clarify what constitutes a sound biblical theology of spiritual deliverance. It will also attempt to clear up the common misunderstandings between Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal preachers over deliverance by providing a harmonious ground based on God's Word, thereby uniting them. The PFN Jos North chapter could refer to this research while attempting to make its position known to the public on spiritual deliverance, especially as its leaders are involved in this research project. The Nigerian Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies at the University of Jos, on the other hand, will also benefit from the research by receiving scholarly information on the subject and may even reflect on it in its academic journal. The research will be particularly beneficial to the researcher in his context of ministry as a church leader and Bible school teacher. Church leaders (clergy

and laity) who receive theological training under the guidance of the researcher will be able to help clear up misunderstandings in the field over spiritual deliverance as they reflect on it in their preaching and teaching. Finally, the findings of the research will contribute to the field of theological scholarship in Africa.

Limitations and Delimitations

Certain factors beyond the researcher's control affected this research negatively. The recurrent religious crises and political unrest in Jos restricted the researcher's access to certain places to obtain data for this project. Moreover, the delay in filling and returning the questionnaires by respondents, or their unwillingness to open up during an interview, also hampered the study.

This research examines the perceptions and practices of Pentecostal Christians in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State, Nigeria on spiritual deliverance. Therefore, this study is limited to Pentecostal Christians in this particular geographical setting, and not Christians elsewhere. Nevertheless, a reflection is made on the thinking of others based on literature consulted for the project.

Definition of Terms

The following constitutes the working definition of words as they are used in this project:

Deliverance

Deliverance, as used here, refers to the setting of a captive free, the action of bringing freedom to a slave. It conveys the idea of a release from bondage.⁴

Demonized

To be *demonized* means to be possessed by evil spirit(s). It comes from the “word *daimonizomai*, to be possessed of a demon, or... to be demonized.” It is used to describe a person who is tormented by a demon.⁵

Oppressed

To be *oppressed* refers to external operations of the spirit and conveys the idea of being afflicted or troubled by demons, as opposed to being *demonized*, which refers to the work of an inhabiting demon.

Pentecostals

Pentecostals refers to believers in Christ who also believe in and/or have received the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the initial physical evidence of speaking in other tongues. Included in this term are those of the various charismatic movements.⁶

⁴James Strong, *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, s.v. “deliverance” (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1901). <https://biblehub.com/greek/164.htm> (accessed June 7, 2021).

⁵Assemblies of God, “Can Born-Again Believers Be Demon Possessed?” (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1996).

⁶Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 8.

Assumptions

Some of the assumptions in this study include the following:

1. It is assumed that the participating Pentecostal churches believe in and experience the operations of the Holy Spirit in their churches.
2. It is assumed that the respondents will respond with accuracy and honesty.

Summary

This chapter presented a general overview of what the study sets out to achieve, beginning with the background statement, which gives the rationale for the study on the topic. The problem statement outlines growing controversy and confusion among Pentecostal believers in Jos over the ways people practice spiritual deliverance, alongside the growing trend of more people (Christians and non-Christians) becoming interested in spiritual deliverance. Therefore, this study investigates what the Bible has to say about deliverance.

This chapter also stated the purpose of the study and formulated a three-fold research question to guide the investigation. The three research questions cover the areas of the biblical-theological literature, the social science literature, and the perceptions and practices of Pentecostals in Jos regarding spiritual deliverance. The section on the significance of the study identified the potential beneficiaries of the completed research project.

The possible limitations and delimitations of the study were considered. Working definitions of certain terms were given to help readers understand the ideas expressed in the work. The chapter concluded by stating two assumptions believed to be true.

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL-THEOLOGICAL LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter of the study will examine some theological issues regarding spiritual deliverance. This will involve carrying out a preliminary word study of selected relevant words such as *spirits*, *angels*, *Satan*, and *demon*. These words are foundational to the study. The chapter will also examine a theological understanding of spiritual deliverance vis-à-vis the nature of man and what happens to man at salvation. Finally, it will carry out an exegetical analysis of three New Testament (NT) passages that seem most relevant to the subject under study. These passages are Matthew 8:16–17, Matthew 12:43–45, and Luke 13:10–13. Although several Old Testament (OT) passages will be alluded to, there is not an exegetical study of OT passages because each time the subject of demons, demon possession, or deliverance/exorcism is discussed among scholars the focus is on the NT. This is because the “Hebrew Scriptures contain relatively few references to demon possession, and none at all on exorcism.”¹

Preliminary Word Study

This study is a biblical-theological issue; therefore, before delving into the exegetical analysis of the selected scriptural passages for the study, there is a need to

¹B. A. Robinson, “Possession and Exorcism in the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament),” Ontario Consultants on Religious Tolerance, https://www.religioustolerance.org/chr_exor1.htm (accessed December 9, 2015).

carry out a study of related keywords. The following words are studied under two sub-headings for the purpose of convenience: *spirits* and *angels*, and *Satan* and *demons*.

Spirits and Angels

What meaning or meanings do the words *spirit* and *angel* convey; how are the words used or applied throughout history? A scholarly response to these questions would be the best starting point in addressing the concern of this work. World literature prominently features the word *spirit*, with diverse meanings and usages according to various disciplines and interest groups.² Wellington Wotogbe-Weneka asserts that “except in its chemical usage, all other usages of the word seem to agree that the ‘spirits’ cannot be talked of in concrete tangible terms.”³

The word *spirit* is a translation of the Hebrew word *ruach*, which can also mean *wind*. The word *spirit* could be used with reference to a person, like the spirit of a person, and may refer to the faculty of knowledge. John Kohlenberger and James Swanson agree with the Hebrew usage, adding that the word is also used for *mind* and *qualities*.⁴ The Aramaic also uses *ruach* for *spirit*, *mind*, and *wind*.⁵ The diverse ways the word *spirit* is used shows the need to rely on context for interpretation.

²Wellington O. Wotogbe-Weneka, *Owumini: Beliefs and Practices of Aquatic Spirit among the Ikwerre People of Niger Delta* (Port Harcourt, Nigeria: University of Port Harcourt Press, 2020), 64.

³Ibid. “Spirits” fundamentally are best described as intangible phenomena. The chemical sense of the word “spirit” refers to a strong distilled alcoholic liquor, or in pharmacy as a solution in alcohol of an essential or volatile principle.

⁴John R. Kohlenberger III and James A. Swanson, *The Hebrew-English Concordance to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998).

⁵Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1906). <https://biblehub.com/hebrew/7308.htm#> (accessed March 20, 2020).

The Greek equivalent of the Hebrew *ruach* is *pneuma*.⁶ *Pneuma* references the Holy Spirit. *Spirit* is also used as a simple essence, as well as “possessing of the power of knowing, desiring, deciding, and acting.” It can also refer to a life-giving spirit, a human soul that has left the body, a spirit higher than man but lower than God, or an angel (good and bad, including demons and evil spirits), as well as the spiritual nature of Christ, higher than the highest angels and equal to God.⁷ Other usages include “the disposition or influence which fills and governs the soul of any one,” such as affection, emotion, and desire, or a movement of air, like wind or breath.⁸

Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich observe that in the Greek world, the word *pneuma* means *wind*, referring to a stormy or normal wind, breeze, or even a vapor. It could mean *breath*, which “denotes the sound that human breath produces by blowing on flutes.” It could also mean *life*, such as a living creature; *soul*, such as the principle of life, much the same as *psyche*; the *divine pneuma*, not referring to a personal God or a personal Holy Spirit, but an immanent spirit; as well as the spirit that stirs, enthuses, fills, and inspires priests, poets, and prophets.⁹ Other usages for *pneuma* within the Greek world reference Stoicism, in which “*pneuma* is a cosmic power or substance,” such as a deity or God. *Pneuma* may also reference the development of a non-Greek concept under Jewish and Christian influence; “*pneuma* is severed from nature and personified as the

⁶Joseph H. Thayer, *Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, s.v. “pneuma” (n.p.: Hendrickson Academic, 1995). Bible Study Tools, <https://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/kjv/pneuma.html> (accessed March 20, 2020).

⁷Ibid.

⁸Joseph H. Thayer, *Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, s.v. “pneuma” (n.p.: Hendrickson Academic, 1995). Church of the Great God, <https://www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Lexicon.show/ID/G4151/pneuma.htm> (accessed March 20, 2020).

⁹Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, s.v. “pneuma” (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1986), 876–877.

active cosmological or soteriological Spirit or God,” or even a demonic force that can be manipulated by magicians for good or evil.¹⁰

Kittle and Friedrich appear to be confusing their description of the *divine pneuma*, which is portrayed as not referring to God or the Holy Spirit, yet inspires priests and prophets, with *pneuma* as a *cosmic power*, which could refer to a deity or God. Such distinctions may leave one wondering if both references to *pneuma* as conceived here, using the words *divine* and *cosmic*, could possibly include the idea of a deity or God since both words have elements of supernaturalism. For example, Johan Thom asserts that “God’s preservative and beneficial influence... penetrates down to the lowest level,” and argues that the idea that “‘the divine naturally penetrates to everything’... sounds Stoic, but the gradual, physical transmission of power envisaged here is very different from the Stoic *pneuma* that permeates everything equally.”¹¹

Literature in both Egypt and Greece refers to the gods begetting life by their breath. However, in natural science and philosophy *pneuma* is basically *matter*, and thus a phenomenon of second rank in the cosmic and human world.¹² In Judaism, the Septuagint sees *pneuma* to mean “wind, breath of life, power of blessing and punishment, spiritual ability, eschatological gifts (of judgment and of grace and salvation, etc.), an

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Johan C. Thom, “The Cosmotheology of de mundo,” in *Cosmic Order and Divine Power: Pseudo-Aristotle, on the Cosmos*, ed. Johan C. Thom (Tubingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 116, <https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.12657/27470/1002538.pdf> (accessed May 27, 2021). The author wants to maintain the transcendence of God, but at the same time allow for his immanence. On the one hand, God is described as the creator and preserver of the world, the cohesive cause of the universe, the leader and commander of the cosmos. Everything that happens in the world is his work. God’s activity is therefore immanently present in this world; the world depends on God, is ordered by him, and receives its existence from him. On the other hand, he is in essence absolutely transcendent, established above this world in the highest region.

¹²Kittel and Friedrich, 876–877.

anthropological-psychological term in Ecclesiastes for vain striving (1:14; 2:11; 4:4, etc.), and wisdom.” Hellenistic Judaism sees *pneuma* as the “higher element of the air, for wind, human, and animal breath; the substance of air that holds things together in the earth, blood as the essence of the soul, the divine *pneuma* (God’s life/spirit received by humans through inbreathing, man as rational beings), and the prophetic spirit (by which man receives divine impartation).”¹³ Palestinian Judaism sees *spirit*, as translated from the Hebrew *ruach*, to mean “wind, angels and evil spirits, the deceased, human spirit, and the Spirit of God.”¹⁴ For reference to various appearances of *pneuma*, see Thayer.¹⁵

Several Bible passages reference the word *spirit*, the meaning of which can only be ascertained through a critical analysis of each passage. For instance, it would be wise and necessary to find out if “a spirit of despair” (Isa. 61:3), “brokenness of spirit” (Isa. 65:14), and “a gentle and quiet spirit” (1 Pet. 3:4) refer to a personal being in man or an emotional state of mind. It would also be wise to find out if the “spirit that has robbed him of speech” (Mark 9:17) means an impersonal force or a personal being. The point of all these examples is that for proper interpretation of a passage, every word must be examined in its context, because it is context that establishes a word’s meaning. Moreover, it is important to “know the truth about the spirit world to combat erroneous and increasingly popular views.”¹⁶ Fred Dickason concludes that there is need to

¹³Ibid., 882.

¹⁴Ibid., 882–883.

¹⁵Thayer, s.v. “pneuma.” *Pneuma* with reference to spirit appears 385 times in the King James version. The details show, “Spirit 111, Holy Ghost 89, Spirit (of God) 13, Spirit (of the Lord) 5, (My) Spirit 3, Spirit (of truth) 3, Spirit (of Christ) 2, human (spirit) 49, (evil) spirit 47, spirit (general) 26, spirit 8, (Jesus’ own) spirit 6, (Jesus’ own) ghost 2, miscellaneous 21.”

¹⁶C. Fred Dickason, *Angels: Elect and Evil* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 1995), 9.

“recognize the titanic struggle carried on every day between forces of darkness and forces of light...Christians need perspective, lest we belittle the enemies of righteousness, or lest we give them more than their due.”¹⁷

The Bible assumes the existence of angels. David Jeremiah notes that the Bible contains more than three hundred direct references to them; he further notes that the reality of angels has been widely accepted throughout human civilization,¹⁸ which makes skepticism about angels a minority view throughout human history. The exceptions are the Sadducees, the only group of people identified in the Bible as not believing in angels (Acts 23:8), and those influenced by modern scientific skepticism.¹⁹ Jeremiah asserts that the “Bible identifies angels as beings created by God alongside with the sun, moon, stars, and the heavens and the earth.”²⁰

The word *angel* is a translation of the Hebrew *mal’ak* and the Greek *angelos*; it can also be translated *messenger* and *agent*.²¹ *Mal’ak* is derived from an unused root that conveys the meaning “to dispatch” as a deputy, a messenger, or an angel.²² *Angelos*, used in connection with bringing of good tidings, is directly applicable to a messenger,

¹⁷Ibid., 8.

¹⁸David Jeremiah, *What the Bible Says about Angels* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah Books, 1996), 25.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Jeremiah, 51. The Bible identifies angels as beings created by God alongside with the sun, moon, stars, and the heavens and the earth (Ps. 148:2ff). Although the time of their creation is not specified in Scripture, there is, however, an indication in Job 38:4–7 that suggests that they were created before the heavens and the earth. The Scripture makes known that when God created the heavens and the earth (cf. Gen. 3:1), “All the angels shouted for joy” (Job 38:7). Jeremiah is of the opinion that “angels were made apparently before the third day of the creation week, the day when God gathered waters into seas and the dry land appeared (Gen. 1:9–10).”

²¹Robert Young, *Young’s Analytical Concordance to the Bible* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1991), 37–38.

²²James Strong, “Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary,” in *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1901), 66.

especially an angel, and by implication, to a pastor (as angel; messenger).²³ These words describe the angels as messengers of God. In the Old Testament, *mal'ak* denotes both human and angelic messengers. Sometimes the word is combined with *Yahweh* to denote a special angelic being, often referred to as the “angel of the Lord.”²⁴ Because of the almost indistinguishable identity of this angel with God, he is referred to as God in human form, or God entering human apperception (Gen. 16:7ff; Exod. 3:2ff). Thus, he is more than a mere messenger, but an agent of the covenant with special commission to help and guide Israel (cf. Exod. 14:19; Num. 22:22; 1 Kings 19:7).²⁵

Another Hebrew word, *abbir*, translated *mighty*, *strong*, or *valiant*, is also used to denote angels.²⁶ The expression in Psalms 78:25, “Human beings ate the bread of angels” (NIV), or “Everyone ate the bread of the mighty” (AMPC), gives an indication of this usage. The word is a derivation of the name *abir*, used as a substitute for deity, and relates to the Akkadian *abaru* (be strong), and, as in Hebrew, it may be an element in a divine name in Ugaritic.²⁷ Moreover, the Hebrew word *elohim*, translated God (or heavenly beings), a god, and judge, is also used for angel (Ps. 8:5),²⁸ where man is described as being made a little lower than the angels or heavenly beings.

²³James Strong, “Greek Dictionary of the New Testament,” in *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1901), 7.

²⁴Kittel and Friedrich, 13.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, eds., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), 1:8–9.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Young, 38.

The Greek and Hellenistic world sees angels (*angelos*) as heavenly messengers, which were described as *divine spirits* with a sacred role. *Angelos* is also used for human messengers such as philosophers; for underworld messengers such as Nemesis, Hecate, and lesser beings; and for birds, which are often seen to be messengers of the gods.²⁹

In Judaism, rabbis group angels into two different categories: either good or bad.³⁰ This categorization of the angelic beings has created the impression that not all angels are good. These various usages indicate how people over the years, from antiquity, view the angelic beings and their activities.

Kittel and Friedrich refer to *daimon*, or demons, as “fallen angels.”³¹ According to William Evans, the work of fallen angels includes to “oppose God's purposes (Dan. 10:10–14); afflict God's people (Luke 13:16; Matt. 17:15, 16); execute Satan's purposes (Matt. 25:41; 12:26, 27); hinder the spiritual life of God's people (Eph. 6:12); [and to] try to deceive God's people (1 Sam. 28:7–20).”³² These activities are what demons do.

Satan and Demons

The question of whether there exists such a personality known as Satan, or whether its idea is conceivable in the first place, has continued to be a debate especially as people who resent religious talk fail to understand the fact that religion influences

²⁹Ibid. The New Testament usage gives the main reference to *angelos* as divine messengers and heavenly representatives (Heb. 12:22; Acts 6:15; Gal. 4:14). As such, angels appeared to Abraham (Heb. 12:2) and Moses (Acts 7:30), mediated the law (Acts 7:53), and accompanied Jesus at the various points of his life and ministry. Thus, angels have a prominent and dynamic part in all processes of salvation history.

³⁰Kittel and Friedrich, 13.

³¹Ibid.

³²William Evans, *The Great Doctrines of the Bible* (n.p.: Bottom of the Hill Publishers, 2011), Project Gutenberg e-book.
https://www.christcentered.info/seminary/uploads/2014/02/The_Great_Doctrines_of_the_Bible_copy.pdf (accessed February 10, 2014).

some level of scientific thought. For example, the Nobel Prize winner in physics Albert Einstein, who was a known and revered scientist in history, was said to have some level of religious inclines and reasoning, which to a large extent encouraged his motivations and devotion in science. Hence, Einstein declares, “My religion consists of a humble admiration of the illimitable superior spirit who reveals himself in the slight details we are able to perceive with our frail and feeble minds.”³³ No doubt, the “illimitable superior spirit” to Einstein referred to God, even as he posits, “That deeply emotional conviction of the presence of a superior reasoning power, which is revealed in the incomprehensible universe, forms my idea of God.”³⁴ Such a conviction and awareness of God, and invariably of other spiritual beings, may give reason to believe in the existence of Satan, as well. However, the question is, who or what is this Satan, and who or what are demons?

According to the *Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary*, the word *Satan* (*saw-tan, saw-tawn*), from the root *satanas*, primarily means “adversary,” “to accuse,” “an opponent,” and “the arch-enemy of good”; it is used figuratively to mean “to attack.”³⁵ The word can also mean “the hater,” “adversary,” or “an opposing spirit.”³⁶ The Greek equivalent of *Satan* or *satanas* is the word *diaballo*, meaning “to accuse,” or *diabolos*, literally the devil or Satan.³⁷ The word *diaballo*, in its basic sense, means “to separate from,” “to be

³³Albert Einstein, “Religion and Science,” <http://www4.einstein.westminster.edu/staff/nak/courses/einsteinsci&rel.pdf> (accessed May 27, 2021).

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Strong, “Hebrew Dictionary,” 115.

³⁶Young, 836.

³⁷Strong, “Greek Dictionary,” 64.

set in opposition,” “to be hated,” “to accuse,” “to repudiate,” “to give false information,” and “accused.” Linguistically, the variation between *diaballo* and *diabolos* is that the former stresses the verb usage, while the latter emphasizes the noun. The main use of *diabolos* is for complaint or calumination (as in false accusation) with emphasis on the “calumniator,” “a talebearer,” or “a false accuser.”³⁸

According to James Kallas, “(1) Satan in the Old Testament is *insignificant*; and (2) Satan in the Old Testament is a *servant* of God, not an enemy but a servant.”³⁹ He explains this by saying that in the entire OT, Satan is explicitly mentioned by name only three times, and in two of those three places, 1 Chronicles 21:1 and Zechariah 3:1–2, he is barely mentioned. The only passage in which Satan is discussed in any extended fashion is in the book of Job, chapter 1. Thus, Kallas concludes that the word *Satan* is insignificant and plays no central role in the OT.⁴⁰ Kallas further explains that Satan must be seen as a servant of God, not his enemy, throughout the OT. He asserts that

Satan never goes off independently, nor does he go further than God's limits. He does not, because in the Old Testament he is considered a loyal servant, a member of the heavenly council, one of the sons of God. That brings us back to where we started the chapter. The whole of the Old Testament doctrine of Satan can be summed up in two words—insignificant, and a servant. Mentioned only three times, only once at length, and in that one lengthy passage, a loyal servant. That is all that the Old Testament has to say about Satan! Any more than that is untrue to the Old Testament.⁴¹

³⁸Kittel and Friedrich, 150–151.

³⁹James Kallas, *The Real Satan: From Biblical Times to the Present* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006), 16.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Ibid.

This assertion of Kallas describing Satan in the OT as “a loyal servant” of God and a member of his heavenly council, adding that anything more or less is untrue, is taken to the extreme. Kallas agrees that the word *Satan* is insignificant in the OT due to its limited mention in OT Scripture, yet he does not see anything wrong with generalizing his conclusion of the “loyal” servanthood of Satan from one book of the Bible (Job 1). Similarly, the understanding of the word *Satan* (*saw-tan*, *saw-tawn*), from its root *satanas*, as primarily meaning “adversary,” “to accuse,” “an opponent,” the “arch-enemy of good,” and “to attack,”⁴² does not present a clear explanation as to whose adversary Satan actually is—whether of Job, of God, or of both. Did God create Satan and appoint him as a member of his cabinet or heavenly council with the mandate or unique assignment of tempting the saints (OT saints, as it were), since Satan can also appear in the OT as a tempter to evil (1 Chron. 21:1)? As cited above, it is also not clear what Kallas means by “loyal servant” in reference to Satan as one who does not act independently of God.

Kittel and Friedrich agree that in the OT Satan is “basically the enemy (cf. 1 Sam. 29:4; Ps. 71:13).”⁴³ Thus, he is seen in intertestamental Judaism as one who tries to disrupt the relation between God and humanity, especially between God and Israel, by tempting man to sin and accusing them before God.⁴⁴ Satan tempts Adam and Eve (Vita Adamo 12), Cain and Abel (Apoc. Moses 2), Noah (Jubilee 11:5), Sarah and Abraham

⁴²Strong, “Hebrew Dictionary,” 115.

⁴³Kittel and Friedrich, 151.

⁴⁴Ibid.

(Jubilee 17:16), and David (Lives of Prophets 21); tempting also takes place during the Exodus (Dam. 5:18f).⁴⁵

According to Craig Evans and Stanley Porter, there is close relation between the concept of Satan and his hosts and ideas that developed in the intertestamental period. Various explanations have been given to the presence of evil in the world, such as the struggle between good and evil powers and the portrayal of the evil powers as having an angelic leader named “*Semihaza, Mastema, Belial* or the Prince of Darkness.”⁴⁶ In several other Scriptures, like Isaiah 14, Ezekiel 28, and Ezekiel 32, Satan is figuratively portrayed in the antagonistic and oppressive activities of an evil king of oppressive empires, thus showing that the empires and their rulers symbolize the cosmic forces that will be judged by God.⁴⁷ Thus, the name Lucifer has naturally come to be applied to Satan (Luke 10:18; Rev. 12:8–9; Jude 6),⁴⁸ an opinion J. Dwight Pentecost also supports.⁴⁹

⁴⁵Kittel and Friedrich, 73.

⁴⁶Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter, eds., *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, s.v. “Satan” (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 153.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, “Isaiah 14:12–15” in *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown’s Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1961).

⁴⁹J. Dwight Pentecost, *Your Adversary the Devil* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1997), 7–8. “The one whom we call Satan was originally known by the name of Lucifer, which means ‘the light bearer,’ ‘the brilliant one,’ or ‘the shining one.’ Ezekiel 28:11–13 (KJV) portrays why that name was so appropriate. The prophet begins his judgment by saying, ‘Take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus [that is upon Satan himself], and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.’ Verse 12 describes something of the perfection of Lucifer before his fall. Lucifer was a created being. That is pointed out in verse 15. ‘Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.’ God in his work of creation began by creating an innumerable host of angelic beings, one of which was Lucifer. As a creature, he was obliged to worship and serve and obey the Creator. Not only was he perfect in his way but, according to the verse 12, he was the epitome of wisdom and beauty. Lucifer was, first of all, the wisest of all of God’s created beings. God had established him as administrator of the affairs of the angelic realm.”

In Isaiah 14:12–14, Pentecost identifies the iniquity or sin that was found in Satan, leading to his fall. This text (in part) reads, “For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High” (Isa. 14:13–14 KJV). The biblical passage paints a picture of a proud heart and rebellious spirit, as explained by Pentecost. Lucifer's heart was lifted up because of pride in his beauty, in his wisdom, and in his privileges and responsibilities (verses 12–14), as seen in his five “I will” statements in the passage (in each case, he sets his will against the will of God). Lucifer’s beauty is portrayed in Ezekiel 28:13 through the use of precious stones; Pentecost describes the appearance of each one:

Every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius (which is a reddish-brown stone), the topaz (golden yellow), the diamond (colorless, reflecting all colors), the beryl (which is a dark red stone), the onyx (which is multicolored), the jasper (which is bluish-green), the sapphire (which is deep rich blue), the emerald (with its scintillating green), the carbuncle (or garnet, which is deep bloodred).⁵⁰

The above quotation presents a colorful description of Lucifer, referring to Satan in his original state. Such a colorful description no doubt reveals Lucifer was made with an exceptional beauty. He was made by God to reflect the glory of God, but on the contrary he attempted to show forth his glory and so rebelled against his Creator.

In the NT, Satan is associated with, and described by, several names.⁵¹ Kittel and Friedrich observe that the two main features of the concept of Satan in the NT are the

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Kittel and Friedrich, 104, 152–153, 186, 748–749, 912. “In the NT, Satan is described as *beliar*, used for devil by Paul in 2 Corinthians 6:15 to designate, probably, a god of the underworld; *satana*’s, basically an enemy, is used to describe Satan as the accuser, and *diabolos*, for devil, also is used to alternate *satana*’s in John and Revelation, though *satana*’s is closer to Palestinian usage than *diabolos*. Other names include *poneros*, used with reference to evil, worthless, and bad; *drakon* (dragon), used for sea-monster and

antithesis between God and Satan and the presence of God's kingdom in Christ. These features describe how Satan is in constant opposition to the works of God and the people of God, and how Christ's kingdom has destroyed the devil's kingdom, although the conflict continues.⁵²

The NT gives more clues to describe the extent to which Satan went in his rebellion against God. Revelation 12:3–9 makes known that John beheld a wonder in heaven, and that the great red dragon, Satan the devil, “drew the third part of the stars of heaven” with his tail. The stars of heaven in this context, Pentecost explains, “refer to the angelic beings, and this seems to suggest to us that... Satan started on a campaign to persuade the angels to rebel against God and to follow him. And he was 33.14% successful.”⁵³ That means when Satan fell, he did not fall alone; rather, he went away with a third of the angelic beings who joined him in his rebellion against God. These angels fell of their own volition. God created the angels with the capacity of volition, or ability to make choice.⁵⁴ When Satan confronted them with his plan to assume the absolute rulership of the heavens and the earth, they had a choice to either remain where the Creator placed them or follow Satan. They decided for Satan, and thus faced the consequence of being fallen angels today.

serpent (serpents were regarded as demonic in ancient mythology), especially in connection to Genesis 3:15 and Revelation 12:7, 9 and 13:2; and the name *ophis*, amongst others. *Ophis* also refers to serpent, or snakes. Its usage seems to basically be about ordinary snakes; however, apart from the ordinary snakes, there are supernatural references made to *ophis*.”

⁵²Ibid., 152.

⁵³Pentecost, 31.

⁵⁴Ibid.

Elmer Towns argues that it is not only true that Satan is a real person, but that he is also the real enemy of God and his children.⁵⁵ Satan is attributed with qualities that only persons can possess. For example, he is described as one who was holy and perfect in all his ways; one who enjoyed the heavenly honors, but through pride and ambition to be as the Almighty, he fell as a powerful being; and as one who will spend eternity in hell. Apart from these qualities, personal pronouns are used in describing Satan and his various activities; he also demonstrates intellectual ability, emotions, an active will, and he can disguise himself as an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14).⁵⁶

When the word *devil* or *Satan* is used with reference to humans, the emphasis is usually on the works of Satan who is behind the evil activities of such individuals. It is worth noting that the word *devil* is always used in a bad or negative sense. For example, Judas Iscariot is called a devil (*diabolos*) by Christ (John 6:70). The idea presented here is that Judas is a wicked man and under the influence of Satan. This negative sense is seen again where the same Greek word, *diabolos*, is translated *slanderers*: Timothy was exhorted to warn that wives of church elders must not be slanderers (1 Tim. 3:11); church women are warned against being slanderers or devils (Titus 2:3); and Paul makes known that in the last days men will be slanderers or devils (2 Tim. 3:1, 3), showing the increase in wickedness in the end-times.⁵⁷ James Cooper's description uses the word *Satan*

⁵⁵Elmer Towns, "Satan, the Devil: The Real Enemy of God and Man in the Bible," BibleSprout.com, <https://www.biblesprout.com/articles/hell/satan-devil/> (accessed June 16, 2017).

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Ibid.

(adversary) and *devil* (slanderer) to refer to the same personality, the great fallen angel, otherwise called Satan the devil.⁵⁸

The word *demon* gained popularity within the Greek and Hellenistic world and appears in the NT more commonly than in the OT. The concept generally covers such terms as *daimon* (demon, divinity), *daimonion* (demonic), *daimonizomai* (to be demon possessed), *daimoniodes* (demonic), *deisidaimon* (religion), and *deisidaimonia* (fear of divinity), which are used in varieties of ways.⁵⁹ The word that is used in the OT is the Hebrew/Aramaic *shed*, pronounced “shade.”⁶⁰ *Shed* (plural, *shedim*: demons) is a loan word from the Assyrian *sedu*, a protecting spirit;⁶¹ the Greek equivalent is *daimon*.

According to John Walton and Harvey Walton, no general term for demons existed in any of the major cultures of the ancient Near East or in the Hebrew Bible. Rather, demons are generally considered one of the categories of spirit beings, along with gods and ghosts.⁶² According to them, the Hebrew word *sudim*, for false gods, which occurs in Deuteronomy 32:17 and Psalm 96:5, is the most notable term; the Septuagint translates this as *daimonia*, demons. They also said that judging by the context of these scriptural passages, the spirits would not have been understood as demons since they

⁵⁸James Cooper, “Satan/Lucifer/the Devil and Demons/Evil Spirits,” whyangels.com, https://www.whyangels.com/devil_demons.html (accessed August 7, 2017).

⁵⁹Kittel and Friedrich, 137.

⁶⁰Strong, “Hebrew Dictionary,” 112.

⁶¹Jewish Encyclopedia, s.v. “demonology,” <https://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/> (accessed March 24, 2020).

⁶²John H. Walton and J. Harvey Walton, *Demons and Spirits in Biblical Theology: Reading the Bible Text in Its Cultural and Literary Context* (n.p.: Cascade Books, 2019), 43, eBook.

receive offerings.⁶³ They further observe that the world of the OT and the ancient Near East use the word *demon* synonymously with all sorts of heathen gods.⁶⁴

Kittel and Friedrich also observe that although belief in spirits occur in the OT as evidenced in 1 Samuel 28:13 (the witch of Endor); Isaiah 8:19 (familiar spirits, wizards, and the spirit of the dead); and Deuteronomy 18:10, 1 Samuel 15:23a, and Numbers 23:23 (the expulsion of those who conjure up the dead), demons appear only marginally. In the later Jewish view of demons, spirits are possibly linked to the worship of idols (Deut. 32:17; 2 Chron. 11:17), except in Psalm 91:6 where the Septuagint shows a possible reference to protection against demons. The word *angelos* is used to replace *daimon* where a reference is made to God's messengers. The Septuagint, by using *daimonion* and its equivalents, *eidolon* and *mataia*, for Hebrew *sed*, is emphasizing that *daimonion* is a contemptuous term for pagan gods.⁶⁵

⁶³Ibid., 59–60. Walton and Walton suggest two possible etymologies. The first is “the Akkadian *šedu*, which refers to the winged bull-men who guard entrances to palaces and temples in a manner similar to the Hebrew *kīrūbiyn* (cherubim). *Sedu* are composite creatures who do not receive offerings, which would place them in the realm of class I spirits; however, because they do not receive offerings, it is unlikely that the wilderness generation gave sacrifices to them. A more plausible option is the Aramaic *šdyn*, which are equated with members of the Canaanite pantheon. The Septuagint's decision to translate the word as ‘demons’ reflects a Hellenistic assessment of intermediate beings that are not gods (Deut. 32:17), which for the translators included any beings other than Yahweh; the Greek word *daimonion* does not reflect the original etymology of the Hebrew term. The fact that the *šédim*, whatever they were, were given offerings means that they would not have been thought of as ‘demons’ and instead should be understood as more or less parallel to foreign gods.”

⁶⁴Ibid. “These terms, which are translated ‘demons,’ include, *sirim* in Isaiah 13:21 for ‘wild goats,’ and *seirim* in Leviticus 1 and 2 Chronicles 1 for ‘goat idols,’ (translated by the Septuagint not as *daimonion* but as *mataios*, literally meaning, “empty things,” (Ps. 96:5)). This is paralleled with Jeroboam's ‘calf idol,’ which is not usually interpreted as representing either an animal or a spirit-being in the shape of a bull. Instead, it is normally thought to represent either a deity or an iconic attribute of a deity who is associated with as a symbol, like Baal. The word is also used to refer to beings which inhabit the ruins or live in liminal regions. This is an ancient Near East conception that depicts ‘demons’ as being drawn to liminal areas. A typical example of this in the NT is Matthew 12:43, which talks about an impure spirit that goes through arid places seeking rest, and does not find it.”

⁶⁵Kittel and Friedrich, 138.

The term *daimonia* was popular and preferred over *daimones*. This preference was an attempt to avoid some popular beliefs about the positive aspects of *daimon* as an instrument of “retributive or educative evils,” since the *daimonia* tends to point to evil spirits which attack and destroy humans. These spirits are generally in complete antithesis to the Holy Spirit because of their sensual, ubiquitous, and harmful nature⁶⁶ and are thus linked to Satan. The spirits are also in contrast to angels. There is no doubt that there are angels that could become hostile demonic powers, in which case the reference would be to the “angels of Satan in a historical fusion that does not erase the fundamental distinction between angels and demons.”⁶⁷ To this Merrill Unger asserts, “Demons are evil and members of Satan's kingdom (Matt. 12:26).”⁶⁸

Dickason is of the opinion that the record in the OT is quite clear about demons as real spirit beings who oppose God and man and are connected to every evil that led to the fall of man.⁶⁹ He strongly holds the view that demons are the same as the fallen angels, including Satan himself.⁷⁰

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷Ibid., 139.

⁶⁸Merrill F. Unger, *Biblical Demonology: A Study of Spiritual Forces at Work Today* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1994), 15–17.

⁶⁹C. Fred Dickason, *Demon Possession and the Christian: A New Perspective* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1993), 25–26. Dickason sees demons as ones who spoke through the serpent in Genesis 3 and caused the fall of the human race; he sees demons as being involved in the first murder on earth (Gen. 4 cf. John 8:44; 1 John 3:12), and in the attack of the race in Genesis 6:1–10. A demon volunteered to be a “lying spirit” to Ahab (1 Kings 22:20–22). They were also the spirit beings energizing the world rulers in the time of Daniel (Dan. 10:13, 20). Dickason, thus, identifies no fewer than five different Hebrew words that are translated by the Septuagint (LXX) using the well-known New Testament Greek words *daimon* or *daimonion*. They are: *shedhim* (Deut. 32:17; Ps. 106:37), *seirim* (Lev. 17:7), *'elilim* (Ps. 96:5; LXX 95:5), *gad* (Isa. 6:11), and *qeter* (Ps. 91; LXX 90:6).

⁷⁰Ibid. Dickason gives five reasons to prove his stance. They have a similar relation to Satan as do Satan's angels. The parallel expressions “the devil and his angels” (Matt. 25:41), and “Beelzebul the ruler of the demons” (Matt. 12:24, 26) support this. When Satan is designated “ruler of the demons,” the term that is used is *archonti*, which has the basic meaning of “first.” “As ‘first among demons’ he is their ruler.”

The position of the pseudepigraphical Judaism regarding demons is that demons are fallen angels, Satan's angels, evil or unclean spirits, or spirits of Beliar, described also as "unclean demons" (Jub. 10:1). Their "main work is to tempt into witchcraft, idolatry, war, bloodshed, and prying into mysteries,"⁷¹ and they are in opposition to God. The existence and activities of demons form part of the operations of Satan on the earth.

The NT is similar to later Judaism in its views about demons. Thus, in the NT, one finds both Jesus and Paul referring to demons. Demons begged Jesus to send them into a herd of pigs (Matt. 8:31), and Paul describes pagan sacrifices as offerings to demons (1 Cor. 10:20–21). In Revelation 9:20, John talks about the worship of demons. The NT, however, uses *daimonion* rather than *daimon*. There are few references to demons except in the case of demon possession. There is no reference to the spirits of the dead in connection with demons, and while angels and demons are used antithetically, there is also no reference to *daimon*, which suggests a divine intermediary.⁷²

Danny McCain describes demons as unconfined and confined fallen angels, angels of Satan, spirit beings, invisible, and personalities with supernatural ability. McCain presents three main views concerning the origin of demons. These views are

Demons and angels have similar essence. Ezekiel 28 and Isaiah 14 speak of the original sin of Satan and his angels. In the NT doctrine of demons, angels are termed "spirits" (Ps. 104:4; Heb. 1:14), and so are demons (Matt. 8:16; Luke 10:17, 20). They carry out similar activities. Demons seek to enter and control men (Matt. 17:14–18; Luke 11:14–15), as do many evil angels such as Satan (Luke 22:3; John 13:27). Evil angels, just as demons, join Satan in war against God and man (Mark 9:17–26; Rev. 9:13–15, 12:7–17). The ranks of angels and demons are similar, if not identical (Rom. 8:38–39; Eph. 6:10–12; Col. 1:16, 2:15). The above reasons seem quite sufficient to identify demons as fallen angels subservient to Satan, carrying out his plans. If that is not the case, then we have no biblical evidence for determining the origin of demons.

⁷¹Kittel and Friedrich, 139.

⁷²Ibid.

either suggestions, speculations, or opinion,⁷³ which do not have proven backing from Scripture.

Unger writes,

The derivation of the term "demon" (daimonion), in the earlier language daimon, is not too certain. Plato indeed derives it from daemon, an adjective formed from dao and signifying "mowing" or "intelligent." Many modern scholars, per contra, derive it from daio (to divide or assign), as though it meant "divider or distributor of destiny." Plato's definition seems preferable; since it points to the superior knowledge of these spirits, who have been credited with superhuman knowledge, and oracles have, accordingly, been sought from them.⁷⁴

Unger does not appear to link the concept to the practice of eating the dead, as some others emphasize. However, he recognizes the fact that demons are superior to humans in knowledge, or intelligence, and ability. These traits further prove that demons are supernatural or spiritual beings with personalities.

Theological Understanding of Spiritual Deliverance

Defining Spiritual Deliverance

David Appleby defines spiritual deliverance as "the process whereby a demonic spirit's influence over an individual is broken and the freedom to choose is restored."⁷⁵

Spiritual deliverance is a process; it is an attempt to get rid of the spiritual personality that influences an individual toward evil. It also suggests that spiritual deliverance is preceded

⁷³Danny McCain, *We Believe: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine* (Bukuru, Plateau State, Nigeria: African Christian Textbooks, 2004), 1:333–338. Views about the origin of demons: (1) the suggestion that demons are angelic creatures that were "expelled from Heaven with Satan," (2) the speculation that demons refer to the offspring of the "angels who came to the earth and cohabited with human beings in Genesis 6:6," and (3) the opinion that "demons are creatures that inhabited the earth before Adam."

⁷⁴Merrill F. Unger, *Biblical Demonology: A Study of the Spiritual Forces behind the Present World Unrest* (Wheaton, IL: Scripture Press, 1952), 56.

⁷⁵David W. Appleby, "Deliverance as Part of the Therapeutic Process," *Faculty Publications and Presentations* 10 (2007): 3–4, http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/ccfs_fac_pubs/10 (accessed September 10, 2012).

by spirit possession. In other words, before contemplating deliverance, there must be a possessed person inhabited by an evil spirit.

Certain keywords mentioned in the above definition of spiritual deliverance are worth examining. One of these keywords is the word *process*. Describing spiritual deliverance as a *process* suggests that deliverance involves a series of actions that are taken in order to set a person free from the influence or power of a demonic spirit. Bob Larson is in agreement with this view when he asserts that deliverance is a “necessary step in total recuperation,” explaining that the “goal of an exorcism is not demonic eviction alone. It is also restoration of the victim’s soul and body to spiritual wholeness so that they may once again be the person God meant them to be.”⁷⁶

Another keyword is the word *freedom*. Appleby directly links this word to the power of choice or the ability to choose.⁷⁷ By this comment, he is implying that a person who is under the influence or control of a demon is robbed of his volitional power so that he cannot do even what he knows is the right thing to do. He loses this power to the spiritual personality that is controlling his life. However, when delivered, he takes back his liberty and acts in the way he feels is right. The extent to which the demons interfere with the victim’s freedom to choose or gain control of his will power is, however, contestable. Larson argues that no condition ever reduces a person under the control of demons to doing whatever the demons desire because Satan cannot force his will upon anyone. Therefore, there must be a small part of the victim that the demons are unable to

⁷⁶Bob Larson, *In the Name of Satan* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1996), 234–235.

⁷⁷Appleby, 3–4.

completely overpower.⁷⁸ Unger argues that evil spirits may slavishly dominate people; they become severely demonized to the extent that “these evil spirits speak and act through them and may reduce them to the status of abject slaves of the devil.”⁷⁹

Appleby agrees with David Powlison, who sees spiritual deliverance as what takes place when demons that indwelt a person are expelled or cast out. Powlison specifically states that another word for deliverance is *exorcism*, which he describes as “evicting demons from victims,”⁸⁰ even though this word seems to denote extra-biblical practices of expulsion of demons. Unger observes that, in a very strict sense of the word, “there are no exorcisms in the Bible.” He further argues that the “use of such word, in its essential etymological meaning, forbids its employment with regard to the expulsion of demons by the Lord Jesus or His disciples” because exorcism signifies the casting out of demons by conjurations, incantations, or religious or magical ceremonies. These methods appropriately describe the Jewish and ethnic practices.⁸¹ The researcher agrees that it is proper to say that the word *exorcism* may not be employed with regard to expulsion of demons by the Lord Jesus, but it is improper to say that the word does not occur anywhere in the Bible. This is because Acts 19 references the word when talking about some Jews that were going around driving out evil spirits and trying to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon possessed. Luke uses the Greek *exorkiston*

⁷⁸Larson, *Name of Satan*, 79–80.

⁷⁹Merrill F. Unger, *What Demons Can Do to Saints* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 1991), 46.

⁸⁰David Powlison, “Deliverance Ministry in Historical Perspective,” Christian Research Institute, <https://www.equip.org/article/deliverance-ministry-in-historical-perspective/> (accessed July 6, 2012).

⁸¹Unger, *Biblical Demonology: Today*, 101.

(v. 13) to refer to those who were involved in such practices, including the seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest. However, this passage does not refer to a Christian practice.

Unlike Powlison, Fanning, and Appleby, who associate deliverance with demonic possession or influence, Daniel Mann associates it with psychological depression.⁸² Although Mann is not writing on deliverance from demonism, he has made a point that deliverance is not all about freedom from demons. In that case, the emphasis is not on spiritual deliverance, which is the concern of this study. By psychological depression, Mann means feelings of dejection, unhappiness, hopelessness, and self-unworthiness. The implication of this is that Mann alludes to clinical methods of treatment for certain types of deliverance cases.⁸³ In other words, there are deliverances that are to be handled spiritually, and there are those that must be handled clinically.

Most deliverance ministers view all negative or sinful behavior as demonic in origin and subsequently approach such behavior with unique vocabulary, such as describing a person who gets angry as one with a “demon of anger” and a person who is depressed as one having a “demon of depression.”⁸⁴ The assertion of Gary Kinnaman that “not every human problem has a demonic origin”⁸⁵ is true. Moreover, anger in particular

⁸²Daniel Mann, “How the Gospel Frees Us from Psychological Oppression,” Christian Research Institute, <https://www.equip.org/article/how-the-gospel-frees-us-from-psychological-oppression/> (accessed July 26, 2012).

⁸³Ibid.

⁸⁴Craig Bluemel, “Rethinking Deliverance,” Craig’s Bible Studies, www.bibleanswerstand.org/deliverance.htm (accessed August 20, 2015).

⁸⁵Gary Kinnaman, *Angels Dark and Light* (Ann Arbor: Servant Publications, 1994), 159.

has to do with a strong feeling of being upset, which shows an increased activity in the body chemistry of the person overcome by anger, a situation prone to all human beings.⁸⁶

Deliverance is done in consonance with the demonized individual who must repent and renounce the evil in which they have taken part.⁸⁷ Other descriptions employed for spiritual deliverance include: expelling an unclean spirit, setting a captive free, getting rid of indwelling demons, healing a person of evil spirits, freeing people from the dominion of demons, casting out evil spirits from a victim, and expelling demons through a process,⁸⁸ among others. These various usages paint a picture of slavery that presents the evil spirits as slave-master and the human victim as a helpless slave who must exhibit traits that befit the life and the expectations of the slave-master.

Purpose of Spiritual Deliverance

Spiritual deliverance aims to destroy the works of the devil in the lives of people by getting rid of indwelling demons, setting people free from the dominion of demons, and bringing healing to people under the torture of evil spirits.⁸⁹ Once this is done, and the demons' influence over individuals is broken, "the freedom to choose is restored."⁹⁰ The implication of restoring the freedom to choose is that restoration is another purpose

⁸⁶Chidi Okoroafor, ed., "Anger," in *Evangel Daily Meal* (Aba, Nigeria: Assemblies of God Press, 2015), 327.

⁸⁷Melissa N. Richards, "Healing the Land: A Charismatic Environmental Theology" (Ph.D. diss., University of Florida, 2013).

⁸⁸Emmanuel Kwabena Frimpong, "Mark and Spirit Possession in an African Context" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Glasgow, 2006), <http://theses.gla.ac.uk/2342> (accessed June 15, 2015); Denzil R. Miller, *Power Ministry: How to Minister in the Spirit's Power* (Springfield, MO: Africa's Hope Publications, 2005), 153; Dickason, *Demon Possession*, 34–46; Frank Hammond and Ida Mae Hammond, *Pigs in the Parlor: A Practical Guide to Deliverance* (Kirkwood, MO: Impact Books, 1973), 3, 19.

⁸⁹Frimpong, 3, 19.

⁹⁰Appleby, 3–4.

of deliverance. Larson is in agreement with the view that the restoration of the victim to total wholeness is the purpose of deliverance.⁹¹

Appleby responds that although deliverance sets the captive free to worship God, it does not make a person holy; it only gets rid of the demons that have influenced him to do what is wrong. Hence, to have true deliverance, there is the need to follow-up with the delivered person in order to lead him to accept Christ as Savior and Lord.⁹²

David Turner also clarifies that the absence of evil spirits does not equate with the presence of redemption.⁹³ While commenting on the parabolic passage about the unclean spirit that returned to reoccupy the life he was cast out from (Matt. 12:43–45), Turner explains that although the house has been cleaned, signifying that the evil spirit was cast out, a good tenant had not taken up residence.⁹⁴ Until Jesus takes up residence in people's lives, there is no true deliverance. Deliverance must necessarily and intentionally aim at helping the individual to repent and renounce the demons and their activities.⁹⁵ Agreeing with Turner, Kinnaman asserts that deliverance is neither a "cure all," as not all human problems are demonic in origin, nor does the effect of deliverance always become a lasting one. He bases this understanding on Jesus' parable concerning the return of an evil spirit (Matt. 12:43–45).⁹⁶

⁹¹Larson, *Name of Satan*, 234–235. The goal of an exorcism is not demonic eviction alone. It is also restoration of the victim's soul and body to spiritual wholeness.

⁹²Appleby, 3–4.

⁹³David L. Turner, *Matthew*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 328.

⁹⁴Ibid.

⁹⁵Richards, 49.

⁹⁶Kinnaman, 160. He comments that "even when a release from an evil spirit occurs, it does not guarantee permanent freedom. Deliverance must be accompanied by a commitment to obey God's Word

Another reason for deliverance is to create the awareness of the need for spiritual deliverance. This reason calls attention to the fact that many people who actually need deliverance fail to receive it because they do not know or perceive spiritual problems. Similarly, believers in Christ on their own part are not quick to notice people who need deliverance, especially within the church.⁹⁷

Practices of Spiritual Deliverance

Forms of Spiritual Deliverance

For any form of spiritual deliverance to be theologically acceptable, it must address itself to the Scripture. That means it must base its prescribed or welcomed practices on a biblical standpoint. What form of spiritual deliverance does one find in the Bible? To put it in other words, does the Bible recommend some forms of spiritual deliverance that can serve as an inference to what deliverance ministers do? What exactly does forms of spiritual deliverance mean?

Scholars seem to be silent over such topics as “forms of spiritual deliverance.” Many scholars have written extensively on the holistic nature and practices among Pentecostal Christians, which “has led to many and diverse efforts to develop appropriate, contextualized ministries which address every-day experiences, questions, and ideas

and grow in Christ. Sometimes, if not always, personal accountability to other mature Christians is necessary during the healing period. Satan’s government must be exchanged for God’s, not just cast out.”

⁹⁷J. P. Timmons, *Mysterious Secrets of the Dark Kingdom: The Battle for Planet Earth* (Bigfork, MT: CCI, 2008), 400. “We pass off the problem as being psychological or some other malady, which we term scientific. Yet psychology deals with the mind and not the spirit of man so it is of little benefit. Because these spirits manifest through the mind, we wrongly assume it is a mental rather than a spiritual problem. You can understand how psychological treatment would be difficult because the entity is controlling the person’s mind.”

related to the supernatural.”⁹⁸ However, the idea of being aware of the forms of deliverance being practiced is popular among deliverance ministers and teachers. Gene and Earline Moody, for example, believe that “forms of spiritual deliverance” refers to a description of the variety or kind of spiritual deliverances being practiced, such as casting out demons, breaking ancestral curses, and delivering land, among others.⁹⁹ They further categorize these various types or forms of spiritual deliverance into two groups: the basic forms, identified as individual and small group deliverance, and the advanced forms, which include large group or mass deliverance.¹⁰⁰ Whether this is descriptive or prescriptive, based on a perception of what one thinks Jesus did when he sent out the disciples two by two (Luke 10:1ff) or the group of twelve (Luke 9:1ff), the point is that certain practices are born out of culture, and, essentially, “Christianity is a cultural product.”¹⁰¹ A global look at the context of the practitioner could shed more light on *how* and *why* people practice Christianity following diverse forms and methods.¹⁰²

⁹⁸Andrew Anane-Asane et al., “Paul G. Hiebert’s ‘The Flaw of the Excluded Middle,’” *Trinity Journal* 30, no. 2 (Fall 2009), EBSCOhost (accessed May 27, 2021): 195. Hiebert called for holistic theologies not reflective of Platonic dualism, and which included on the middle level, a holistic theology of God in human history in the affairs of nations, of peoples, and of individuals. This must include a theology of divine guidance, provision, and healing; of ancestors, spirits, and invisible powers of this world; of suffering, misfortune, and death.

⁹⁹Gene Moody and Earline Moody, “How to Do Deliverance Portion,” <http://www.demonbuster.com> (accessed May 21, 2016).

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*

¹⁰¹Kalu, 12. The forms of Africa’s crusades and services, the music, the use of the Bible, and even the selection of texts, continually suggest the particular origins.

¹⁰²*Ibid.*, 17. The global perspective consists of the various ways in which charismatic spirituality is appropriated, expressed, articulated, and lived in response to the challenges from indigenous cultures and ecosystems and other competing religious forms.

Methods of Spiritual Deliverance

Environmental factors largely determine the methodology used in the practice of spiritual deliverance. Annelin Eriksen and Knut Rio assert, “Pentecostal healing ministries are also premised on a basis of local engagement.”¹⁰³

The method of deliverance refers to the way deliverance is being carried out. It involves a systematic or orderly pattern of logical steps that deliverance ministers follow in doing spiritual deliverance.¹⁰⁴

Spiritual deliverance, according to Charles Kraft, involves the deliverance minister having the knowledge of demonic tactics. It also involves the deliverance minister having personal knowledge of how to carry out deliverance. Kraft lists seven tactics demons use to keep themselves from being cast out.¹⁰⁵ The first five tactics unravel what demons do to maintain their abode in the victim, while the last two tactics

¹⁰³Annelin Eriksen and Knut Rio, “Demons, Devils, and Witches in Pentecostal Port Vila: On Changing Cosmologies of Evil in Melanesia,” in *Pentecostalism and Witchcraft: Spiritual Warfare in Africa and Melanesia*, ed. Knut Rio, Michelle MacCarthy, and Ruy Blanes (Gwerbestrasse, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 207. The authors’ evaluation of Pentecostalism in Port Vila is that “they are popular movements that take seriously the underlying social predicaments of the congregation but not by turning to historical or social conventions about what these predicaments are. Their popular power rather comes from redefining the spiritual and interhuman realm altogether. Their language of ‘warfare,’ ‘spiritual mapping,’ and ‘discernment’ reveal their intense activity of renaming and reorganizing the inventories of the spiritual realms.”

¹⁰⁴Moody. Some propose six basic steps that must be followed. Six step method: (1) identifying the problems, (2) forgiving, (3) breaking the curses and soul ties on the victim and descendants, (4) casting out the demons, (5) praying for the healing of body and soul of the victim, and (6) self-discipline through change of thought and behavior. According to Moody, before any deliverance can take place the individual should be given an opportunity to discuss his problems and background so as to know about the person spiritually, after which forgiveness must be sought. He asserts that the “most important key in setting a person free from the sins of the ancestors is to get the person to forgive the ancestors, and ask God to forgive them and bless them if they are alive.”

¹⁰⁵Charles H. Kraft, *Defeating Dark Angels: Breaking Demonic Oppressions in the Believer’s Life* (California: Regal, 2011), 214–217. Seven tactics of demons: (1) demons like to delude you about their presence, (2) demons often talk big to get you to fear them, (3) demons will deceive and lie, (4) demons often give excuses and even plead to be allowed to stay, (5) demons will try to wear down both you and the person to whom you are ministering, (6) the person usually knows when the demons leave, and (7) fill the space emptied of demons with blessings.

apply to the minister. With these tactics in mind, Kraft outlines the various steps that may be followed to get demons out of victims. The steps include getting information from demons; discerning the particular types of demons; ministering in teams; praying intensely, starting each session by taking authority over the place, time, and people around; challenging the demons; and completely getting rid of them.¹⁰⁶ Kraft believes that getting rid of these spirits involves the practice of commanding all the demons into boxes.¹⁰⁷

Spiritual Deliverance and Demon Possession

Emmanuel Frimpong, who believes that spirit possession precedes spiritual deliverance, defines spirit possession as the process whereby people are forced to act against their will in accordance with the wishes of the evil spirits in them.¹⁰⁸ At the time of exorcism, the possessed are liberated or set free from the control and influence of the spirit.

The Assemblies of God position paper on demon possession puts forward the following description regarding demon possession:

The word *daimonizomai*, to be possessed of a demon, or, as some put it, to be demonized, is not as common. It is used as a verb only once and that of a Canaanite girl who was “badly demonized,” or cruelly tormented by a demon. Everywhere else it is found as a participle which should be translated, “the demoniac(s)” (Matthew 8:28,33; 9:32; 12:22; Mark 5:15–18; Luke 8:35).¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶Ibid., 181–182, 201–209.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., 209, 212. “When the demons on my list are all in locked boxes, I usually ask the angel to round any demons not in the boxes and force them into another box, on the count of three. I then count to three rapidly and the person usually sees a bunch of demons scurrying into the box. I then ask that the boxes be taken to Jesus and ask Him to dispose of the boxes full of spirits.”

¹⁰⁸Frimpong, 71.

¹⁰⁹Assemblies of God, “Can Born-Again Believers.”

Unger's assertion is that demon possession, though erroneously termed, actually refers to a "physical indwelling and bodily control by evil spirits."¹¹⁰ He further adds, "Demon possession is a condition in which one or more evil spirits or demons inhabit the body of a human being and can take complete control of their victim at will."¹¹¹ According to him, "The demonized are incapable of separating their own consciousness and mental processes from the influence of the demon, and their own identity and free volition are merged, and to that extent lost, in that of their invaders," which accounts for the hideous, inhuman, and often bestial behavior of the demonized.¹¹²

The above assertion by Unger does not seem to give a true reflection of the demonized, as this reduces the victim to "inhuman" and creates confusion in understanding the difference between a person who is possessed by a demon and one who has a mental illness. In most cases, "mental illness has often been attributed to supernatural powers."¹¹³ Evidence abounds regarding this misrepresentation and wrong association of mental cases with demonism.¹¹⁴ Alton Parks submits, "Mental illness and demonic possession are related. Demonic possession and mental illness are not the same,

¹¹⁰Unger, *Biblical Demonology: Present World*, 77.

¹¹¹Merrill F. Unger, *Demons in the World Today* (Wheaton: Tyndale, 1971), 102.

¹¹²Ibid., 95–96. "The behavior of the demonized which is occasioned by the loss of 'individualism,' or the consciousness of a distinct and self-determining individuality, with the power of self-origination in mental and moral actions, which distinguishes the human soul from the animal... is not due to mental disease, where injury to the brain or nervous system may cause previously existing mental impressions to be excited without corresponding outward stimuli, as in maniacal disorders, nor is it due to vice, as involving the power of moral self-origination and self-action, but it is attributable to the presence of an inhabiting superior power of evil."

¹¹³Colleen A. Ward and Michael H. Beaubrun, "The Psychodynamics of Demon Possession," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 19, no. 2 (June 1980): 201, EBSCOhost (accessed May 28, 2021).

¹¹⁴Ibid. The authors report: "Field observations and interviews with possessed individuals in contemporary Trinidadian society indicate that the incorporation of the local folklore and superstition is the prime prerequisite for the possession complex, but that the reaction per se is triggered by situations of unusual stress or emotional conflict."

and believers should not treat them as such.”¹¹⁵ Parks, citing Jean Mercer’s publication regarding demon possession and mental illness, reports that

in the Western world, mainstream Christians and Jews generally consider natural factors in mental illness and mental health interventions despite their acknowledgment of the importance of spiritual or supernatural phenomena. Pentecostal believers, on the other hand, emphasize the role of the supernatural in both the causation and healing of mental and physical disorders. Pentecostals believe these disorders result from demonic possession.¹¹⁶

The overriding point in the above submission is that demon possession and mental illness are related in their causation since Satan is primarily responsible for them and especially since both conditions came as a result of the fallen state of man. It is the fallen state of man, through the fall of Adam in the garden of Eden, that is responsible for man’s condition.¹¹⁷

Dickason agrees with Unger that “demon possession” means “demon-caused passivity,” or control by one or more demons with results affecting every area of the life of the person, including the “physical and the psychological and in varying degrees.” He uses the word *demonization* to describe “demon possession,” which he says has the following parallel expressions: “to have a spirit” or “having the spirit of an unclean demon” (*ecbon pneuma daimoniou akathartou*) in Luke 4:33 and “having a spirit of divination” (*echousan pneuma puthona*) in Acts 16:16, literally translated, “having a python spirit.” Others include “those who were troubled with unclean spirits”

¹¹⁵Alton Parks, “Mental Illness and Demonic Influence: The Difference between Them and the Difference It Makes” (Ph.D. thesis, Liberty University, 2020), 51, <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3640&context=doctoral> (accessed May 28, 2021).

¹¹⁶Ibid.; Jean Mercer, “Deliverance, Demonic Possession, and Mental Illness: Some Considerations for Mental Health Professionals,” *Mental Health, Religion and Culture* 16, no. 6 (2013): 595.

¹¹⁷Ibid.

(*enochloumenoi apo pneumaton aeatbarton*) in Luke 6:18, “healing all who were oppressed by the devil” (*katadunasteuomenous bupo tou diabolou*) in Acts 10:38, and those “who were sick or afflicted with unclean spirits” (*ochloumenous bupo pneumaton akatharton*) in Acts 5:16,¹¹⁸ amongst others.

The phrase “physical and the psychological and in varying degrees” in the statement of Dickason suggests the extent to which he agrees with Unger about the effect of demonic possession on a victim. The words seem to have some reservation when aligned with Unger’s assertion that the demonized person is rendered “inhuman.” This agrees with the view of Craig S. Keener, who asserts that

forms of possession behavior vary in some respects even in the NT; it is possible that different types of possession existed in the early Christians' milieu and that cultural features sometimes either patterned some common elements or invited some particular transcultural elements to the fore. Thus, for example, the larger Gentile culture apparently valued the mantic abilities of the enslaved woman in Acts 16:16 yet recognized the danger in the more violent possession in Acts 19:16.¹¹⁹

The two Bible passages Keener cites no doubt add more understanding to how different demon-possessed persons could act, based on the level of the demonic influence over their lives.

Dickason objects to unbiblical states of demon control that most writers refer to such as subjection, demonization, obsession, and demon possession. He explains that the

¹¹⁸Dickason, *Demon Possession*, 41–42.

¹¹⁹Craig S. Keener, “Spirit Possession as a Cross-Cultural Experience,” *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 20, no. 2 (2010): 221, <https://www.pas.rochester.edu/~tim/study/Keener%20Possession%20.pdf> (accessed August 8, 2018). “Various cross-cultural parallels to NT spirit-possession narratives (in terms of both behavior and interpretation) suggest that scholars should respect the NT descriptions as potentially reflecting eyewitness accounts or sources. Anthropologists have documented spirit possession or analogous experiences in a majority of cultures, although interpretations of the experiences vary. In some cases, possession trance can produce violent behavior toward oneself (cf. Mark 5:5, 9:22) or others (cf. Acts 19:16), and some cultures associate it with publicly recognized, apparently superhuman feats of strength (cf. Mark 5:4) or knowledge (cf. Mark 1:24, Acts 16:16–17).”

Bible merely classifies the working of demons as either external or internal and says that the internal activities refer to demonization, the proper term for the commonly misused "demon possession."¹²⁰ When this happens, there "is the automatic projection of a new personality in the victim."¹²¹

The researcher agrees with Dickason on the description of the characteristics of the demonized person, if this is what he means by *demonization*. Dickason defines *demonization* (demon possession) as referring to all the workings of demons, including to be "troubled by unclean spirits" (Luke 6:18), "oppressed by the devil" (Acts 10:38), and "sick or afflicted with unclean spirits" (Acts 5:16). As previously mentioned, this does not support the description of demonization as *internal* activities of the spirits. Therefore, the researcher does not fully agree with Dickason's definition because most of these activities are *external* operations of the spirit. For example, the idea of being afflicted, oppressed, or troubled by demons does not refer to the work of an indwelling or inhabiting demon in all cases.

Kurt Koch identifies eight characteristics resulting from cases of demon possession, based on the Scripture in Mark 5. He calls these eight characteristics

¹²⁰Dickason, *Demon Possession*, 40–41. "Demonization is not merely an old-world term for schizophrenic illness, which many agree is caused by a chemical imbalance in the brain and is aggravated by circumstances so as to lead to abnormal thinking, emotions, and behavior. Genuine schizophrenia may be relieved by the application of proper drug therapy. But we are not talking about a human illness. In demonization, the personality of the demon eclipses the personality of the person afflicted. The demon displays his personality through the human's body to a greater or lesser degree. The control may be overt or covert. In fact, there is no indication that the human must be aware of demonization in order to be so classified. The control of the thought processes and emotions seems to be the primary characteristic."

¹²¹Unger, *Demons in the World*, 102.

“symptoms of demon possession” that can help in discerning the presence of a demon in a person.¹²²

Demon possession, according to Don Fanning, is just one of the ways demons operate. He cites Charles Ryrie, who defines demon possession as “a demon residing in a person, exerting direct control and influence over that person, with certain derangement of mind and/or body.”¹²³ Thus, Fanning asserts that demon possession is different from demon influence or demon activity in relation to a person. He clarifies this by noting that the work of a demon in demon influence or activity is from the outside, whereas in demon possession it is from within. This is usually evidenced by a number of certain physical traits: “A change in moral character and spiritual disposition, frequently different voice, a different educational level, or even a foreign language will reflect a difference in the affected person’s personality.”¹²⁴ The possession of supernatural knowledge (Mark 1:23–24) and supernatural physical strength and ability (Mark 5:3–4) are also evidence of demon possession. This view is also held by Thomas Sappington, who asserts that most scholars, and some Christian groups, see a distinction between demon possession (*daimonizomai*) and oppression by demons. The distinction shows *possession* (from inside a person) and *oppression* (from outside the person).¹²⁵ Joseph Thayer points out that *daimonizomai* is used thirteen times in the Gospel accounts to refer

¹²²Kurt E. Koch, *Occult Bondage and Deliverance* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1970), 57–58.

¹²³Don Fanning, “Angelology, Satanology, and Demonology,” *Bible Doctrines* 5 (2009): 21, <http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1039> (accessed September 10, 2012).

¹²⁴*Ibid.*

¹²⁵Thomas Sappington, “Demon Possession,” The Gospel Coalition, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/essay/demon-possession/> (accessed May 30, 2021).

to one under the power of demons.¹²⁶ Koch affirms the presence of the aforementioned symptoms in the demon-possessed person, but argues that they occur in the possessed person only during the time of the attacks.¹²⁷ In other words, the symptoms do not characterize the general traits the person exhibits every time of the day, and “do not occur in connection with genuine mental illnesses.”¹²⁸

Appleby agrees with Dickason on the use of the term *demonization* in place of *demon possession*. He contends that *demon possession* is a confusing term, and that although different versions of the Bible sometimes refer to a person “being possessed by a demon,” the word *possession* is not actually present. He suggests an alternative definition of interpretation of the Greek in such Bible references is “demonized,” because “*possession* implies ownership and demons own nothing. The NT views them as squatters or invaders of territory that does not belong to them.”¹²⁹

With this in mind, Appleby, just like Dickason, defines demonization as “being under the influence or control of one or more demonic spirits.”¹³⁰ Supporting this view, Gary Kinnaman cites Charles Kraft as saying that the term *demon possession* is based on a poor translation of the Greek word *daimonizomai*, which means “demonized” or “under the influence of a demon.”¹³¹ He mentions further that even Merrill Unger, the famous

¹²⁶Joseph H. Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, s.v. “daimonizomai,” (n.p.: Hendrickson Academic, 1995). Church of the Great God, <https://www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Lexicon.show/ID/G1139/daimonizomai.htm> (accessed June 3, 2021).

¹²⁷Kurt E. Koch, *Demonology Past and Present* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2000), 10–12.

¹²⁸Ibid.

¹²⁹Appleby, 3–4.

¹³⁰Ibid.

¹³¹Kinnaman, 156; Kraft.

Bible scholar, recognized that the term *demon possession*, though a popular term today, does not appear in the Bible. He, therefore, opines that it is far better to use a more neutral term such as *echein daimonion* (to have a demon) or *daimonizomai* (demonized or under the influence of a demon), which “are more true to the original Greek and also run less risk of frightening people.”¹³² Notwithstanding, Unger employs the term *demon possession* in his books. For instance, he describes demon possession as a physical indwelling and bodily control by evil spirits, and claims that “in the Synoptic Gospels cases of demon possession and demon expulsion are extremely common.”¹³³ Unger further observes,

That demon possession by no means ended with New Testament times is irrefutably proved by the witness of early Church history.... A striking feature of demonic possession is the constancy of its nature throughout the centuries.... The constant nature of the phenomena of demonic possession and its persistence throughout the Christian centuries till the present day may be abundantly illustrated from a vast literature.¹³⁴

The above assertion shows Unger’s inconsistencies in his use of terms. This assertion contradicts his other views, such as when he agrees with Alfred Edersheim that the actual expression *demon possession* does not occur in the NT, but apparently originated with Josephus, through whom it passed into ecclesiastical language.¹³⁵ This assertion by both Unger and Edersheim lacks justifiable proof. The biblical meaning of *demon possession* from the Greek *daimonizomai*, or, as used in Matthew 12:22, *daimonizomenos*, actually refers to a *demonized person* or one *possessed by a demon*. Several lexicons lay emphasis

¹³²Kinnaman, 156.

¹³³Unger, *Biblical Demonology: Today*, 78–79.

¹³⁴*Ibid.*, 79–85.

¹³⁵*Ibid.*, 90.

on the fact that the original Greek in Matthew 12:22 gives the expression of being possessed by a demon: “Then (*Tote*) a demon-possessed (*daimonizomenon*) man, who was blind (*tuphlon*) and mute (*kophon*) was brought (*prosenenkan*)”;¹³⁶ “Then (*Tote*) was brought (*prosenechthe*) to Him (*auto*) one possessed by a demon (*daimonizomenos*).”¹³⁷

Demon possession, to Colleen Ward and Michael Beaubrun, refers to a “relatively long term state in which the individual believes he is unwillingly possessed by one or more intruding spirits and exhibits contingent (usually maladaptive) behavioral responses which he attributes to the spirits' influence.”¹³⁸ James Dunn and Graham Twelftree assert that “the idea of demon-possession was reserved for conditions where the individual seemed to be totally in the grip of an evil power (using his vocal chords, Mark 1:24, 5:7, 9; Acts 16:16; convulsing him, Mark 1:26, 9:20–26; super-human strength, Mark 5:3–4; Acts 19:16).”¹³⁹ This control is just for a time, as “demons cannot totally control a person all the time, though in severe demonization, nearly total control may occur for shorter or longer periods of time.”¹⁴⁰ Demon possession also describes various other manifestations of spiritual bondage.¹⁴¹ Richards asserts, “Demons can exercise authority over the lives of

¹³⁶Bible Hub, “NASB Lexicon,” biblehub.com, <https://biblehub.com/lexicon/matthew/12-22.htm> (accessed May 26, 2021).

¹³⁷Bible Hub “Interlinear,” biblehub.com, <https://biblehub.com/interlinear/matthew/12-22.htm> (accessed May 26, 2021).

¹³⁸Ward and Beaubrun. The authors comment: “Although possession of this type may be somewhat uncommon, cases have been reported in psychiatric literature in the United States (Galvin & Ludwig, 1961; Ludwig, 1965; Warner, 1977) Hong Kong (Yap, 1960) and India (Freed & Freed, 1964), as well as more primitive tribal societies (Leiris, 1968; Kiev, 1964).”

¹³⁹James D. G. Dunn and Graham H. Twelftree, “Demon-Possession and Exorcism in the New Testament,” *Churchman* 94, no. 3 (1980): 217.

¹⁴⁰Kinnaman, 157.

¹⁴¹Dunn and Twelftree, 222. “When the New Testament talks about demons, its concern is to describe various manifestations of spiritual bondage. Such bondage can be described also as ‘having an unclean spirit,’ or being dominated by Satan, and is essentially of a piece with being ‘enslaved by the

individuals because of decisions made by ancestors, or even because of the geographic location a person resides in.”¹⁴² However, she does not explain how residing in certain geographical locations could give room to being demonized, or if merely residing in a demon dominated area (if there is such a thing) could be a sufficient reason for such territorial demons to invade, possess, or control the lives of the residents.

Richard McBrien sees demonic possession as “a phenomenon where the psychic power of a demon takes over the personality of a human recipient so that the individual is incapable of voluntary ‘action’ in contrast to demonic obsession, where the person can still exercise volition.”¹⁴³ This perspective on demonic possession presents an extreme and complex situation in the condition of possession. It is an extreme situation in the sense that only on rare cases would one find a demonized person who cannot, at least occasionally, exhibit their own behavior or act based on personal volition. The understanding that the demonized most commonly exhibit demonic actions or symptoms during the time of his or her attacks¹⁴⁴ may help the situation. Koch points out the symptom of clairvoyance, for instance, which he says occurs in the possessed person only during the time of the attacks.¹⁴⁵

elemental spirits,’ being ‘blinded by the god of this world,’ being afflicted by ‘an angel/messenger of Satan,’ or being inspired by ‘the spirit of antichrist.’ ‘Demon-possession’ was one way of understanding and representing such bondage, particularly when more disturbing physical manifestations were involved, but it was not the only way.”

¹⁴²Richards, 44–45.

¹⁴³Richard P. McBrien, ed., “Demon Possession,” in *The HarperCollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism*, ed. Richard P. McBrien and Harold W. Attridge (New York: Harper Collins, 1995), 407.

¹⁴⁴Koch, *Demonology Past and Present*, 10–11.

¹⁴⁵Ibid.

McCain sees demonic possession to mean the attempt by a demon to keep a person under his control, to keep a person under fear and cause him “to act in strange and even supernatural ways.”¹⁴⁶ Such strange and supernatural ways have become the symptoms of demon possession or being demonized. Some of these bizarre symptoms, such as histrionic behavior, incoherent speech, uncontrollable physical movements, extraordinary feats of physical strength, alteration of voice, clairvoyance, speaking in foreign languages, and sometimes behavior that is self-destructive or destructive to others or to material objects, vary from one individual to another.¹⁴⁷

In redefining spiritual possession from Pentecostal parlance, Ogbu Kalu asserts that Pentecostals “brand all cults...as satanic, exorcise all, and breed skepticism”; they go further to providing “an alternative – ‘white,’ clean possession by the Holy Spirit.”¹⁴⁸ Kalu explains that this is why Pentecostals prefer the word *deliverance* to *exorcism*. They do not just seek to expel the demonic force that has taken control of the person or victim, but go further to “refill the person with a healthier, clean spirit so that the person can become truly human and achieve the vaunted life goals of a community.”¹⁴⁹ Ed Murphy states, “By demonization I mean that Satan, through his evil spirits, exercises direct partial control over one or more areas of the life of a human being.”¹⁵⁰ Thus, when Christians engage in a counter struggle against the demonic, it results in what is described

¹⁴⁶McCain, 340.

¹⁴⁷McBrien, 11–12.

¹⁴⁸Kalu, 172.

¹⁴⁹Ibid.

¹⁵⁰Ed Murphy, “We Are at War,” in *Supernatural Forces in Spiritual Warfare: Wrestling with Dark Angels*, ed. C. P. Wagner (Shippensburg: Destiny Image Publishers, 2012), 59.

as “spiritual warfare.”¹⁵¹ It must, however, be understood that although Scripture represents many sicknesses such as dumbness, deafness, and paralysis as due to demon inhabitation (Matt. 9:32–33, 12:22; Mark 5:5, 9:17–18), all who were dumb, deaf, or paralyzed are not described as demonized. Therefore, “it is evident that all physical or even mental disorders of the same class are not ascribed to the same cause”; some may be natural, while others may be demonic.¹⁵²

The Christian and Demon Possession

Discussion on spiritual deliverance has received global attention. Studies have shown that spiritual deliverance is also the concern of Christians from the West.¹⁵³ It is important, however, to state here that Christians generally agree that non-Christians are primarily the victims of demon possession. That is, there seems to be no serious disagreement (if there is any at all) on whether a non-Christian can be demon possessed or demonized. For this reason, this study is deliberately focused on the area where there is a controversy, and that is regarding whether or not Christians can be possessed by demons, or demonized.

Can a born-again Christian be possessed by a demon? Is it possible for two opposing personalities (God and demons) to live comfortably together in one house (a human body)? It is important to address these issues against the backdrop of the understanding of human nature vis-à-vis what happens to man at salvation. A proper

¹⁵¹Eriksen and Rio, 9. The demonic, as well as the warfare against it, is presented as an ontological starting point, where Pentecostal energy is dedicated to discerning the presence of Satan in social life anywhere. Spiritual warfare is the Christian version of taking a stand against invisible evil forces.

¹⁵²Unger, *Biblical Demonology: Present World*, 97.

¹⁵³McCain, 341.

understanding of human nature and man's status after the salvation experience would subject every opinion about whether a born-again Christian can be possessed by demons or not to a critical review.

The Nature of Man

Eric Gondwe, commenting on man as God's special creation, asserts that God made man "earthly," as opposed to angels who are heavenly creatures, giving him not only soul and spirit, but body also. He sees the body as the essential part of man that enables him to live on the earth and to exercise authority in it.¹⁵⁴ The emphasis Gondwe is making is that although man has a divine part, the spirit, which carries the image of God in man, the body and the soul are the means by which man expresses his "earthly self" and consciousness, respectively.

Mark Christians examines human nature from a psychological perspective.¹⁵⁵ Although modern psychology, with its paradigm shift from its links to philosophy, theology, and natural sciences, is today closely tied to a humanistic view of humankind, the fact remains that the primary object of the science of psychology is human nature and how it is expressed in thought, actions, and feelings. He explains that God created humans to think, act, and feel, as well as to be in relationship with other humans, but when Adam and Eve gave in to Satan's temptations, they "forfeited God's perfect human

¹⁵⁴Eric Gondwe, *Breaking Spiritual Strongholds and Healing the Wounded Spirit*, under "Our Triune Nature: Spirit, Soul and Body," www.spiritualwarfaredeliverance.com/books/08-breaking-spiritual-strongholds-healing-wounded-spirit/html/spirit-soul-body/ (accessed July 8, 2017). "Our make up as humans is triune. We exist in three parts – spirit, soul and body. The spirit part of us is what relates with the soul which in turn relates with the body. We are made in God's image in our spiritual makeup. Our physical bodies are only for the purpose of physical dealings on this physical earth."

¹⁵⁵Mark Christians, "God, Human Nature, and Psychology," Dordt University, <https://inallthings.org/god-human-nature-and-psychology/> (accessed February 4, 2018).

creation” and subsequently led the way for all humanity to be marred and flawed by this sinful nature.¹⁵⁶

Christians asserts that being active in psychology means being active agents in God’s kingdom. He explains that some of the areas of inquiry in psychology and human nature that reflect this kingdom work lie in the biological, psychological, and social realms.¹⁵⁷ This is similar to what Valentine Seymour identifies as the three components of human health (physical, mental, and social).¹⁵⁸ In the biological realm of human nature, psychology explores “brain activity and specifically neurotransmitters that affect mood, memory, learning, sleep,” among others. The psychological realm of human nature explores various mental disorders that impact people everywhere; Christians expects God’s children to “know how to diagnose and treat these disorders to restore the person to physical, psychological, and spiritual health.”¹⁵⁹ The psychological realm of human nature also explores the emotional response to trauma and loss, such as death. The social realm of human nature looks at cultural background, both its effects and how it reflects in people’s actions. This shows how racial diversity and awareness has impacted lives and also shows

how prejudice can be influenced by in-group bias, out-group bias, family socialization, and many other social and cognitive factors. Despite the seemingly positive progression in racial awareness, citizens of our culture and many other cultures around the world continue to exhibit prejudice in their attitudes and

¹⁵⁶Ibid.

¹⁵⁷Ibid.

¹⁵⁸Valentine Seymour, “The Human-Nature Relationship and Its Impact on Health: A Critical Review,” *Frontiers in Public Health* 4 (2016), under “Toward an Interdisciplinary Perspective of Human and Ecosystem Health,” <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5114301/> (accessed July 7, 2017).

¹⁵⁹Christians.

behaviors, which lead to greater separation, rather than reconciliation among races.¹⁶⁰

The need to understand that human beings are naturally ethnocentric, egoistic, or self-centered, which is stressed in the above statement, is one way to attribute certain actions of humans to human nature, rather than to external factors. That means prejudice and biases are the function of human nature, a sinful or fallen nature, and not necessarily the masterminds of evil forces in all instances. This shows that psychology is an essential tool in theology, even as Eric Johnson comments,

Psychology, then, in the Christian framework, is not an independent activity that operates apart from God, it is dependent upon God's mercy to illuminate human understanding and reveal things about human nature through human reflection, research, and creative insight. The Christian psychologist submits to God's lordship in his or her thoughts and beliefs.¹⁶¹

The point of emphasis in the above quote is that knowledge of psychology enhances knowledge of human nature in terms of who man is, how he acts, and why he acts in certain ways. This knowledge is not independent of God and his words. Thus, the knowledge of psychology helps to affirm God's revelation about man.

What Happens to Man at Salvation

As J. Hampton Keathley explains, "The word 'salvation' is the translation of the Greek word *soteria* which is derived from the word *soter* meaning 'savior.'" Salvation is an all-encompassing word. It "communicates the thought of deliverance, safety,

¹⁶⁰Ibid.

¹⁶¹Eric L. Johnson, "Christ, the Lord of Psychology," *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 25, no. 1 (1997), <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/009164719702500102> (accessed February 4, 2018).

preservation, soundness, restoration, and healing.”¹⁶² Theologically, the doctrine of salvation discusses various aspects of the saving work, which includes

redemption, reconciliation, propitiation, conviction, repentance, faith, regeneration, forgiveness, justification, sanctification, preservation, and glorification. On the one hand, salvation is described as the work of God rescuing man from his lost estate. On the other hand salvation describes the estate of a man who has been saved and who is vitally renewed and made a partaker of the inheritance of the saints.¹⁶³

The significance of this is that salvation takes care of every aspect of man’s problem, especially the spiritual one. It not only affords him a change of status from sinner to saint, but also gives him a change of ownership: from property of Satan to temple of God, the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit, and a child of God, thus qualifying him to share in the inheritance of the saints.¹⁶⁴

Pentecost argues that demons are uncomfortable living around an individual who knows Christ as their personal Savior or in an area where God is recognized and his authority honored.¹⁶⁵ With salvation, not only has Christ come to dwell in the believer, but the believer is also set apart for Christ as God’s property. Keathley further stresses that “the broadest meaning of salvation as used in the Bible encompasses the total work of God which is to rescue man from the ruin, doom, and power of sin and to bestow upon him the wealth of His grace encompassing eternal life, provision for abundant life now, and eternal glory (Eph. 1:3–8; 2:4–10; 1 Pet. 1:3–5; John 3:16, 36; 10:10).”¹⁶⁶

¹⁶²J. Hampton Keathley III, “Soteriology – The Doctrine of Salvation,” bible.org, <https://bible.org/article/soteriology-doctrine-salvation> (accessed February 8, 2018).

¹⁶³Ibid.

¹⁶⁴Ibid.

¹⁶⁵Pentecost, 140.

¹⁶⁶Keathley.

Among other things that happen in a man's life when he becomes a Christian are the following: the instantaneous endowment with all spiritual blessings in Christ (Eph. 1:3), the endowment with divine power to become a child of God and to live the new life (John 1:12), the blessing of eternal life (John 3:36), a walk in the light and disfellowship with darkness (John 8:12), the blessing of the spirit of adoption in place of the spirit of slavery and fear (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:5–7), and the blessing of forgiveness of all sins (Col. 1:14). Very important, too, is the blessing of deliverance, “For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son” (Col. 1:13 NASB),¹⁶⁷ thus making man a “spiritual house” (1 Pet. 2:5), a royal priesthood and “God's own possession” (1 Pet. 2:9), fully protected and secured both now and in the future (1 Pet. 1:5). The benefits of salvation are thus all encompassing. As observed by Keathley, these benefits or blessings, in the word of Paul the Apostle, are *unfathomable*, a word from the Greek *anexichniastos*, which means “past finding out, unsearchable, not to be tracked out.”¹⁶⁸

Unger also makes known that the new nature bestowed at regeneration constitutes the sphere in which the Holy Spirit works in the believer through his regenerated human spirit. He argues that the “powers of darkness cannot invade or indwell that holy sanctum...because God's ‘seed’ (the new nature) remains in the believer alongside the old nature, God's child, therefore, cannot practice sin as a habit

¹⁶⁷All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the *New American Standard Bible* (NASB).

¹⁶⁸*Ibid.*

(1 John 3:9).”¹⁶⁹ Anything contrary would serve as an indication that such a person is a member of the devil's family and not of God's family (1 John 3:8, 10).

The Assemblies of God holds the view that

the salvation provided by Christ grants freedom to the believer, but Paul cautions against using that freedom wrongly by indulging the flesh. Such indulgence denies the absolute expectation on the believer to “serve one another humbly in love” (Galatians 5:13). The direction of the unchecked flesh is to broken relationships and personal harm, which are antithetical to the work of the Spirit in the lives of believers.¹⁷⁰

As earlier observed, people vary in their opinions on this issue; this includes scholars too. For instance, McCain’s position is:

Actually the Bible is silent on the subject. There is no account in the Bible where a Christian was said to have been demon possessed and needed deliverance. However, neither is there any clear scripture in the Bible that says that it is impossible for a believer to be demon-possessed. It is my own understanding based upon theological considerations that a Christian cannot be demon possessed. When people repent... the Holy Spirit comes to live in their heart. How can the Holy Spirit live in the same body in which a demon is living?¹⁷¹

The understanding from this quotation is that the fact that the Bible does not make a definite statement about certain issues does not mean that man cannot tell what the truth is about such an issue. Conclusions can be made based on evidential truth—truth based on practical realities. McCain further explains that what accounts for what appears to be demon possession in some Christians is a demon’s continuous work of harassing a believer who was once his victim, and “to lay claim to certain demonic or occult

¹⁶⁹Unger, *What Demons Can Do*, 60.

¹⁷⁰Assemblies of God, “Spiritual Warfare and the Believer,” <https://ag.org/Beliefs/Position-Papers/Spiritual-Warfare-and-the-Believer>

¹⁷¹McCain.

materials that the Christian may still possess which gives the demon a certain amount of control over the Christians life.”¹⁷²

Fanning agrees with McCain when he affirms that “a Christian cannot be possessed by a demon since he is indwelt by the Holy Spirit.”¹⁷³ He, however, says that a believer can be the target of a demon’s activity to such an extent that he may begin to show appearances that are similar to demon possession, such as an influence to his thinking that leads him away from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ (2 Cor. 11:3).¹⁷⁴

A position statement given by the Assemblies of God reasons to explain why born-again Christians cannot be possessed or indwelt by demons. These include the following points:

Many passages make a clear distinction between sicknesses and diseases not caused by demons and those caused by demons.... In none of these examples is there any indication that any of these sicknesses caused by demons were of people in right relation to God.... The word daimonizomai, to be possessed of a demon, or, as some put it, to be demonized, is not as common. It is used as a verb only once and that of a Canaanite girl who was “badly demonized,” or cruelly tormented by a demon. Everywhere else it is found as a participle which should be translated, “the demoniac(s)” (Matthew 8:28,33; 9:32; 12:22; Mark 5:15–18; Luke 8:35). Again, in no case is there any indication that any of these “demoniacs” or demonized persons was right with God...the idea that demons may possess Christians is a concept that erodes faith and waters down our concept of God and the salvation He provides. God is our Father. He has “rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves” (Colossians 1:13).... It would seem contradictory for demons to indwell our bodies now that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷²Ibid.

¹⁷³Fanning, 21.

¹⁷⁴Ibid., 19.

¹⁷⁵Assemblies of God, “Can Born-Again Believers.” “We were once servants of sin (Romans 6:17) but now we are free to live for Christ. It is still possible to sin, but if a believer sins, it is because of having become willing to do so, not because of having been invaded by a demon.... For a Christian to have a demon would bring a division that Jesus refused to admit. The Pharisees tried to say that Jesus cast out

Lester Sumrall's assertion is in agreement with the above position statement; he affirms that "one cannot be an effective part of two opposite kingdoms," thus it is unimaginable that one who is actively serving Christ and casting out demons can himself be possessed by demons.¹⁷⁶ Opal L. Reddin states emphatically that "it is impossible for a born-again believer to be 'demon possessed!'" because there is no such thing as "joint ownership or joint occupancy" in the spiritual world, and having become Christ's possession, believers cannot become Satan's possession at the same time. Thus, it is impossible for Satan to repossess what Christ possesses, as long as the believer remains a believer and keeps his faith.¹⁷⁷ Satan may afflict the believer, may cause him to stumble, may influence his behavior, but certainly cannot possess him. The backslider, one who has denied faith in Christ, however, stands the chance of being demonized.¹⁷⁸

Sharing a similar view that demons cannot possess a Christian is Bill Subritzky.

He contends for what he calls "correct terminology." Subritzky argues that there is

demons by Beelzebub, the prince of demons (Matthew 12:24). They supposed the kingdom of Satan might be divided against itself. Jesus rejected this. Luke 11:21,22 further implies that Jesus has bound Satan as far as Satan's power to enslave a believer is concerned. Only when a demon returns and finds the house empty is he able to reenter (Luke 11:24–26). The idea of a true believer being inhabited by a demon also erodes the biblical concept of salvation and peace. It may produce terrible fear as Christians begin to wonder what demon will invade them next. This is certainly not in line with the freedom the Bible assures us we have. Early Christians had no such fear, nor did the Church of the second century. Hermas, who wrote a very influential Christian book called *The Shepherd* about a.d. 139, rebuked corruption and encouraged Christian virtue. In the book he also spoke of evil spirits that were able to live and reign within a person, but denied that the Holy Spirit could live in the same person with these evil spirits." One of the fundamental truths about Christianity is that a believer is a person who is delivered from the devil. The Christian spiritual warfare is not a call to get someone to cast the demons out of us, but for us to "take our stand on God's Word and resist Satan and his demons, in faith" (Eph. 6:10–18; 2 Cor. 10:3–6; 1 Pet. 5:8, 9; James 4:7). The attack of demons on the Christians is external, not internal as "seen in the case of Job; and also in the case of Paul's thorn in the flesh, which he called a messenger (or angel—Greek *aggelos*) of Satan sent to buffet him (beat or strike him with the fist). (See 2 Corinthians 12:7.)"

¹⁷⁶Lester Sumrall, *Demonology and Deliverance: Principalities and Powers Foundation Studies* (South Bend, IN: LeSea, 1995), 111.

¹⁷⁷Opal L. Reddin, ed., *Power Encounter: A Pentecostal Perspective* (Springfield, MO: Central Bible College Press, 1999), 162–163.

¹⁷⁸*Ibid.*, 163, 170.

“nothing in original Greek to justify putting the word ‘possessed’ alongside the word ‘demons.’” He says that the “correct translation is to have an unclean, evil spirit (Matthew 11:18).”¹⁷⁹

Subritzky also points out that most Christians confuse the flesh with demons. He explains that many do not have the understanding that *flesh* is to be crucified whereas *demons* are to be cast out.¹⁸⁰ *Flesh*, from the Greek *sarx*, which is also called “sinful nature” (Gal. 5:16–19), is not in itself sinful. It is the aspect of human nature that makes a believer susceptible to sin, a nature that will remain in humans until the resurrection.¹⁸¹ Reddin contrasts flesh and demons as follows: flesh is not removed at the time of the new birth, but demons are removed prior to or at the time of new birth; flesh is a part of human personality, but demons are alien personality; flesh can be crucified, but demons are to be cast out; flesh is not evil in itself, but demons are totally evil; flesh makes it possible for believers to sin, but demons live inside people and make it impossible for the people not to sin; flesh is internal, but demons are external¹⁸² until they invade or gain access into people’s lives.

Reasoning in the same direction as Subritzky and Reddin, Bluemel asserts, “While there is strong precedent for commanding demonic forces out of those possessed, I find nothing in Scripture teaching the Church to practice demonic exorcism among

¹⁷⁹Bill Subritzky, *Deliverance from Demons*. (Auckland, New Zealand: Dove Ministries, n.d.), 1.

¹⁸⁰Bill Subritzky, *How to Cast Out Demons and Break Curses* (Auckland, New Zealand: Dove Ministries, 1991).

¹⁸¹Reddin, 181–182.

¹⁸²*Ibid.*

believers.”¹⁸³ He narrates that most of those who practice exorcism among Christians started the practice out of a “sincere effort to explain the influence of the spiritual powers in a Christian’s life.” Subsequently, the search for a solution on how to free the Christians from the demonic influence evident in their day-to-day behavior gave birth to deliverance ministry, especially among believers.¹⁸⁴ Another factor that contributed in worsening the situation is the fact that believers were left in ignorance regarding the forces of darkness; Paul made known that ignorance of the devices of Satan gives the devil the opportunity to take advantage of the believer (2 Cor. 2:11). Bluemel states,

Even mainline Charismatic churches such as the Assemblies of God (AOG), Church of God in Christ (COGIC) and others who practiced speaking in tongues, healing and miracles often fall short of adequately developing teaching on the influence of demonic powers in a Christian’s life. Christians, for the most part, are completely ignorant of spiritual influence and spiritual warfare.¹⁸⁵

Appleby is, however, of a contrary view on this matter. In his opinion, Christians can be demonized and thus need deliverance too. He asserts that “to deny believers deliverance from demonic oppression because of a predetermined theological position is to deny those who would desire and benefit from it the most any access to this aspect of God’s grace.”¹⁸⁶ He testifies that from studies and his personal experience he has witnessed not less than “400 cases where genuine Christians who were inhabited by demons were delivered.”¹⁸⁷ Agreeing that Christians can only crucify the flesh and not demons, however, Appleby argues that ascribing to flesh what is actually demonic “will

¹⁸³Bluemel.

¹⁸⁴Ibid.

¹⁸⁵Ibid.

¹⁸⁶Appleby, 3–4.

¹⁸⁷Ibid.

only lead to endless frustration on the part of the Christian, and a wrong treatment strategy on the part of the counselor.”¹⁸⁸ However, Appleby does not give the parameter for determining who is a genuine Christian and who is not a genuine Christian as the individuals themselves may best determine the matter.

Like Appleby, Kinnaman argues that the popular myth that Christians cannot be demon possessed is only true technically. He explains that since Christians are possessed or owned by the Holy Spirit they could never be completely demon *possessed*, but if the term demon *possession* is understood to mean demonization or demon influence, then it is “possible for a Christian believer to be personally oppressed by dark angels.”¹⁸⁹ He cites Jesse Penn-Lewis as saying,

Christians are as open to possession by evil spirits as other men, and become possessed because they have, in most cases, unwittingly fulfilled the conditions upon which evil spirits work.... The primary cause of deception and possession in believers may be condensed into one word, Passivity: that is, a cessation of the active exercise of the will in control over spirit, soul, and body.¹⁹⁰

What the researcher deduces from the above citation, which he also agrees with, is that in as much as there exists the possibility of a falling away from faith, it is possible also that one who has fallen away from faith, whether he or she is still parading as a Christian, can be demon possessed.

Dickason appears to agree with Appleby when he insists that although the biblical and theological evidence cannot prove that Christians cannot be demonized, those who hold to that view must present their own clinical evidence to substantiate their

¹⁸⁸Ibid.

¹⁸⁹Kinnaman, 157.

¹⁹⁰Ibid.; Jesse Penn-Lewis, *War on the Saints* (Fort Washington, PA: Christian Literature Crusade, 1977).

suppositions. He argues that any attempt to give such proof would be a difficult task because, though they may not find many Christians who have demons, “they must search all parts of the world to determine that no Christian in all the world, present or past, has ever been demonized. Such a task is not only herculean, but impossible.”¹⁹¹ He opines that biblical and theological conclusions do not give any valid answer about whether a Christian can be demonized or not. He, therefore, suggests the use of clinical parameters along with biblical guidelines to find answers. A clinical approach, according to him, involves seeking for evidence through investigation, looking at actual experiential data to identify and certify that the person afflicted is a genuine Christian. Such evidence should be verified by other means and by other observers.¹⁹²

Unger argues that the fact that the believer is saved, delivered from sin, and indwelt by the Holy Spirit is not a guarantee that they cannot be possessed by demons if they permit the demons to invade their lives. “But who dares assert that a demon spirit will not invade the life of a believer which the Holy Spirit has been grieved by serious and persistent sin and quenched by flagrant disobedience?”¹⁹³ he queried. Unger sees demons in believers as squatters.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹¹Dickason, *Demon Possession*, 168.

¹⁹²Ibid.

¹⁹³Unger, *What Demons Can Do*, 42.

¹⁹⁴Ibid., 42, 56. He further argues that demons have no legal right to enter, since the Christian’s body belongs only to God both by creation and redemption (Ps. 100:3; 1 Cor. 6:19–20), but as squatters the demons can enter. Demons in Christians operate as squatters (one who settles on land without right or title or payment of rent), a guest or intruder, not as an owner. He rejects the claim that the Holy Spirit could not dwell in the same body with an evil spirit, saying that such claims overlook an important theological observation that the Holy Spirit dwells in our bodies, which are still possessed of the old nature and therefore subject to sin.

Just like Dickason, Unger relies much on experiential evidence in his conclusions about demonization of a Christian. He narrates incidents of assumed deliverance of born-again Christians from demons and remarks that “numerous other Christian leaders are beginning to comprehend the full extent to which demon power may affect the Christian” because of the “numerous reports of people who seem to be real Christians and who apparently suffer from demon possession.”¹⁹⁵

Clinton Arnold is also of the opinion that both the Holy Spirit and demons can co-exist in the same body of a believer. He argues that it is a “popular misconception that since the Bible refers to the believer’s body as a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19), a demon cannot occupy the same space as the Spirit of God.”¹⁹⁶ Arnold maintains that demons will take as much room as we will give them, and that what matters most are what the believers are bringing into, or allowing to remain in, this holy temple.¹⁹⁷

The general opinion of all works consulted agree that a Christian cannot experience demon possession in as much as the term demon possession refers to being *owned* by demons. These works also accept the possibility of Christians drifting into sin or sinful habits, thereby giving demons access into their lives. There is, however, a disparity and inconsistency among the various authors in the usage and understanding of the term *demon possession*. For example, Kinnaman, who argues in favor of Christians being possessed by demons, later employs the term *oppressed* to explain demon possession or demonization. He says that “if the term demon possession is understood to

¹⁹⁵Ibid., 49–56.

¹⁹⁶Clinton E. Arnold, *Three Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1997), 81–82.

¹⁹⁷Ibid., 138–139.

mean demonization or demon influence... it is possible for a Christian believer to be personally oppressed by dark angels.”¹⁹⁸ In the same vein, Appleby, a strong believer in the deliverance of Christians from demon possession, also uses the same term while referring to demon possession. His argument is that “to deny believers deliverance from demonic oppression because of a predetermined theological position is to deny those who would desire and benefit from it the most any access to this aspect of God’s grace.”¹⁹⁹

The Beneficiary of Spiritual Deliverance

Some suggest it is better to leave a demon-possessed person in his present situation than plunge him into a more terrible problem by getting rid of his demonic problem without leading him to saving faith in Christ, thereby opening him up for greater attack of the sent out demon plus “seven other spirits more wicked than itself” (Luke 11:24–26). Therefore, “deliverance is inappropriate for those who do not desire to become Christians or who are not Christians.”²⁰⁰

Exegetical Analysis of Three New Testament Passages

The three New Testament passages for the exegetical work include Matthew 8:16–17, Matthew 12:43–45, and Luke 13:10–13. These Scriptures were chosen because of their relevance to the subject of spiritual deliverance, and because they seem to be some of the most misunderstood passages by Christians on the issue of deliverance.

¹⁹⁸Kinnaman, 157.

¹⁹⁹Appleby, 3–4.

²⁰⁰Ibid., 5.

Exegesis of Matthew 8:16–17 on Spiritual Deliverance

This passage of Scripture gives the narrative of Jesus healing all manner of diseases and delivering all who were oppressed by demons. The setting of the event is Capernaum, in the region of Galilee. Matthew records that this deliverance, which came in succession among other miraculous healings and deliverances, took place after Jesus came down from the mountainside (8:1 ff). Matthew chapter 8 is essentially a “demonstration of King’s power, showing the ability of Jesus to heal (8:1–17).”²⁰¹

G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson suggest that Matthew’s original intention was to “focus primarily on ritual purity and impurity” as the individuals, especially the leper, the centurion’s servant being a Gentile, and Peter’s mother-in-law being a woman (8:1–13), “would have also been considered ritually unclean (or at least ‘second-class’ citizens).”²⁰² Thomas Constable points out that “the Pharisees considered lepers, Gentiles, and women as outcasts, but Jesus showed mercy to them all, thus, by healing them, Jesus was extending His grace to people the Jews either excluded or ignored as unimportant.”²⁰³

The healing and deliverances seem to have started in the early hours of the day and lasted until evening when the demon possessed were brought to Jesus, who cast out the demons in them. “In the Jewish inter-testamental literature the writers spoke of demons as responsible for making people ill. Jesus cast out the demonic spirits and healed many who were sick.”²⁰⁴ Matthew remarks that this was to fulfill the prophecy of

²⁰¹Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on Matthew,” (2012): 129, <https://www.planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/matthew.pdf> (accessed August 7, 2012).

²⁰²G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, eds., *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 30–31.

²⁰³Constable, 129.

²⁰⁴Ibid.

Isaiah that Jesus “took up our infirmities and carried our diseases” (v. 17). “The Old Testament taught that all sickness is the direct or indirect result of sin. Messiah would remove infirmities and diseases by dying as a substitute sacrifice for sin. He would deal with the fruit by dealing with the root.”²⁰⁵ Therefore, Matthew quoted Isaiah 53:4 to show the efficacious power of the atonement.

Davies and Allison observe that the spotlight in verse 17, which contains the only explicit reference to Isaiah 53, “is not giving a broad or general sweep over what is now happening in Israel but is directed right at Jesus’ person and ministry; thus the primary function of the quotation is a Christological one.”²⁰⁶ By this citation, Matthew “associates the prophet and his book with Jesus as the bringer of salvation.”²⁰⁷

Matthew does not tell how many demon possessed persons were brought, or their sexes. He only reports that they were “many who were possessed with demons” (v. 16). Who were these demon-possessed persons? Could any of them have been a “Christian” or disciples of Jesus? Does the quotation, “He took our infirmities and bore our diseases” (v. 17), which is a reference to the Isaiah 53 passages, suggest the deliverance of a Christian from demon possession?

²⁰⁵Ibid.

²⁰⁶W. D. Davies and D. C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew: Matthew 8–18* (London: T. and T. Clark International, 2004), 2:37–38.

²⁰⁷Ibid. “By associating the servant motif with the ministry of miracles, Matthew shows us that Jesus’ healings are ‘to be understood as a work of his obedience and his humiliation’ (Barth, in TIM, p. 128). The miracles flow from Jesus’ meekness and mercy; his task is not grand or glorious or in any way self-serving. Rather, his portion is with lepers and demoniacs, and he identifies himself with humanity in its suffering.”

James Laine asserts that the “quotation of the Isa. 53 passages implies that these acts of healing and deliverance are associated with the effect of the atonement.”²⁰⁸

Laine’s argument is that since healing is part of the atonement, “we also hold that this passage clearly intends to show that the effects of the atonement include victory over demons. Through Christ’s victory we are set free.”²⁰⁹ He further explains that as Jesus healed all who were sick who came to him, in the same way he set free from demons all who were brought to him.²¹⁰ Turner adds, “Matthew views the healings and exorcisms performed by Jesus as evidence for the presence of God’s reign, which anticipates a glorious future reality.”²¹¹

Craig Blomberg comments on the time the people came to Jesus for their healing, evening being the end of the Sabbath when normal activity could resume. According to Matthew’s narrative, “When evening came, many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick” (v. 16).²¹² This passage paints a picture of hopeless and helpless sinners who

²⁰⁸James A. Laine, “A Biblical View of Demonology,” *Faculty Publications and Presentations* 55 (1981): 30, https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1054&context=ccfs_fac_pubs (accessed August 27, 2012).

²⁰⁹Ibid.

²¹⁰Ibid.

²¹¹Turner, 235. “The use of Isa. 53:4 in Matt. 8:17 has led to much debate over the relationship of Jesus’s ministry and death to physical healing (cf. Mahhue 1995). A broad, biblical-theological view of sickness and death helps to resolve this question. Pain, illness, and death were originally rooted in sin (Gen. 3), and redemption from sin will ultimately result in the redemption of the body (Rom. 8:23) and the end of pain (Rev. 21:4).”

²¹²Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*, vol. 22, The New American Commentary (n.p.: Broadman and Holman Academic, 1992), 13. “From Mark 1:21, 29 we learn that Jesus healed Peter’s mother-in-law on a Sabbath. Jesus has done privately that which would later incur public hostility (e.g., Matt 12:9–14). Matthew is not concerned to note the day of the week here, but the information from Mark explains why the ‘many’ who bring their sick (v. 16) wait until sunset – the end of the Sabbath when normal activity could resume.”

were presented to Jesus for his help and mercy. Further proof of the passage as referring to sinners, rather than the saved, comes from Adam Clarke's observation that the people of the region "abounded with demoniacs" because "they were then advanced to the very height of impiety.... Secondly, because they were then strongly addicted to magic, and so, as it were, invited evil spirits to be familiar with them."²¹³ Clarke further comments that the phrase "Himself took our infirmities" is taken from Isaiah 53:4, "where the verb *nasa* signifies to bear sin, so as to make atonement for it."²¹⁴ According to him, the "rabbis understand this place to speak of the sufferings of the Messiah for the sins of Israel; and say that all the diseases, all the griefs, and all the punishments due to Israel shall be borne by him."²¹⁵ With "Isaiah's emphasis on physical restoration in the messianic era (35:5–6) and the connection between physical and spiritual healing in Jewish tradition...it makes good sense that Matthew also finds the nuance of physical healing here."²¹⁶

Exegesis of Matthew 12:43–45 on Spiritual Deliverance

This passage of Scripture presents Jesus' reaction to his accusers after a series of healing and deliverance cases. Matthew 12:43–45 is one of the Bible references that the researcher sees as a Scripture that has been wrongly interpreted with reference to spiritual

²¹³Adam Clarke, "Matthew 8:16–17," in *Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 1967). Accessed through *PC Study Bible*, Version 5, electronic database.

²¹⁴Ibid.

²¹⁵Ibid.

²¹⁶Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 66; Ibid.

deliverance. Does this passage support the argument that a Christian can be possessed by demons?

This parabolic passage looks back to verse 38, but covers up to verse 45, and presents “two perspectives that stress the gravity of the unbelief of Jesus’s contemporaries, described four times as ‘this evil generation’ (12:39, 41–42, 45).”²¹⁷ In the passage, the legal experts and Pharisees requested a sign from Jesus as proof of his Messiahship (12:38). In his response to their request, Jesus said no new sign would be given to them, but pointed them to three illustrations (the sign of Jonah, the queen of the South, and the unclean spirit) that could suffice for their request.²¹⁸

Grant Osborne explains that the “person freed of the demon represents the Jewish people... on behalf of whom their Messiah has bound Satan (12:29).”²¹⁹ Apparently, the freed person is left unoccupied; thus, at the return of the wandering demon, he finds two things on arrival: an empty, swept, clean house, and a house ready for occupancy. Thus, “the final condition” is “worse,” which shows a “perfect picture of Israel after rejecting

²¹⁷Turner, 325. “The first perspective contrasts the Pharisees’ unbelief with surprising cases of belief in the Hebrew Bible (12:38–42). The second perspective portrays this unbelief parabolically, showing that Israel will be worse off after not believing in Jesus than it was before he came.”

²¹⁸Ibid., 326–327. “The allusion to Jonah continues in 12:41 with the unfavorable comparison of Jesus’s contemporaries to Jonah’s audience. In language reminiscent of 11:21–24, Jesus underlines the severity of the sin of his contemporaries: although the Ninevites repented when Jonah preached (Jon. 3:2), Jesus’s contemporaries do not repent when one greater than Jonah preaches (cf. Matt. 12:6). The queen of Sheba (literally, ‘the South’) came from a distant land to hear and test Solomon’s wisdom (1 Kings 10:1–13; 2 Chron. 9:1–12; Josephus, Ant. 8.165–73), but Jesus’s contemporaries will not accept the wisdom of one greater than Solomon...Therefore on judgment day both the Ninevites and the queen of the South will condemn Jesus’s contemporaries.”

²¹⁹Grant R. Osborne, *Matthew*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, ed. Clinton E. Arnold (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 487–488. “Wherever Jesus went, through all the towns of Galilee and surrounding areas (cf. 4:23; 9:35), demons ‘went out’...and evil was defeated. God’s salvation was present.”

their Messiah and allowing Satan to have full sway.”²²⁰ Turner further suggests that the overall idea of the passage is that “although a great multitude of Jews have profited from Jesus’s healings and exorcisms, comparatively few have genuinely understood Jesus’s message and repented.... This enigmatic parable implies that the absence of evil spirits does not equate with the presence of redemption.”²²¹

According to Constable, “The point of these verses that describe *demon possession* goes back to Jesus’ warning about the peril of being neutral toward Him.”²²² He explains the passage further, referencing the Jewish views on angels and demons.²²³ Stuart Weber also asserts that what Jesus was saying in the passage is that Israel was in danger of ending up in a worse condition than before he came if it did not take advantage of the window of opportunity presented by his coming.²²⁴ Therefore, “Jesus compared the

²²⁰Ibid. “The demon finds two things upon ‘arrival.’ (1) The house/person is even better than before – clean, orderly, and ready for occupancy; the exorcism has ‘cleaned house.’ (2) It is empty and ready for the taking. In other words, the person has been freed but left spiritually empty. The attractive new dwelling cries out for an inhabitant, and the implied situation is ‘First come, first served.’” Seven additional demons enter and make their home there. “The number seven stresses completeness. This is a full contingent of demons.” And the final condition of that person is worse than the first.

²²¹Turner, 327–328. “The nation, like a recently cleaned house, has had its demons removed. Yet it has done nothing to ensure itself against their more rigorous re-entrenchment.” “Evidently, after the first spirit left, nothing good came into the man to fill the vacuum.” “The house has been cleaned, but a good tenant has not taken up residence.”

²²²Constable, 187.

²²³Ibid. “Cf. Tasker p.133. See Edersheim, *The Life...*, 2:748–63, 2:770–76, for the Jewish views of angels and demons.” “A demon cast out of a person initially goes through waterless places seeking rest. This statement affirms the Jewish belief that demons prefer dry places (Tobit 8:3; cf. Rev. 18:2). Eventually they seek to inhabit human bodies, through which they can do more damage. Jesus implied the possibility of demonic re-possession (v. 44). The demon’s ‘house’ is a human body in Jesus’ story. The demon returns to the person it had left, discovering that he or she is still receptive to the demon’s presence because no superior power occupies that person. Consequently the demon invites seven other demons—a full complement and more wicked than itself—and they take up residence in the person.”

²²⁴Stuart K. Weber, *Matthew*, Holman New Testament Commentary, ed. Max E. Anders (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2000), 180.

unbelieving Jews of His day to the demon-possessed person” and warned against the danger of the life of neutrality.²²⁵

Laine observes that whenever the demons’ purpose to inhabit people is thwarted, they resort to inhabiting animals or to the comfort of water,²²⁶ hence the driven out demons go through arid (waterless) places looking for a new abode. Clarke indicates that the significance of “waterless places” refers to Orphic demonology, which states that different classes of demons delight in different abodes; hence there are celestial demons, aerial demons, aquatic demons, and terrestrial demons.²²⁷

To keep a demon from returning to the place from where it was sent out, the former demoniac should not only put his life physically in order, he should accept Jesus as Lord and Savior and get baptized in the Holy Spirit.²²⁸ This is why the former demoniac remains vulnerable, because the demon would find his house (life) clean, but empty. Laine opines that the inviting of “seven other spirits more wicked than itself” (v. 45) is a figurative way of saying the individual would be “more demonized than he was before, and to give the indication that some demons are more wicked than others.”²²⁹ The number seven could also refer to the gravity and level of the person’s degeneration, as

²²⁵Ibid. “John the Baptist and Jesus had purified the lives of many in Galilee by calling them to repentance, but not all of them had embraced Jesus in faith. Jesus had cast demons out of many people, but they did not all believe that He was the Messiah. This neutral condition left them vulnerable to an even worse invasion from Satan to say nothing about judgment from God. These neutral individuals represented the nation as a whole.”

²²⁶Laine, 41.

²²⁷Adam Clarke, *Adam Clarke’s Commentary on the Bible* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 1967), quoted in James A. Laine, “A Biblical View of Demonology,” *Faculty Publications and Presentations* 55 (1981): 40.

²²⁸Laine, 42.

²²⁹Ibid.

“‘sevenfold’ was a traditional way to express severe punishment” in Jewish tradition (Gen. 4:15, 24; Lev. 26:18).²³⁰ Constable supports the belief that “Jesus' teaching here gives evidence that demons cannot possess a true believer,”²³¹ but agrees that believers can be afflicted by demons.²³²

Further observation from the Greek reference to “empty,” *scholazonta*; “swept,” *scholazoo*; and “garnished” or “adorned,” *kekosmeemenon*,²³³ makes it clear that the former demoniac, who is in danger of being possessed by demons again, could not have been a Christian. *Scholazonta* (unoccupied) carries the idea of the house being “empty of the former inhabitant, and ready to receive a new one: denoting a soul that has lost the life and power of godliness.”²³⁴ This description does not suit a Christian. *Scholazoo* (swept) describes a state of idleness or unemployment. It refers to a life whose affection is not God-centered, a life of vanity.²³⁵ *Kekosmeemenon* (garnished or adorned) speaks of a life decorated with the vain showy trifles of folly and fashion, a person without the life of God.²³⁶

²³⁰Keener, *IVP Bible Background*, 78; Clarke, “Matthew 12:43–45.”

²³¹Constable, 186.

²³²Ibid. “Demons can afflict believers greatly. Believers are no more immune against attack from Satan, and his demons, than they are against attacks from the world and the flesh. The line between demon possession and demon affliction is a thin one that is very hard to identify.”

²³³Clarke, “Matthew 12:43–45.”

²³⁴Ibid.

²³⁵Ibid.

²³⁶Ibid.

Exegesis of Luke 13:10–16 on Spiritual Deliverance

This passage of Scripture presents an account of the healing of a bent-over woman, a miracle that is unique to Luke. Darrell Bock describes this miraculous healing as a “‘mirror miracle,’ in that it replays the Sabbath healings of 4:31–41 and 6:6–11 and will be reinforced by another Sabbath account.”²³⁷ For historical information regarding the peculiarity of the account of this healing to Luke, see footnote.²³⁸ Three notable things are evident in the passage, namely: Jesus’ teaching in the synagogue (13:10–11), the healing of the woman on a Sabbath day (13:12–13), and various reactions (13:14–17). This included reactions by the synagogue’s leader (13:14), Jesus’ rebuke (13:15–16), and division in the house (13:17). The main controversy in the passage is that Jesus healed the sick on the Sabbath. The ruler of the synagogue felt this was a violation of the law of Moses. Jesus reprovved the ruler of the synagogue and the Pharisees for wrongly interpreting Scripture. He also expounded the truth to all that were present that day in the synagogue.²³⁹

²³⁷Darrell L. Bock, *Luke*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, ed. Robert W. Yarbrough and Joshua W. Jipp (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1994), 43–44.

²³⁸Ibid. “The miracle is unique to Luke (Aland 1985: §208), which has led to speculation about its origin and meaning. Bultmann (1963: 12) argues that it is constructed around the saying now found in 13:15 (also Lohse, TDNT 7:25–26). But many, though they see Luke’s style in some of the wording, also recognize that the account has roots in Jesus’ ministry (Grundmann 1963: 279; Schweizer 1984: 221; Fitzmyer 1985: 1011; Marshall 1978: 556–57; Hengel, TDNT9:53). The Jesus Seminar rejects the authenticity of dialogue here, arguing that the miracle is attested only in Luke and that the sayings of 13:12, 15–16 were created for this account (Funk and Hoover 1993: 345–46).[1] Roloff (1970: 67–68) defends the integrity of this traditional unit, questioning only 13:14b–15. But to argue that 13:15 is secondary erroneously assumes that the tradition records certain themes only once.”

²³⁹Ibid. “Jesus contrasts the leaders’ indignation at the woman’s being healed on the Sabbath with a Jew’s readiness to untie cattle, feed them at the manger, and lead them to water on the Sabbath. All are overt acts of labor and compassion. The Mishnah allows cattle to be lead on the Sabbath as long as they do not carry a load (m. sab.5) and tied up on the Sabbath lest they wander (me. Sab. 15:2)... Thus the leaders are condemned by their own practice. They show compassion to animals, but not to humans.”

According to Beale and Carson, “The Damascus Document limits the provision of pasture and water to animals on the Sabbath to a distance of two thousand cubits for members of the Essene communities.”²⁴⁰ Thus, Jesus’ argument in Luke 13:15–16 is that “what is permissible for cattle is all the more permissible for a human being, and calls his critics ‘hypocrites’ for not understanding God’s purpose and for not understanding the meaning of Scripture.”²⁴¹

A series of questions come to mind as one reads this passage (apart from the fact that the passage presents a controversy built around whether it was right or wrong for Jesus to heal the sick on the Sabbath). Does the passage suggest that the woman was *possessed* by demons? Did Jesus cast out demons or an evil spirit from the woman for her to regain her freedom? Does the description “daughter of Abraham” suggest that the woman was a “Christian” or a follower of Jesus Christ, whereby she becomes the NT example of a demon-possessed Christian who was delivered? To answer these questions, there is a need to take a critical look at the passage.

Some translations seem to suggest that the woman’s ailment was caused by a demon, which they describe as a “spirit of infirmity” (v. 11). They also agree that the ailment, though not clear, was a physical one, as it appears to have affected her posture.²⁴² This was a case of deformity, just as the NIV renders it when it says that the woman was “crippled.” Luke’s description favors both the spiritual and physical condition of the woman; thus, she is said to have been “possessed, or at least influenced

²⁴⁰Beale and Carson, 334.

²⁴¹Ibid.

²⁴²Laine, 51–52.

by a spirit that has left her in a weakened condition for eighteen years.”²⁴³ The length of time of her suffering indicates the severity of her illness and condition, which has attracted several descriptions.²⁴⁴

Observation shows further that, although an evil spirit caused the ailment, there is no indication in the passage that the spirit was residing in the woman. Therefore, one might allude to the fact that this was not the case of a demon possession. This is evidenced in the manner Jesus dealt with the situation. Jesus did not speak even a word to the demon. He merely announced the woman’s freedom and laid his hand on her.²⁴⁵

Jesus describes the sick woman as “a daughter of Abraham” (v.16). She is said to have been kept bound by Satan for eighteen years. Jesus saw her and immediately interrupted his teaching as he shifted his attention to her. Jesus called her forward and said, ““Woman, you are set free from your infirmity”” (v. 12). He then laid his hand on her and she was restored to health again (v. 13).

The description of the woman as “a daughter of Abraham” (v. 16) may not mean that she was a Christian or a follower of Jesus Christ. This description seems to refer to her as a descendant of Abraham, the progenitor of the Hebrew race, or one who belongs

²⁴³Bock, 43–45.

²⁴⁴Ibid. “Among the suggestions for the disease referred to are *spondylitis ankylopoietica* (a fusion of the spinal bones; Marshall 1978: 557) and *skoliosis hysterica* (a type of hysterical or muscular paralysis; Grundmann 1963:279). Although it is hard to be sure, a condition similar to *spondylitis ankylopoietica* is perhaps more likely given the duration of the condition (Wilkinson 1977). The result of the evil spirit’s presence is that the woman is bent over or ‘bent double’ (*sygkypousa*; BAGD 775; BAA 1546; only here in the NT; Sir 12:11; 19:26). She is not able to stand erect (*anakypsai*; BAGD 56; BAA 111; John 8:7, 10), (*panteles*) goes with either the infirmity *anakypsai* to mean ‘completely’ (Oepke, TDNT 2:427 n. 30) or the participle (*dynamene*, being able) to mean ‘at all’ (Delling, TDNT 8:66–67). Most favor the first option so that the phrase refers to the woman’s not being able to straighten herself completely (Creed 1930; 183; Van Der Loos 1965: 530 n. 3; Arndt 1956: 329).”

²⁴⁵Laine, 52.

to Abraham, the “renowned founder of the Jewish nation.”²⁴⁶ The Bible traces the descent of all the Jews from Abraham.²⁴⁷ The NT, however, stresses that the Jews should not boast of their sonship from Abraham if such attachment was not supported by acts of righteousness (Luke 3:8) as “it is not carnal descent from Abraham to which importance is attached; rather it is to practicing the virtues attributed to Abraham in Genesis.”²⁴⁸

Jesus “calls the sinner Zacheus a son of Abraham,” as he called the woman he healed in Luke 10:16 a “daughter of Abraham.”²⁴⁹ This implies that although Christians are also referred to as the seed of Abraham, having been justified by faith (Gal. 3:29; Rom. 4), there is no evidence in Luke 10:6 that suggests the woman was a Christian. Therefore, any interpretation that uses this passage to illustrate an instance of a demon-possessed Christian whom Jesus delivered from demons may be based on an erroneous understanding.

Summary

In this chapter, a theological approach was used to investigate what different scholars have said on the subject of spiritual deliverance. Areas examined fall into two categories: the foundational issues and the theological understanding of spiritual deliverance. The foundational issues examined the meaning of *spirit* and *angels*, *Satan*

²⁴⁶Joseph H. Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, s.v. “Daughter of Abraham” (n.p.: Hendrickson Academic, 1995). Bible Suite, <http://biblesuite.com/greek/11.htm> (accessed March 15, 2013).

²⁴⁷James Howlett, “Abraham,” in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1907), 1. <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01051a.htm> (accessed March 15, 2013).

²⁴⁸Ibid.

²⁴⁹Ibid.

and *demons*, and their activities, as well as the nature of man, and what happens to man at salvation.

The different ways the words *spirit*, *angels*, *Satan*, and *demons* are used in Scripture and in history were critically examined. The understanding of these usages helps one to stick to contextual meaning in order to understand the incident being addressed. The examination of the nature of man before and after salvation explains the work of God in man at salvation, which changes man's state and status, making it impossible for the born-again to be co-owned by both God and Satan.

The theological understanding section considers the meaning of spiritual deliverance, purpose of spiritual deliverance, spiritual deliverance and demon possession, practices of spiritual deliverance, the controversy surrounding spiritual deliverance, and the exegetical study of three NT passages: Matthew 8:16–17, Matthew 12:43–45, and Luke 13:10–13. These passages give evidence of cases of demonization and deliverance of victims by Jesus.

From the findings in these Scriptures, there appears to be no reference to any instance where a Christian was demon possessed and subsequently delivered from the same by Jesus, just as it cannot be clearly ascertained if there were any Christians at this stage of Jesus' ministry. The reference of Matthew 8:16–17 to the prophecy of Isaiah that Jesus "bore our infirmities" (53:4–6) clearly points to Christ's atonement for sin and victory over sicknesses and diseases, and not on the deliverance of a Christian or a believer from demon possession. Hence, the many demonized persons brought to Jesus for deliverance were never described as disciples of Christ.

Similarly, Matthew 12:43–45, which talks about the return of an evil spirit to the house he was cast out of and his activities in that life, does not seem to suggest the demonization of a Christian. This is because findings have shown that all who received Jesus' healing, miracles, or deliverance did not automatically become his followers or Christians; the “absence of evil spirits does not equate with the presence of redemption.”²⁵⁰ In the same vein, it has been established that the description of the woman who was bound by Satan for eighteen years as “a daughter of Abraham” (Luke 13:16) does not suggest she was born-again or a Christian, rather her description is that of a descendant of Abraham, the progenitor of the Hebrew race.²⁵¹

There appears to be disagreement among individual writers regarding different perspectives adopted to express the meaning of spiritual deliverance and what it means to be possessed by demons or demonized. This is seen in the use of different nomenclatures to describe demon possession. On the other hand, however, there is general agreement that spiritual deliverance is predicated by the presence of demon(s) in a person. When that happens, the individual whose body is inhabited by the evil spirit starts manifesting ungodly and anti-social behaviors. At the moment of deliverance, the person is set free and given total restoration and recuperation, defined in terms of freedom from demonic control, which invariably is the purpose of deliverance.

Other areas of concern from the literature deal with the ways different people practice spiritual deliverance, and the controversial issue regarding the possibility of a

²⁵⁰Turner, 328.

²⁵¹James Strong, *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, s.v. “Daughter of Abraham” (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1901). <http://biblesuite.com/greek/11.htm> (accessed March 15, 2013).

Christian being possessed by demons. Here, the inconsistent use of certain nomenclatures to describe the phenomenon threatens to widen the gap; otherwise, all seem to agree that a demon does not and cannot own any human's life as property (talking about possession), not to mention a Christian whose body is the temple of God. Nevertheless, demons appear to have a level of control of any life yielded to them, irrespective of whether the person is a believer in Christ or not.

Finally, a hole in the body of knowledge is identified by briefly pointing out areas in the study where researchers are yet to give adequate information to the academy. Researchers have attempted to examine the meaning of spiritual deliverance from different perspectives. They have looked at the need for spiritual deliverance, the beneficiary of spiritual deliverance, and the question of whether a Christian can be demon possessed or not. An area in the literature with a lacuna is having a clear distinction between *flesh* and *demons*. Therefore, the question is if there is a way to draw a clear line between the works of the flesh and the works of evil spirits. Another perturbing unaddressed problem for those who accept the idea that believers can be demonized or demon possessed is the question of whether the Christian who is demon possessed or demonized will enter God's kingdom with the evil spirit still in him or her, since some believe that both demons and the Holy Spirit can co-exist in the same temple or body of the believer. Would the demon be cast out of the believer before his or her translation into life eternal? If yes, by whom and at what time would this happen? Admitting that God will divinely perform this action before the translation of the believer, is it possible that he will, in the same manner, blot out the sins of the adulterers, liars, and idolaters

(whom the Scripture says shall not inherit the kingdom of God) to qualify their entrance into life eternal?

CHAPTER 3
SOCIAL SCIENCE LITERATURE

Introduction

This section of the study examines what the social science literature reveals about spiritual deliverance. This is discussed under the following sub-topics: anthropological perception of spiritual deliverance, psychological perception of spiritual deliverance, spiritual deliverance in African Traditional Religion (ATR), and spiritual deliverance in Nigerian culture.

Anthropological Perception of Spiritual Deliverance

The beliefs and practices regarding spirit possession and deliverance may seem to be a theological concern, and more common among Pentecostals than the mainline churches. Often, Pentecostals, in discussing the issue from a theological perspective, assume that the whole idea of spirit possession and deliverance is unconnected with the born-again member of the church, since his newly found life and faith in Jesus Christ is a life that is ruled by the Holy Spirit rather than influenced by evil spirits or demons. Thus, Pentecostals call for a “complete break with the past,”¹ a situation which Jorg Haustein describes as “not really a cultural rupture but a way of continuously relating to traditional

¹Birgit Meyer, “‘Make a Complete Break with the Past.’ Memory and Post-Colonial Modernity in Ghanaian Pentecostalist Discourse,” *Journal of Religion in Africa* 28, no. 3 (August 1998): 316.

beliefs.”² Haustein sees the anthropological approach to the subject of spiritual deliverance as both intriguing and important. This is because the approach would help in making a cultural reflection on Pentecostal beliefs, perceptions, and practices, and in understanding the Pentecostal “cultural process.”³

The beliefs and practices of spiritual deliverance seem to have always received a theological examination and scrutiny readily made possible by the “discerning help of a spiritual expert.”⁴ Such practices tend to promote traditional religious biases that are capable of influencing the general opinion and conclusions on the subject. To examine an issue only or always theologically has the implications of being one-sided. Thus, with the tendency to look one-sided comes the tendency to see one-sided and reason one-sided, and possibly the tendency to shut the doors on other alternatives. This is why Thomas Csordas, in proposing an anthropological reflection to the analysis of deliverance rituals, argues that the reflection should not begin with the already constituted object, which he identifies as “the Christian evil spirit,” but should be understood based on “an embodied process of self-objectification.”⁵

Various cross-cultural reports recognized as parallel to the NT spirit possession narratives show why “scholars should respect the NT descriptions as potentially

²Jorg Haustein, “Embodying the Spirit(s): Pentecostal Demonology and Deliverance Discourse in Ethiopia,” *Ethnos* 76, no. 4 (2011): 2, www.soas.ac.uk/17035/1/contribution_Haustein-final_accepted (accessed August 10, 2018).

³Joel Robbins, “The Globalization of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 33 (October 2004), <https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/abs/10.1146/annurev.anthro.32.061002.093421> (accessed August 10, 2018).

⁴Haustein, 2.

⁵Thomas J. Csordas, “Embodiment as a Paradigm for Anthropology,” *Ethos* 18 (1990), quoted in Jorg Haustein, “Embodying the Spirit(s): Pentecostal Demonology and Deliverance Discourse in Ethiopia,” *Ethnos* 76, no. 4 (2011): 2, www.soas.ac.uk/17035/1/contribution_Haustein-final_accepted (accessed August 10, 2018).

reflecting eyewitness accounts or sources.”⁶ “Anthropologists have documented many spirit possession experiences in a number of cultures, although with varying interpretations of the experiences.”⁷ Keener contends that “spirit-possession claims (known to NT scholars from the Gospels and Acts) are a fairly widespread cross-cultural experience,” thus, the occurrences today “bear striking resemblance to reports from Mediterranean antiquity.”⁸

Basure Stephen and Taru Josiah agree to the fact that ethnographic study has revealed that many cultures across the world recognize the phenomena of spirit possession, but go further to state that the belief in demon possession predates the introduction of Christianity into many non-western societies.⁹ Cultural beliefs inform what possession constitutes, as well as the nature and the form of such possession;¹⁰ hence, a possessed person is defined as being possessed by people using cultural values.¹¹

Spirit Possession and Behavior among Different Societies

This research does not look for historical evidence of where and how a born-again Christian was possessed by demons, or where and how such a person was delivered from demon possession. The reason for this is that issues regarding whether or not someone is

⁶Keener, “Spirit Possession,” 215.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Basure Hardlife Stephen and Taru Josiah, “Dialogue with Demons, Religion, Culture and Exorcism in Christian Churches in Zimbabwe,” *The International Journal of Humanities & Social Studies* 2, no. 1 (January 2014): 45, <https://the.ijhss.com/january2014/7.HS140-015.pdf> (accessed August 10, 2018).

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹I. M. Lewis, *Ecstatic Religion: An Anthropological Study of Spirit Possession and Shamanism* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1971), <https://www.scribd.com/doc/92318383/Ecstatic-Religion-A-Study-of-Shamanism-and-Spirit-Possession> (accessed August 9, 2018).

born-again are a theological concern. It is not the business of any anthropologist, sociologist, or ethnographer to say who is or is not born-again, because they lack the parameters to do so. The research aims to find out what anthropologists say regarding spirit possession and the behavioral characteristics of the possessed in different societies of the world, especially in Africa, in order to compare the phenomena with that of the biblical account. For example, Wes Buch asserts that “to date, there is no broadly accepted taxonomy of possession...largely because possession is a variable phenomenon, occurring on a global basis with culture-bound interpretations of its etiology, purpose, and consequences.”¹² Possession is thus a matter of context.¹³

New Testament “scholars have often treated spirit possession as an ancient belief in isolation from apparently analogous phenomena today.”¹⁴ This is because most of these scholars are not familiar with voluminous anthropological documentation of analogous claims today.¹⁵ Acquaintance with various spirit possession and deliverance experiences as evident in diverse cultures helps to shape theological perspectives and

¹²Wes Buch, “Exorcism-Seekers: Clinical and Personality Correlates” (Ph.D. thesis, University of British Columbia, 1994), 15–16, <https://open.library.ubc.ca/cIRcle/collections/ubctheses/831/items/1.0076838>

¹³Ibid., 17. “Some of the outward manifestations which are ascribed to ‘possession’ in some societies may be ascribed to other causes elsewhere (p. 6). Pattison and Wintrob (1981) speak of the ‘culture of belief’ associated with possession and exorcism phenomena. Oesterreich (1966), Bourguignon (1976) and others maintain that belief in the demonic is a necessary condition for the occurrence of demonic possession. For example, Tippett (1976) concludes that ‘there can be no possession without a cultural situation that makes it credible and possible and renders the human spirit vulnerable to possession’ (p. 168). The ‘demon’ in demonic possession points to the profoundly religious nature of this phenomenon. Demonic possession is rooted in the language, symbols and cosmology of religion and cannot be adequately understood apart from its religious context. The belief in demons and demonic possession is common to a variety of religions besides Christianity, including such major religions as Buddhism, Islam, and Judaism. Within Christianity, demonic possession refers to a belief in evil spirits which ‘possess’ people, inflicting suffering (‘torment’) and a reduced sense of personal control (‘bondage’).”

¹⁴Rudolf Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, 2nd ed., trans. John Marsh (Germany: Blackwell, 1963), 231–232.

¹⁵Keener, “Spirit Possession,” 216.

correct unsound hermeneutics. It shows that possession experiences are not limited to the NT or the ancient Near East.¹⁶ As observed by Erika Bourguignon, any reader of ethnographies knows that “spirit-possession beliefs are geographically and culturally pervasive.”¹⁷ An example of such pervasive anthropological documentation of spirit-possession experiences may be seen in Bourguignon’s report, “which after sampling 488 societies, she found spirit-possession beliefs in 74% of them (that is, 360 societies), with particularly high ranges in the islands of the Pacific (88%) and 77% around the Mediterranean.”¹⁸ The report further shows the different forms of possession, which vary among the societies studied. For example, “16% of these 360 societies have possession trance only, 22% have other forms of possession, and 35% have both.”¹⁹ This shows some kind of homogeneity of experiences among people everywhere in the world with regard to spirit possession; therefore, some NT scholars have noted anthropological parallels for spirit possession behavior. Based on these current analogies,²⁰ scholars have said that it is fairly transcultural.²¹ Similar surveys have shown that

Americans harbor a wide variety of supernatural beliefs: 50% believe in ghosts, 31% believe in astrology, and 27% believe in reincarnation. Large majorities of the population say they believe in God (86%); angels (75%); and heaven (82%). Most Americans (84%) believe in the survival of the soul after death, 84% believe

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Erika Bourguignon, “Spirit Possession Belief and Social Structure,” in *The Realm of the Extra-Human: Ideas and Actions*, ed. Agehananda Bharati (Hague: Mouton, 1976).

¹⁸Ibid., 19–21.

¹⁹Ibid., 21.

²⁰John Dominic Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1991), 315–317.

²¹Marcus J. Borg, *Jesus, a New Vision: Spirit, Culture, and the Life of Discipleship* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1987), 62.

in miracles, and 68% believe in the devil....58% of Americans believe that the devil sometimes possesses people.²²

Belief in demon possession is found all over the world. Timothy Thomason reports, “The phenomenon of Zar possession is common in many North African and Middle Eastern countries, including Egypt, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, and Iran. Susto or ‘soul loss,’” a type of illness caused by demons, “affects Latinos in the U.S. and people in Mexico, Central America, and South America.” He further reports,

Windigo psychosis (possession by a cannibalistic demon) is well established among the Northern Algonquin Indians. The Ainu community in Japan believes in demonic possession and exorcism; in Nicaragua and Honduras there is a possession state called Grisi Siknis; and trance possession is found in Voodoo as practiced in Haiti.²³

In their research on Pentecostal phenomena across different geographical zones and ethnic groups in Nigeria, Umar Danfulani and John Brown report on the various forms of spirit possession that they discovered among the Nigerian people.²⁴ Victims of spirit possession vary from culture to culture, but women, children, and the poor occur most predominantly among them. Some of the possessed persons express extraordinary strength, similar to what the Scripture records in Mark 5:4 about the man who lived among the tombs who could not be tamed even with chains. This made some deliverance therapists employ the use of canes and whips to calm the victims as a temporary measure until the spirits are either sent away or subdued. Others show evidence of great intelligence and supernatural knowledge, as well as an evidence of the presence of a

²²Timothy C. Thomason, “Possession, Exorcism and Psychotherapy,” <https://www.shsu.edu/~piic/winter2008/Thomason.html> (accessed August 11, 2018).

²³Ibid.

²⁴Umar Habila Danfulani and John Brown, “Phenomenon of Pentecostalism” (paper presented at the conference of the Nigeria Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies University of Jos, Divine Love Retreat Conference Centre Lugbe, Abuja, Nigeria, May 25, 2012).

different personality speaking through them.²⁵ This agrees with Keener, who observes that violent expression by the possessed can be toward oneself, and sometimes toward others, both in the early Christian narratives and in some modern accounts. He cites Mark 5:5 and 9:22 as examples of self-destructive expression, where a demonized man cuts himself with stones and a spirit-afflicted boy often falls into fire or water.²⁶ Keener also cites John Mbiti, a scholar of African religions, as recounting a case of possession trance that he observed near Kampala in which the person was pounding his head on the floor, but was not injured.²⁷ Additionally, Keener states that many descriptions of spirit possession behaviors in African societies are similar to the NT accounts. Such behaviors include the spirit driving the victim to live in the forest, to jump into fire, or to use sharp objects to hurt himself, which are similar to the biblical accounts in Mark where “a person controlled by spirits might dwell outside society (Mark 5:3), jump into fire (Mark 9:22), or use sharp objects on his body (Mark 5:5).”²⁸

Stephen and Josiah call attention to the typologies developed by anthropologists to describe two categories of demon possession in most societies. The first type refers to “a form of possession in which the bodily functions of the possessed person are adversely altered resulting to ill-health of the victim.” The second type “transforms the consciousness, awareness, and the will of the possessed person.” The two categories are

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Keener, “Spirit Possession,” 231.

²⁷John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophies* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1970), quoted in Craig S. Keener, “Spirit Possession as a Cross-Cultural Experience,” *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 20, no. 2 (2010): 232–233. <https://www.pas.rochester.edu/~tim/study/Keener%20Possession%20.pdf> (accessed August 8, 2018).

²⁸Keener, “Spirit Possession,” 232–233.

described by Bourguignon as “possession and trance possession,”²⁹ and by Emma Cohen as “*executive* possession and *pathogenic* possession.”³⁰ The type of possession largely determines the behavior of the possessed person. Thus, while some possessed persons would fall, become unconscious, syncope, have convulsions or tremors, speak in strange/meaningless tongues, or cause self-destruction and sometimes death of the victim, others would exhibit other forms of supernatural abilities, sometimes manifest by foretelling the future, performing healing, and changing the course of nature like causing or stopping a rainfall.³¹

The wide range of diverse forms of possession behavior and beliefs evident among cultures suggests the possibility that there were different types of possession “in the early Christians’ milieu and that cultural features sometimes patterned some common elements or invited particular transcultural elements to the fore.”³² What can be deduced from this is that the experiences found among possessed persons today are not strange to man, as the phenomena resembles biblical accounts.

Spiritual Deliverance among Different Societies

The practice of exorcising or freeing victims of demon possession varies from culture to culture, just like the varying forms of possession behavior. Stephen and Josiah observe that there is no in-depth analysis of the relationship between exorcism and culture, mostly because of too much reliance on religious conversations; they propose

²⁹Stephen and Josiah, 45.

³⁰Emma Cohen, “What is Spirit Possession? Defining, Comparing, and Explaining Two Possession Forms,” *Ethnos* 73, no. 1 (2008): 120.

³¹Stephen and Josiah, 45.

³²Keener, “Spirit Possession,” 221.

that the practice of deliverance from demon possession should be understood within the context of local cultures and values.³³ According to Bodo Nischan, exorcism, which goes hand in hand with the concept of possession, was instrumental in assisting people to understand what it meant to be possessed by a demon during the late reformation period.³⁴

Exorcising demons from victims usually involves religious or traditional priests or prophets who have the ability to communicate with the demons, commanding them to leave their victims.³⁵ Depending on the traditional cultural or the Christians' cultural practice, the deliverance agent sets the scene for the exercise. This involves a number of things such as consecrating members of the deliverance team (where more than one person is involved) and consecrating the venue and the objects to be used, like water or a staff. There may be singing, dancing, using force on the demons by pressing the possessed person to the ground (if he is a violent type), and interviewing and communicating with the spirits. Sometimes this includes identifying them by names such as animal spirits, ancestral spirits, spirit of death, or mermaid spirit, among others. If successful, the person is returned to his "natural" state at the end of the exercise.³⁶

Psychological Perception of Spiritual Deliverance

The idea that spirits can invade human bodies and take control of their lives, causing all manner of pain, has historical, biblical, archeological, and anthropological

³³Stephen and Josiah, 44.

³⁴Bodo Nischan, "The Exorcism Controversy and Baptism in the Late Reformation," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 18, no. 1 (1987): 31–52.

³⁵Stephen and Josiah, 46.

³⁶Ibid.

evidence. This idea also has psychological evidence: “Since the ancient Babylonians and Egyptians...the mentally abnormal have been treated with techniques like the laying on of hands, music and herbs, and a ritual of exorcism.”³⁷ Exorcism is as old as human history; in fact, between 1700 and 200 BC it is believed that “almost all mental disorders were understood in terms of demonic possession”³⁸ and even today “spirit possession is the most common explanation of problems throughout the world.”³⁹

C. Peter Bankart observes that, although non-western societies have the problem of distinguishing between mental and bodily illnesses, or between natural and supernatural causes of illness, it would be a mistake to think beliefs in spirit possession and exorcism are found only in less industrialized societies. He states, “Demonology continues to be a favored explanation for bizarre behavior even in modern, postindustrial, politically correct North America.”⁴⁰ The American Psychiatric Association has reported on “several disorders involving spirits and possession in the appendix on culture-bound syndromes.”⁴¹

Exorcism seems to be gaining more medical attention and credibility today, as psychiatrists in the United Kingdom are increasingly referring patients for private

³⁷Thomason.

³⁸L. Wolpert, *Six Impossible Things before Breakfast: The Evolutionary Origins of Belief* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2007), 163.

³⁹Jay Haley and Madeleine Richeport-Haley, *The Art of Strategic Therapy* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 20.

⁴⁰C. Peter Bankart, *Talking Cures: A History of Western and Eastern Psychotherapies* (Pacific Grove: Brooks/Cole, 1997), 34.

⁴¹American Psychiatric Association, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 4th ed. (Washington D.C.: American Psychiatric Association, 2000).

exorcism.⁴² For example, most of the people exorcised by the Church of England, with an 80 percent success rate, are referred by a registered psychiatrist,⁴³ although results are not published.⁴⁴ Observations have shown, however, that “many Evangelical, Pentecostal, charismatic, and other conservative Christian churches do not take psychology seriously. Biblical literalists understandably resist attempts to explain human behavior without reference to the Bible.”⁴⁵ The need to overview major theories of psychotherapy from a Christian perspective has been presented by Stanton Jones and Richard Butman in their book, *Modern Psychotherapies*, where issues involving supernatural entities such as God, angels, the devil, and demons are addressed.⁴⁶ Moreover, the textbook *Introduction to Psychology and Counseling* calls attention to the fact that demon possession can imitate epileptic seizure, an attack by Satan can be a precipitating factor in depression, and individuals with personality disorders may be thought to be demon possessed. Hence, the authors make known that the presence of the demonic always stands out from other abnormal behavior during clinical counseling. They list “eight characteristics of demon possession, including superhuman strength, the ability to perform supernatural acts, and a

⁴²Thomason.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Julia Layton, “How Exorcism Works,” howstuffworks.com, <https://science.howstuffworks.com/exorcism.htm> (accessed August 11, 2018).

⁴⁵Thomason.

⁴⁶Stanton L. Jones and Richard E. Butman, *Modern Psychotherapies: A Comprehensive Christian Appraisal* (n.p.: IVP Academic, 1991), http://www.amazon.com/Modern-Psychotherapies-Christian-Appraisal/dp/0830817751/ref=pd_bbs_sr_1/103-1389702-8214222 (accessed August 11, 2018).

change of voice when the demon speaks,”⁴⁷ and assert that “demon-possessed individuals do not respond to therapy.”⁴⁸

The need for Christians to learn to see through other lenses, rather than seeing “only through a spiritual lens,” is stressed by Parks, who asserts that “church leaders must address the lack of education on mental illness and the demand for mental health services.”⁴⁹ This is because, in most instances, people tend to attribute what could be a mental illness to demon possession, and vice versa, even though the “religious (spiritual) and the natural (mental) work together.”⁵⁰ The assertion here is that people ought to know when a victim’s problem is a result of demonic possession and when it is a mental problem, and different from demonic. When a demon is involved, the problem is spiritual, but when it is mental, the problem is natural, even though the symptoms and signs are similar in most cases.

Valentine Seymour, in examining the human nature relationship as it affects health, points out that, broadly speaking, health has been measured through two theoretical approaches, the subjective and the objective.⁵¹ The subjective approach

⁴⁷Thomason.

⁴⁸P. D. Meier et al., *Introduction to Psychology and Counseling* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991).

⁴⁹Parks, 11.

⁵⁰Ibid., 18–19. “Mental illness is a condition and not the result of demonic possession; however, some symptoms of mental illness may mirror acts of demonic possession. Because demons use people and influence them, some individuals believe people with personality disorders to be under demonic possession. According to the American Psychiatric Association, personality is how people behave, their thoughts and views, and how they relate to others. Individuals with personality disorders are often rigid, extreme, and intense in their thoughts and actions as they struggle to respond to the changes and demands of life in healthy ways.”

⁵¹Seymour, under “Defining Health.” “The subjective approach is based on individual’s perceived physical, emotional, and cognitive experiences or functioning. By contrast, the objective approach measures those variables, which are existing and measurable external to an individual’s internal experience such as living conditions or human needs that enable people to lead a good life (e.g., health markers,

involves internal variables, while the objective approach focuses on the external variables responsible for how people behave and why they behave in that way. Seymour explains that a human's nature is made in such a way that their behavior at any given time is determined by certain variables.⁵²

Spiritual Deliverance in African Culture and Traditional Religion

There are many people today, especially from the western world, who would scoff and laugh at anyone who would suggest that there are such things as demons, or that there is a need to carry out spiritual deliverance on people. To the African mind, however, this is viewed differently. Africans have much to say about demonism because they seem to have suffered greatly from oppression by evil spirits. Therefore, Africans do not have difficulty believing in the existence of evil spirits and their activities.

Stephen Awoyemi et al., assert that there is an understanding of the place and position of primal religion in the local environment and ecosystem.⁵³ ATR finds expression in nature; according to Peter Beyer, this means that it can be categorized under the umbrella of nature religion, which is a “useful analytical abstraction referring to any religious belief or practice in which devotees consider nature to be the embodiment

education, environment, occupational attainment, and civic involvement). Together, these approaches provide a more comprehensive picture of a person's health status, which are applicable across its three health components (physical, mental, and social).”

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Stephen M. Awoyemi et al., “Global Efforts to Bridge Religion and Conservation: Are They Really Working?” in *Topics in Conservation Biology*, ed. Tony Povilitis (n.p.: Intechopen, 2012), 99, <https://www.intechopen.com-books-global-efforts-to-bridge-religion-and-conservatio-are-they-really-working?> (accessed June 2021). African indigenous adherents believed that there are spirits in charge of nature or the environment and that they must be gratified. This is to suffice that the respect for nature and the environment is evident and well established among the indigenous people of Africa. There is a series of sacred mountains, rivers, forests, and trees, well-revered by the African people across the world. For the African Traditional Religion, there is a spiritual relationship with nature, its environment, and a sacred duty to care for it. Nature is valued in religious systems.

of divinity, sacredness, transcendence, spiritual power or whatever cognate term one wishes to use.”⁵⁴

The belief in spirits, both good and bad, is one thing that characterizes ATR. These include the belief in the Creator God, in divinities, in the spirit world, and in the powers of witchcraft and magic. It should be noted that the belief in spirits varies among the African people according to their geographical regions and settings. In other words, not all the peoples of Africa believe in these things in the same way. Nevertheless, belief in spirits is central in Africa.

According to Michael McKenny’s summary of John Mbiti’s book, Mbiti explains that Africans generally share in common certain traditional beliefs and practices, such as the belief in “two kinds of spirits, nature spirits and human spirits. Nature spirits are associated with the sky (weather, celestial objects, etc.) and the earth (natural features, including those dealing with water).” Human spirits refer to the souls of departed members of the family, usually those that departed recently, four or five generations ago, and those who died earlier than that. Those “who died a long time ago (outside of prominent and known personages) are generally met with distrust and apprehension.”⁵⁵ This agrees with Ogugua Anwuluorah and Jude Asike, who assert that “just as in other parts of tropical Africa, the Nigerian air was swarming with these spirits.”⁵⁶ They also

⁵⁴Peter Beyer, “Globalization and the Religion of Nature,” in *Nature Religion Today: Paganism in the Modern World*, ed. Joanne Pearson, Richard H. Roberts, and Geoffrey Samuel (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998).

⁵⁵Michael McKenny, “Review of John S. Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*,” www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/30/197.html (accessed August 11, 2018).

⁵⁶Ogugua Patricia Anwuluorah and Jude Chinweuba Asike, “Nigeria Traditional Moral Values in the Context of Globalization: Approach of Justice and Responsibility,” *Journal of Religion and Human Relations* 7, no. 2 (2015): 190, <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/jrhr/article/view/119702> (accessed August 11, 2018).

point out that within the Nigerian cultural beliefs and practices, beliefs in these deities abound.

Richard Gehman asserts that there are different kinds of spirits existent within the ATR society. He identifies these spirits as the ghosts of human beings and created spirits, apart from the Creator God. The ghosts of human beings refers to the spirits of departed ancestors with whom the living members of the family continue to communicate. Created spirits are supernatural beings believed to be associated with some of the happenings in the world, such as being responsible for diseases like plague or smallpox, being associated with the forces of nature, and being resident in trees, mountains, or rivers as their dwelling places.⁵⁷ Some believe that these spirits dwell in certain animals or birds. For example, if strange animals leave their dwelling place and come to the village, it is believed that spirits are behind such a sudden change of behavior. Some believe that the spirits' abode is below the earth, while others maintain that their abode is above the earth in the sky.⁵⁸

In relation to *spirit possession*, Africans believe that two types of possession are common. The first is by the ancestors, a situation where the living-dead may enter people and use them as mediums to communicate with the living. The second is by the created spirits, a belief that evil spirits may possess human beings. This is evidenced by the fact that “in most areas there is at least one person who often falls into a state of madness

⁵⁷Richard Gehman, *African Traditional Religion in the Light of the Bible* (Bukuru, Plateau State, Nigeria: Africa Christian Textbooks, 2013), 122–123.

⁵⁸Ibid.

when he or she is spirit possessed.... Almost always these spirits attack, destroy and harm the living,” and they may be blamed for any sickness, death, madness, or epilepsy.⁵⁹

Furthermore, “there are two ways in which a spirit can take over a person’s body in spirit possession.” These are forcible possession and possession by invitation. In forcible possession, the spirits take over the bodies of the possessed persons unaware to them; this can take place anywhere, including the marketplace. When this happens, traditional doctors are invited to perform rituals to find out the identity of the spirit and the purpose of its visit, such as its usefulness to the community or otherwise.⁶⁰ Possession by invitation occurs most often during dancing, as in Ghanaian religious society. As the drums beat and the people dance, many spiritual entities take possession of the people. Certain kinds of songs with their distinctive beats attract the spirits to come into the people, who, when possessed, “can foretell the future, interpret the cause of sickness and give instructions on how to cure illnesses, foretell the coming of rain, and what should be planted.”⁶¹ These actions are carried out almost involuntarily because at the height of spirit possession the one who is possessed loses his or her own personality and acts in the context of the personality of the spirit possessing him or her.⁶²

Gabriel Bannerman-Richter gives two reasons for spirit possession. He discloses that people become possessed by spirits following their spiritual or philosophical status. The spiritual reason or status has to do with spiritual weakness. In other words, it is the

⁵⁹Ibid., 123, 127.

⁶⁰Gabriel Bannerman-Richter, *The Practice of Witchcraft in Ghana* (Elk Grove, CA: Gabari, 1982), 45.

⁶¹Ibid., 45–48.

⁶²John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (London: Heinemann, 1969), 81.

spiritually weak people, who have no spiritual power over their bodies, that can be possessed by evil spirits. The philosophical reason relates to the laws of retribution, cause and effect, and reciprocity. The point of emphasis here is “that a person whose body has been controlled by a disembodied spirit must have performed an action in a previous or present life,” therefore rendering his or her body possessable by an evil spirit.⁶³

Frimpong points out three purposes of spirit possession in the African context, especially in relation to Ghana. They include “those associated with rituals, which may be divinatory with the aim of finding out hidden events or causes of misfortune”; those that are purely religious with the aim of honoring the spirit or spirits, appeasing them and inviting their protection; and those in association with the removal of an affliction or misfortune by way of persuading the spirits to depart or to keep their distance. This is usually done by establishing a harmonious relationship with the spirits.⁶⁴

Belief in a variety of spirits influenced the practice of exorcism among Pentecostal Christians in East Africa. Eriksen and Rio explain that East African believers cast out not just demonic spirits, but also nature spirits and ancestral spirits.⁶⁵ Many Pentecostal churches in Africa seem to be designed for the purpose of healing and exorcism, just as the “crux of Pentecostal universalism seems to lie in its handling of

⁶³Bannerman-Richter, 51.

⁶⁴Frimpong, 164.

⁶⁵Eriksen and Rio, 10.

witchcraft or demons.”⁶⁶ This is in agreement with the assertion that in Africa, healing appears to be the main function of religion.⁶⁷

Spiritual Deliverance in Nigerian Culture

The belief that spirits are responsible for human ills is common among the Nigerian people of West Africa. Most of these spirits make the human body their dwelling place. They also manifest themselves in diverse ways such as through spirit possession, dreams, and strange diseases like epilepsy.

In Yorubaland, the belief in spirits surrounding every region of Yorubaland is common. According to R. Burgess, the Yoruba believe in the existence of several living beings in the universe.⁶⁸ To the Yorubas, there is a connection between the physical and the spiritual world, to the extent that nothing happens accidentally without the two worlds being involved. Hence, “in an effort to avert calamities and misfortunes, the Yoruba perform sacrifices to deities and pray to God through their ancestors.”⁶⁹

The belief in spirit beings and the corroboration between the spiritual and the physical world is not peculiar to the Yoruba people of the Western part of Nigeria, but cuts across the entire region and all ethnicities in Nigeria. J. O. Awolalu and P. A.

⁶⁶Ibid., 8, 206. “Churches move into suburbs with what they call ‘spiritual warfare’ and approach, clean out or exorcise whole neighborhoods for signs of witchcraft.”

⁶⁷J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *Contemporary Pentecostal Christianity: Interpretations from an African Context* (Oxford: Regnum Books, 2013), 130–131.

⁶⁸R. Burgess, “Freedom from the Past and Faith for the Future: Nigerian Pentecostal Theology in Global Perspective,” *PentecoStudies* 7, no. 2 (2008): 35.

⁶⁹M. A. Adetunmibi, “Yoruba Spiritual Heritage and Its Implications for the Yoruba Indigenous Churches in Nigeria” (Ph.D. diss., Potchefstroom, North-West University, 2017), 44. “According to the Yoruba heritage, *Ise ki se la san* - nothing happens accidentally or naturally in the universe. There is always a connection between physical evil and the activities of the evil forces. In an effort to avert calamities and misfortunes, the Yoruba perform sacrifices to deities and pray to God through their ancestors.”

Dopamu assert that among the Igbo people of Southeastern Nigeria, *Ala* is known as the earth goddess, otherwise called *Ale*, *Ane*, *Ani*, or *Ana*. She is regarded as the “great mother goddess who is the spirit of fertility, the Queen of the underworld, the nearest and dearest of all the divinities to man.”⁷⁰

Deliverance from evil spirits, as practiced in Nigeria, involves many processes. Similar to other African societies, beliefs in spirits and practices of deliverance vary among the Yorubas in Nigeria. The work of deliverance from evil spirits and misfortune lies mainly in the hands of the medicine-men and herbalists. The next group among the practitioners is the magician. However, unlike the medicine-men and herbalists, who are believed to be generally good and for the well-being of the society, the magicians can be good and bad.⁷¹ The three practitioners are in most cases placed under the same category in Yorubaland.⁷² According to Mbiti, bringing healing and cure to the possessed person

⁷⁰J. O. Awolalu and P. A. Dopamu, *West African Traditional Religion* (Ibadan, Nigeria: Macmillan Nigeria Publishers, 2005), 91–92. In Igboland it is believed that *Ala* is powerful and beneficent; and also, a custodian of public morality in association with the ancestors. Some of her statues represent her as carrying a child in her arms or on her knees. This depicts her as the goddess of fertility and of increase in all departments of life. Besides, the spirit of *Ala* controls the earth, and it is said that farmers usually take permission from her before they till the ground. The Igbo people say that: *Ala* is our Mother, and our god, all that we have is from her, and without her gifts we must be lost. *Ala* (earth goddess) is very close to man because it is on her that human beings move, walk, sit, sleep, and plant their crops.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, 44. A medicine man uses plant and animal substances as well as supernatural forces to prevent or cure diseases. A magician is somebody who is an expert in magic using in this case certain plants whose leaves, roots, and bark are recognized to have medical properties and are therefore used for making medicine. An herbalist is a man who has wide knowledge of the curative properties of herbs, plants, bark, and roots. In this way, a medicine man is an herbalist, but an herbalist is not necessarily a medicine man because a medicine man uses additional natural phenomena in his art.

⁷²*Ibid.*, 146–147. In Yoruba land, regardless of the three functions they are usually combined in one person, it is hard to know a medicine-man who does not have the knowledge of herbs or some working knowledge of magic. Thus, a medicine-man can be called a magician or an herbalist and vice-versa, only that they may have one form of knowledge more than the other. In other words, to avoid confusion of thought, the three professionals can be technically referred to as “men of hidden supernatural power.” They are ubiquitous throughout West Africa, both men and women are in this profession; they heal the sick and prevent diseases, protecting individuals and the society against unseen dangers and enemies.

involves dealing with the spirit by exorcism.⁷³ Deliverance from spirit possession in the Western part of Nigeria begins by ascertaining “first which spirit is responsible for particular ills. After this the appropriate medicine, often with rituals and incantations, is then applied to drive out or entice away the spirit from the individual concerned or from the house or village which the spirit is using as a dwelling place.”⁷⁴

Summary

In this chapter of the study, a critical review and analysis of relevant literature on the subject of spiritual deliverance from the perspective of social science was completed. In an attempt to present a non-theological perspective on the subject, the opinions of anthropologists and psychologists were critically examined with regard to spirit possession and deliverance, and areas where the authors agree and areas where they differ with each other were discovered, as were areas they conflict with the Bible. This research also explored the African context in terms of its cultural and traditional beliefs and practices on spiritual deliverance. Topics discussed in this direction included the anthropological perception of spiritual deliverance, psychological perception of spiritual deliverance, spiritual deliverance in African culture, and traditional religion with reference to Nigeria.

In the review, it was discovered that the issue of spiritual possession and deliverance is as old as human history; spiritual deliverance is not only existent in the Christian religious culture, but it is also well evident in the different traditional cultures

⁷³John S. Mbiti, “African Traditional Medicine and Its Relevance for Christian Work,” in *So sende ich euch*, ed. Martin Porksen, Otto Waack, Justus Freytag, and Gerhard Hoffman (Stuttgart: Evangelische Missionsverlag, 1973), 312.

⁷⁴Frimpong, 180.

of the world. The study unraveled ethnographic reports and anthropological documentation of demon possession and deliverance incidents in different cultures, which support the fact that the beliefs in supernatural powers aiding or hampering the activities of humans on earth are real, not only on the basis of biblical accounts, but also on the basis of sociological and psychological evidence.

Both anthropological and psychological reports of demon-possessed behaviors bear resemblance to the biblical accounts, especially as recorded in the Gospels and Acts. Also discovered was that the knowledge of psychology, especially from the Christian perspective, can serve as a great tool to clarify certain theological misconceptions about demon possession and spiritual deliverance. Such knowledge can help distinguish a demonic case from other cases that may border mainly on personality traits or culturally inherited habits and behaviors. This knowledge would also help the deliverance agent to attempt to handle spiritual (purely demonic) cases, while referring cases that are purely psychological, after necessary counseling.

Finally, since Africans, in their cultural and traditional beliefs, seem to give more attention to the spiritual world (because their departed fathers and loved ones remain the invisible members of the visible family on earth), their beliefs and practices regarding demon possession and deliverance tend to receive extreme emphasis. The studies also show that Africans are open to biblical accounts about demon possession and deliverance.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter describes how the data was collected, organized, and analyzed in this investigation. The problem under investigation is: What are the current beliefs, perceptions, and the self-described practices of Pentecostal pastors and laity in Jos, and how do they compare with a biblically sound and contextually relevant theology of spiritual deliverance?

This chapter explains the research questions and a suitable methodology to answer each research question. This is to ascertain the points of agreement and departure between the beliefs and practices of Pentecostal Christians in Jos and biblically acceptable beliefs and practices on spiritual deliverance. The chapter also discusses the research methodology selected for each research question in the study, the participants in the study, the instrumentation for the study, data collection and data analysis procedures of the study, as well as justifies the procedures and acknowledges any limitations of the methods employed.¹

Methodological Framework

This study utilized a mixed methods approach (see appendix A). A mixed methods approach is “a research that combines alternative approaches within a single

¹Martyn Denscombe, *The Good Research Guide* (England: Open University Press, 2012), 316–317.

research” and a “research strategy that crosses the boundaries of conventional paradigms of research by deliberately combining methods drawn from different traditions.”² Jennifer Perone and Lisa Tucker state that “over the past decade, there has been an increasing trend of blending quantitative and qualitative data within a study to provide a broader, deeper perspective. This process is referred to as triangulation.”³ The benefits of using the mixed methods approach include improving accuracy, providing a more complete picture, compensating strengths and weaknesses, developing the analysis, and aiding sampling.⁴ The various approaches combined for the study are: exegetical-hermeneutical study, integrative critical analysis (ICA), survey research study, focus group, and interviews. It is believed that with the use of these approaches in the study, there will be validity and reliability, and biases shall be greatly minimized.

In adopting the exegetical-hermeneutical study approach as one of the strategies for data collection, the research focused on biblical literature by seeking to discover what the biblical literature reveals about spiritual deliverance. It is understood that the issue under study is a biblical theological issue, which “is not concerned about the quality of the empirical data nor the repeatability of the process so as to yield identical results.”⁵ The concern of biblical theology is biblical truth as found in the biblical text. Edgar Elliston asserts that what is expected in an exegetical-hermeneutical research approach is

²Ibid., 137.

³Jennifer S. Perone and Lisa Tucker, “An Exploration of Triangulation of Methodologies: Quantitative and Qualitative Methodology Fusion in an Investigation of Perceptions of Transit Safety,” www.dot.state.fl.us/research-center/...Proj/...FDOT_BC137_22pdf (accessed November 12, 2018).

⁴Ibid., 139–144.

⁵Edgar J. Elliston, *Introduction to Missiological Research Design* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2011), 113.

the researcher's exegetical and hermeneutical approach to the Bible, which involves the application of the different methods of interpretation of the biblical text; the researcher's faith and understanding of God; and the researcher's worldview, skills and abilities, and spiritual giftedness.⁶ Other considerations of an exegetical-hermeneutical approach, according to Elliston, include the uniqueness of the church in a given time and place, the particular context where the biblical text is to be applied, and the unique ways the Holy Spirit works.⁷

Another method used in this study is integrative critical analysis (ICA). The ICA method is the answer to the problem of a methodological lacuna that exists in several research texts, including both theological and empirical research texts, and aims at producing a credible review of precedent literature. The primary strength of ICA lies in the integration of the findings reported in multiple bodies of knowledge, helping the researcher to develop a comprehensive understanding of that knowledge. Next to that is this method's critical nature, which, according to Marvin Gilbert, helps in developing accuracy as it

identifies and challenges assumptions (particularly the assumptions of other writers), remembers the importance of context (e.g., the academic discipline or school of thought), imagines and explores alternatives (to current norms and styles of behaving and thinking), embraces a reflective skepticism (especially when interacting with the world of ideas), justifies his or her beliefs (e.g., all summaries-conclusions are fully supported by the data), strives for objectivity (e.g., attempting to disprove pre-research beliefs and assumptions).⁸

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Marvin Gilbert, "Integrative Critical Analysis" (lecture notes, Pan Africa Theological Seminary, Lome, Togo, May 2015).

The point of this information is that the researcher understands the importance of applying the ICA approach. This is because, by interacting with the opinions of scholars, the researcher is able to carry out a critical examination and scholarly review of a piece of literature. The information thus emphasizes the scholarly response to literature used in the research project.

By employing the ICA method, this research has attempted to “build a credible case for new research by distinguishing between what the academy knows and what it does not yet know,”⁹ thus discovering a gap in the literature or a hole in the body of knowledge. This research also aimed to “summarize synergically and strategically what a diverse collection of scholars have discovered and reported to the academy.”¹⁰ This means that, through the ICA method, new discoveries about spiritual deliverance may not only surprise those who thought they knew all about the subject, but may also help them by shaping their conclusions on the subject.

This research also used the survey method. The survey method is used when there is a need to discover what a body, for instance, a church, thinks about certain issues, or when there is a need to investigate behaviors that are theologically significant.¹¹ Surveys are used in discerning attitudes, beliefs, or opinions.¹² Since the purpose of the study includes examining the perceptions and beliefs of a Pentecostal church regarding spiritual deliverance, this research used a variety of methods to collect data including

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Marvin Gilbert and Alan Johnson, *Missiological Research* (n.p.: Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, 2011), 87.

¹²Ibid.

questionnaires, interviews, a focus group, documents, and observation, which are all part of a survey approach.¹³ Participants were selected using a non-probability sampling procedure, which means the participants were selected “because they are available, convenient, or represent some characteristic”¹⁴ this research wanted to study.

In view of the various research approaches adopted for the study, the following steps were taken to collect data. For the exegetical-hermeneutical approach, certain biblical texts were exegeted by using various biblical study tools to discover what the biblical literature reveals about spiritual deliverance. Since the goal of interpretation is to discover what a particular biblical text means, the principles and procedures that are necessary to accurately understand that meaning were identified and explained. This was done by analyzing the principles of Bible interpretation in the areas of language communication, context, historical-cultural background, grammar, and wisdom literature.¹⁵ There is no doubt that the biblical writers were communicating specific messages to their various audiences who, being the original reader or recipient of the message, knew what these writers were saying and what the particular messages meant to them.¹⁶ Therefore, by applying the principles of biblical interpretation to the different texts that reference spiritual deliverance, it was helpful to discover what the passage actually says about spiritual deliverance.

¹³Denscombe, 12.

¹⁴Pan Africa Theological Seminary, “Research Methodology” in *Dissertation Development Manual* (Pan Africa Theological Seminary, 2013), 48.

¹⁵William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard, Jr., *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 2nd ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004), 213–217.

¹⁶Ibid.

To conduct this research, three data-gathering methods were adopted: questionnaires, a focus group, and interviews. Plans were established with regard to the accurate population to choose; the provision for the expansion of the sample population where the need arose; the decision of whom to survey through questionnaires, the focus group, and interviews; what information needed to be gathered through these instruments; and the possibility of gathering the information through each instrument.¹⁷

Spiritual deliverance is a complex issue. Complex issues or sensitive subjects, according to Martyn Denscombe, usually benefit from the use of an interview method.¹⁸ Therefore, an interview approach was used to gather data about the subject being studied. A semi-structured interview¹⁹ guide was designed for this purpose (see appendix B). The interview guide contained the subject of the research, the description of the researcher, and his specific intention and expectation. It clearly spelled out the role the respondent was expected to play and how the confidentiality of the data would be maintained to protect the privacy of the respondent. The interview guide contained twenty questions that the respondent was requested to answer, or they could refuse to do so. The respondents were allowed to determine the place and time for the interview, but a suggestion was offered, such as using a place where interruption may be minimal for better concentration on the issue or subject matter.

¹⁷Gilbert and Johnson, 89.

¹⁸Denscombe, 13.

¹⁹Ibid., 175.

Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments

The validation committee was used, whose role was to validate the instruments selected for the study. The validation committee helped with the construction of the instruments and the assessment of the content or face validity of the instruments.

With the help of the validation committee, the validity of the research instruments was determined. The face validity or content of the research instruments was clear in terms of the purpose of the test so that even naïve respondents could easily respond to them. The respondents were expected to understand the questions, which were constructed with the implications of their age, intellect, and language in view.²⁰ A local scholar, a respected cultural expert living in the research area, was involved (see appendix F) to review all instruments used for the study to make sure that the instruments had contextual-cultural appropriateness.²¹ The importance of this step in the validation process was to highlight “terms that (1) may not be commonly understood or (2) may be offensive in the research context.”²²

Data Collection Procedures

Research Question 1

Research Question 1 (RQ1) asked: What does the biblical-theological literature reveal about spiritual deliverance? The data-collection method employed to answer RQ1 was the exegetical-hermeneutical procedure. This was used because this research question concerns biblical literature.

²⁰Denscombe, 156.

²¹Chuck Wilson, “Step 4: A Local Scholar, the Instrument Development and Validation Process When Translation is Not Required” (lecture notes, Pan Africa Theological Seminary, Lome, Togo, May 2016).

²²Ibid.

To understand what the biblical literature reveals about spiritual deliverance, the general rules of hermeneutics for prose and/or for biblical poetry were followed. The general rules of hermeneutics in relation to prose, for instance, require the application of the principles of hermeneutics relating to context. Klein, Blomberg, and Hubbard, Jr. make known that there are three important principles that must guide the practice of interpretation in relation to context. The first insists that each statement must be understood according to the natural meaning in the literal context in which it occurs. This requires the reader's understanding of both the meaning of individual words and the meaning of the complete statement. The second states that a text without a context may be a pretext, which serves as a warning against the tendency to engage in invalid quoting of biblical passages to prove a doctrine without regard for the literary context. The third principle argues that "the smaller the passage being studied, the greater the chance of error."²³ The point here is that a word, phrase, or single sentence by itself could convey several different meanings, hence the need to read a larger passage to be able to get at the meaning as contained in a given passage of Scripture. Therefore, biblical texts that relate to spiritual deliverance were examined by studying the immediate context, the entire book context, and the context of the Bible, to discover the meaning of the text.²⁴

Data was collected periodically, at different times, using the various tools. The data was critically analyzed to determine what the biblical literature reveals about spiritual deliverance.

²³Klein, Blomberg, and Hubbard, Jr., 218.

²⁴Ibid., 219.

Research Question 2

Research Question 2 (RQ2) asked: What does the social science literature reveal about spiritual deliverance? The concern of this research question was what the precedent literature says about the subject being investigated and the reaction and response of the researcher to claims and assumptions made by scholars in these literatures. The study went beyond merely reporting the literature to doing a critical examination and analysis of such literature. Therefore, the ICA method was the data-collection procedure used to answer this research question. This method enabled the researcher to “build a credible case for new research by distinguishing between what the academy knows and what it does not yet know,”²⁵ thus discovering the hole in the body of knowledge. The researcher then summarized “synergically and strategically what a diverse collection of scholars have discovered and reported to the academy.”²⁶

Research Question 3

Research Question 3 (RQ3) asked: What are the perceptions and self-described practices of Pentecostals in Jos North on spiritual deliverance? This research question was focused on the sample population of the study. These are the membership of Pentecostal churches in Jos, including the Pentecostal church leaders, pastors, and members. The sample population was taken from the target population of the study (all the Pentecostal denominations in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State, which comprises three hundred denominations).

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Ibid.

To answer this research question, data was collected using the survey research procedure, including the instruments of questionnaires and interviews. Surveying opinion polls is a type of quantitative research method, as it touches on the experiences of the participants. While questionnaires targeted a larger part of the sample population, interviews focused on the church leaders, including both the clergy and lay leaders, such as deacons and deaconess, department leaders, and others. Data was collected at different times for interviews and all at once for questionnaires.

Research Participants

The target population for this study was all the Pentecostal denominations in the Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State, which comprises 300 denominations,²⁷ of which 142 are registered members with the PFN Jos North chapter and 158 are non-registered members.²⁸ From this target population, a total of sixty denominations were sampled, representing 20 percent of the denominations in the PFN in Jos.²⁹ From the above number of sixty denominations, thirty were registered members and thirty were unregistered. The purposive sampling method was used in making this selection. This method appears to best suit the study. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method that allows cases to be chosen on purpose, not randomly, which is preferred when dealing with such a sensitive issue as spiritual deliverance. Also, as Russell Bernard states, there are circumstances under which non-probability samples

²⁷Ezekiel Saje, interview by author, RamunGyel, Jos, September 21, 2014.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Nova Southeastern University, "Writing Chapter 3," Abraham S. Fischler School of Education, https://education.nova.edu/Resources/uploads/app/35/files/ARC_Doc/writing_chpt3_quantitative_research_methods.pdf (accessed July 15, 2014).

are used. “Nonprobability samples are also appropriate...when, despite our best efforts, we just can’t get a probability sample.”³⁰

The above assertion by Bernard best describes the situation where those denominations considered best for the research work were purposively decided. Moreover, from each of the denominations, a sample of the heads of denominations, church leaders (both clergy and laity), and church members were chosen. These came from different ethnicities, but all reside in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State of Nigeria. This purposive approach aims at choosing key informants, as “it would be pointless to select a handful of people randomly from a population and try to turn them into trusted key informants.”³¹ Therefore, once a denomination was selected, its leader also was selected on purpose, with the assumption that they are an informed respondent, and in a position to give the information required for the research. The purposive approach was also used in selecting respondents from among the church members. A total of three hundred persons were selected, five from each of the sampled sixty denominations. Respondents were purposively chosen in a way that seeks to represent the entire population of the study, within the following constraints: the sample was selected with no respect to sex, and the church members (non-pastors) had to be between the ages of eighteen and seventy-five. The age bracket was chosen because maturity is associated with age;³² a younger person of below eighteen years of age is considered a “minor,”³³

³⁰H. Russell Bernard, *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, 5th ed. (Plymouth, UK: AltaMira Press, 2011), 143.

³¹Ibid.

³²Jane Mallum and Mary Haggai, *Educational Psychology*, s.v. “maturity” (Jos, Nigeria: Dekka Publications, 2000), 58–59.

and so may not be trusted to give reliable information. Those under eighteen years “are still immature to be treated as adults.... because they are still children. Offences committed at this period are legally regarded as juvenile offences.”³⁴

To access the participating denominational heads and church leaders phone calls were made to book an appointment, after which they were personally visited to give them the “Informed Consent Form”³⁵ (see appendix D), with which the purpose of the dissertation study was explained.³⁶ In the same vein, the church members were accessed through their denominational heads; consent and approval was obtained to administer the research questionnaires to them. A non-probability sampling procedure was used in selecting the denominational heads, which means these categories of participants were selected “because they are available, convenient, or represent some characteristic”³⁷ the research is to study. This procedure was adopted because most Pentecostal pastors were unavailable in Jos. Most of them have new branch churches outside of Jos, they often traveled out to strengthen the young churches, and so were frequently out of town.

Informed Consent Protocol

An informed consent form was designed for every participant in the study (see appendix D). In the informed consent form, the research project was described with the topic and purpose for the study provided. It also clearly stated what was expected of the

³³Gloria Elijah Sunday and Yakubu Songden, interview by author, First Bank Anglo Jos, Jos, June 9, 2013.

³⁴J. O. Mallum, M. P. Haggai, and K. J. U. Ajaegbu, *Introduction to Child Development* (Jos, Nigeria: Deka Publications, 2002), 104.

³⁵Pan Africa Theological Seminary, 48.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Nova Southeastern University.

participant in regards to the interview, such as asking them to respond to every question, except any they may have no answer to or are not willing to answer. The promise to treat the participant's responses as confidential and to use the responses for academic purposes, as indicated in the research project, was clearly outlined. The informed consent form also referred the participant to this project's supervisor for any information about the research project they may want to confirm, and provided the name and mailing or email address of the supervisor to the participant. The form also had a provision for the signature of the participant which, when provided, became proof that the participant agreed to take part in the research and to provide the researcher with information for the study. The participant then signed the informed consent form. The researcher also signed the form; once this was done, the research interview was conducted at the agreed date, place, and time.

Instrumentation

Instrumentation, as a term, refers to the “entire process of collecting data in a research investigation,”³⁸ while the devices used to collect the data refer to the instrument.³⁹ The instruments selected for this study are broadly classified under two categories: the “researcher-completed instrument and the subject-completed instrument.”⁴⁰ The researcher-completed instrument for the study was the focus group

³⁸SDSU, Edweb.sdsu.edu/people/tphan/690/ptp/Instrumentation.ppt (accessed July 15, 2014).

³⁹J. Patrick Biddix, “Instrument, Validity, Reliability,” researchrundowns.com, <https://researchrundowns.com/quantitative.methods/instrument-validity-reliability/> (accessed July 15, 2014).

⁴⁰Ibid.

and interview guide, while the subject-completed instrument was the questionnaire. These are described below.

Focus Group

A focus group guide was prepared to ensure the participants understood the focus of the study and to avoid digression to other irrelevant subjects. The focus group guide contained ten questions that enabled a look at the perceptions and practices of Pentecostal churches in Jos. These questions were discussed by a six man focus group comprised of leaders of the PFN in Jos North, Nigeria.

Semi-structured Interview

A semi-structured interview guide, made up of a two-part set of questions, was prepared to elicit information relevant to the study from the respondents. Part one was biological data and contained nine questions that asked for information about the participant. Part two was a twenty-item questionnaire on the subject under study. While the use of the interview guide brought the interviewer (researcher) and the interviewees (respondents) into a face-to-face discussion, it resulted in “something more than just a conversation...a meeting intended to produce material that will be used for research purpose.”⁴¹ The semi-structured nature of the interview guide allowed both the researcher and the respondents some level of flexibility in the ordering of questions and in speaking widely on the issue.⁴² Fifteen church leaders were interviewed (clergy and laity), purposively selected from the sixty denominations. During the interview, the

⁴¹Denscombe, 172.

⁴²Ibid., 175.

respondent's residence was preferred over the office for some respondents, to avoid conflict or interference with official duties such as meetings, counseling, prayers, etc. A neutral place was a better option for others, where such place was free from interruption by non-participants.

Questionnaires

A questionnaire is a systematically prepared form with a set of questions deliberately designed to elicit responses from respondents.⁴³ Questionnaires were developed to assess the participants' knowledge and appraisal of the subject under study. For this study, questionnaires were seen as one of the best strategies for data collection because of the large number of respondents involved, and because the social climate is open enough to allow full and honest answers.⁴⁴ The questionnaire contained a total of seventeen questions (see appendix E) and was constructed to measure participants' views. Questions were formulated with the help of a five-point Likert-type scale⁴⁵ to measure the attitude of the respondents with regard to how much they agree or disagree with a particular statement. The five-point Likert scale measuring agreement was expressed as, Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral or Undecided (N or U), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD).⁴⁶

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid., 156.

⁴⁵Saul McLeod, "Likert Scale Definition, Examples and Analysis," Simply Psychology, www.simplypsychology.org/likert-scale.html (accessed December 4, 2018).

⁴⁶Ibid.

Data Analysis Procedures

The data was analyzed following the research questions and the research methods used in the study. For the research methods with quantitative studies, such as the survey and questionnaires,⁴⁷ the data was collected and collated by critically comparing the responses of the different respondents to make conclusions that are a true representation of the account.⁴⁸ The responses from the questionnaires were transferred into a spreadsheet, with each possible answer assigned a code or number. After all the respondents' questionnaires were entered, the whole record was reviewed to ensure that no errors were made. A careful calculation and analysis was carried out to see if there were any variations in the way that different types of people responded. A five-point Likert-type scale⁴⁹ was used to measure the responses, which were reported on using means and standard deviation. A Likert-type scale is "a five (or seven) point scale which is used to allow the individual to express how much they agree or disagree with a particular statement."⁵⁰ Analysis procedures employed for the focus group were also adapted.⁵¹ For the focus group, the following steps were taken:

⁴⁷Nova Southeastern University.

⁴⁸Russell K. Schutt, "Chapter 10: Qualitative Data Analysis," in *Investigating the Social World: The Process and Practice of Research* (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2012). www.sagepub.com/upm-data/43454_10.pdf (accessed July 15, 2014).

⁴⁹McLeod.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹The seven steps recommended for analyzing focus groups data were found helpful for this study. However, each step was not followed simultaneously, but ideas were borrowed and, where necessary, concepts were combined from different steps into one. For further reference, see University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas, "7 Steps to Analyzing Focus Group Data," http://library-capacity.4.health.org/sites/default/files/7-steps-to-Analyzing-FG_Data-UTS.pdf (accessed November 10, 2018).

1. The responses of each participant to the given question were transcribed verbatim. The participants were randomly assigned a distinct number as a label, so that a designation did not allow for the identification of a group member. For example, Focus Group Response 1 (FGR1), Focus Group Response 2 (FGR2), etc. does not match the identity of a group member according to the list of church leaders (see appendix K).
2. The transcripts, observer notes, and audio and/or video recorder were reviewed (this exercise was done several times). Emerging themes or patterns that related to the perceptions and practices of spiritual deliverance among Pentecostals in Jos were looked for. The responses for each interview question were evaluated at one time. The criterion used to detect an emerging theme or pattern was when “several people within a focus group repeated them or made very similar statements... [or] When someone in the group made a statement, a substantial number of people in the group demonstrated agreement either verbally or nonverbally.”⁵²
3. The data was coded (observed themes and patterns). First, the data was examined for broad categories, then for specific properties that were related to the broader themes.
4. Preliminary conclusions were drawn based on the commonalities of issues raised in response to each question (emergent issues, themes, or patterns). These conclusions were aided by quantifying recurring themes. “Quantitative analysis approaches are meaningful only when there is a need for data

⁵²Appendix D.

summary across many repetitions of a participatory process, e.g. focus group discussions.”⁵³

Summary

In this chapter, the methodology for the study was discussed. The mixed method approach adopted for the study was described. This approach includes various strategies, such as exegetical-hermeneutical study, ICA, and survey study. The procedures and methods for data collection and data analysis were also stated. This chapter also described the research participants and ethical guidelines for this study; the process for protecting the participants’ privacy was clearly stated in the informed consent protocol.

⁵³Savitri Abeyasekera, “Quantitative Analysis Approaches to Qualitative Data: Why, When and How,” in *Methods in Development Research; Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, ed. Jeremy Holland and John Campbell (Warwickshire: ITDG Publishing, 2005), 98. www.reading.ac.uk/.../Quantitative_analysis_approaches_to_qualitati... (accessed November 10, 2018).

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

Introduction

The research study dealt with a biblically sound perspective of spiritual deliverance, in the context of Pentecostal Churches in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State, Nigeria. The question of what constitutes a biblically sound and contextually relevant theology of spiritual deliverance continues to stir up controversy and confusion among Pentecostal believers in Jos, Nigeria. The study, therefore, investigated the current beliefs, perceptions, and self-described practices of Pentecostal pastors and laity in Jos, and how they compare with a biblically sound and contextually relevant theology of spiritual deliverance. To do this, a methodological approach was employed, as described in chapter 4.¹ In this chapter, the analysis of specific data for Research Question 3 is presented (refer to appendix A).

Analysis of Data

Research Question 3

Research Question 3 (RQ3) asked: What are the perceptions and practices of Pentecostals in Jos North regarding spiritual deliverance? RQ3 used two questions, RQ3A and RQ3B, to sample opinions of selected respondents for the research study. RQ3A examined the perceptions of Pentecostals in Jos on spiritual deliverance, while

¹See chapter 4: Research Methodology.

RQ3B looked at the self-described practices of Pentecostals in Jos regarding spiritual deliverance.

Research Question 3A

Research Question 3A (RQ3A) states: What are the perceptions of Pentecostals in Jos regarding spiritual deliverance? This research question sampled the opinions of the PFN leaders in Jos North.² RQ3A was thus accomplished by collecting data through a focus group (FG) consisting of six PFN leaders in Jos North. A set of ten questions was made available to the group (see appendix C). Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8 of the focus group gave responses to RQ3A, while questions 7, 9, and 10 reported the responses to RQ3B. For a full transcript of the FG with each participant's responses to the questions, see appendix G; for a more detailed report of the FG discussion, see appendix H. The FG participants were randomly designated as P1 for Participant 1, P2 for Participant 2, etc. One of the group members was randomly chosen to be the facilitator (F). For a full description of the participants, see the demographic details of participants in appendix I.

Focus Group Question 1

In establishing the perceptions of Pentecostals in Jos regarding spiritual deliverance, the first question in the FG asked: What does spiritual deliverance mean to you? The meaning of spiritual deliverance was answered by three out of the six participants (P2, P3, and P4), with responses indicating that spiritual deliverance means for an individual to be totally free, emancipated and liberated from demonic oppression, possession, and manipulation. They also said that spiritual deliverance affects not just an

²See appendix A: Tables of Research Methodology Options, Table 3, RQ3A.

individual soul, but involves the liberation of families, communities, or lands. P2 added that it must be done biblically, with faith in the name of Jesus, with the bottom line being the salvation of the person being delivered. From the responses of the three participants, the emerging themes include the meaning of deliverance, the process of deliverance, and the description of demonic bondage (see appendix G).

Focus Group Question 2

The FG guide question 2 asked: How should deliverance be conducted? Responses to this question were given by four of the six participants,³ who all agreed that spiritual deliverance should be conducted in accordance with the leading of the Holy Spirit of God, using the Word of God, the name of Jesus, and the blood of Jesus as a reference to his sacrificial and restitutionary death (see appendix G). Examples were given of deliverances that go against scriptural practices. Respondent P6 narrated an incident where some Pentecostal pastors conducted deliverance by breaking coconut and eggs (see appendix G); P3 told of instances where deliverance pastors used canes to beat or flog the victims (see appendix G). The respondents condemned these practices as being unscriptural.⁴

Emergent themes from responses to FG question 2 reveal that deliverances are conducted differently by Pentecostal pastors and members in Jos North, but in accordance with the Scripture and the leading of the Holy Spirit, using the name of Jesus and the blood of Jesus. The responses also reveal that there are Pentecostal pastors who use unscriptural practices in conducting deliverance, such as breaking a coconut,

³See appendix H, result of focus group discussion, responses to question 6.

⁴See appendix H, result of focus group discussion, responses by P1(F) and P3.

breaking eggs, flogging the victims, and demanding payment of a certain prescribed amount of money for the freedom of victims (see appendix G).

Focus Group Question 3

The third question in the FG asked: Who needs spiritual deliverance? The four participants⁵ were at variance with regards to who needs spiritual deliverance. In the view of P4,⁶ anyone who has strange experiences, such as being chased by an animal in a dream, needs deliverance.⁷ P2 noted that anyone who is possessed by demons by having their mind overtaken or influenced to do things contrary to God's Word needs to be delivered. He stated that an intermittent demonic attack does not need deliverance. He illustrated an intermittent attack as a thief who comes to steal and goes away, as opposed to a thief who comes to take up residence in a person's house, dispossessing the owner of his property. He explains that the person whose house is dominated and lived in by the thief will want to send the thief away, while the person who only had their goods stolen may not see the thief to send them away. In addition, a person who is obsessed, oppressed, possessed, or tormented by fear needs deliverance.⁸ This point was supported by P1(F), who enumerated on the levels of attack that need deliverance to include obsession, depression, oppression, and possession.⁹

⁵See appendix G, Focus Group Transcript, and appendix H, result of focus group discussion on spiritual deliverance carried out December 11, 2018.

⁶See appendix G, Focus Group Transcript.

⁷See appendix H, result of focus group discussion on spiritual deliverance carried out December 11, 2018, sections on who needs spiritual deliverance.

⁸See appendix H, result of focus group discussion carried out on December 11, 2018, response of P5.

⁹See appendix H, result of focus group discussion carried out on December 11, 2018, section on who needs spiritual deliverance, four levels of attack.

However, respondent P2¹⁰ did not agree that a depressed individual is in need of spiritual deliverance. According to him, not every depression is caused by demonic oppression; in some cases, depression is a gradual process and does not happen all at once. He also mentioned social depression, which is caused by poverty, continual lack, or government policies. He said he made this distinction because the study was for academic purposes. He noted that there are certain factors where drugs are needed to cure the sickness, and not necessarily prayer for somebody to be healed. This, according to him, is actually different from the level of deliverance most pastors are used to. Respondent P5¹¹ asserted that anything negative that happens to man is sourced from the devil, so whether it is gradual or sudden, the devil is the source of every form of wickedness, every form of evil, every form of negativity. He further asked, if the depression is caused by poverty, who is behind poverty? Of course, “It is the devil,” he answered. He concluded by saying anyone that falls under this category needs spiritual deliverance. With this conclusion, however, P2,¹² who said his father was a psychiatrist, reasserted that although Satan is the root of every trouble and pain, not every trouble and pain needs spiritual deliverance. He questioned, “Can you cast out demons with drugs?” Yet there are instances where a mentally disturbed person needs drugs, not deliverance, “and their mentality will come back.”

The emergent broad themes regarding the beneficiary of spiritual deliverance reveal that three out of the four participants who addressed the issue agree that spiritual

¹⁰See appendix H, result of focus group discussion, response of P2 on who needs spiritual deliverance.

¹¹See appendix H, result of focus group discussion, response of P5 on who needs spiritual deliverance.

¹²See appendix H, result of focus group discussion; P2 gave further reason why depression is not a case of demonic possession and spiritual deliverance.

deliverance is for people who are oppressed, depressed, obsessed, possessed, or tormented by Satan, and that the presence of anything evil, bad, or negative, such as sin, sickness (of any kind), poverty, or depression (of any kind), requires spiritual deliverance. Only one participant insisted that only the possessed needs deliverance.

Focus Group Question 4

The fourth question in the FG interview guide asked: Can a born-again Christian be demon possessed? On this question, five participants responded that a born-again Christian cannot be demon possessed. According to all five participants,¹³ if Christians, however, do not take their walk with God seriously, or have evil communication and become backslidden, they can be possessed because demons can take ownership of backsliders (see appendixes G and H). The premise they used was that if a person is born-again, then the Holy Spirit resides in that person and has total ownership; therefore, no demon can possess that person.¹⁴

One of the participants¹⁵ cited Scripture in Luke 13, where a woman was bound for eighteen years, as a possible reference to a born-again Christian being possessed by demons. He argued that the woman was a daughter of Abraham, invariably a born-again Christian, a part of the kingdom, and still bound.¹⁶ This was refuted by a majority of the

¹³See appendix H, result of focus group discussion, responses to the question, “Can a born-again Christian be demon possessed?”

¹⁴See appendix H, result of focus group discussion; P2 describes demon possession.

¹⁵See appendix H, result of focus group discussion; P3 and P4 gave their interpretation to the phrase, “daughter of Abraham” in Luke 13 to establish whether a Christian can be possessed by demons or not.

¹⁶See appendix H, result of focus group discussion, view of P3 on who the daughter of Abraham was.

participants,¹⁷ who said that the woman was being referred to as a Jew, and not a born-again Christian.¹⁸

The emergent broad themes from the question of a born-again Christian being demon possessed reveal that five out of six participants believe that a born-again Christian cannot be possessed by demons. Secondly, they believe that if a Christian backslides from the faith they can be possessed by demons,¹⁹ arguing that if a Christian backslides, demons can assert their ownership (see appendixes G and H).

Focus Group Question 5

The fifth question in the FG interview guide asked: Do you think Pentecostal churches in Jos practice deliverance the Bible way? Four of the participants²⁰ answered this question, stating that the majority of the Pentecostal churches in Jos practice deliverance the biblical way; however, some do not. They also gave insight into the practices of the PFN, where they conduct monthly meetings with pastors in order to teach them how to operate and behave ethically. They stated that those who attend the meetings are well equipped with the truth about spiritual deliverance.²¹ They lamented that the challenge in Jos among Pentecostal ministers is that most of the churches do not associate

¹⁷See appendix H, result of focus group discussion, view of P4 on who the daughter of Abraham was.

¹⁸See appendix H, result of focus group discussion, conclusions from P1(F) on whether a Christian can be demon possessed.

¹⁹See appendix H, result of focus group discussion, responses to the question, “Can a born-again Christian be demon possessed?”

²⁰See appendix H, result of focus group discussion, responses to question 5.

²¹See appendix H, result of focus group discussion, response by P6.

with the PFN, and that non-biblical practices on spiritual deliverance are common among these churches.

The emergent themes from the fifth question indicate that most Pentecostal churches in Jos North practice spiritual deliverance the biblical way. Churches that affiliate/associate with the PFN practice deliverance the biblical way, unlike others who do not belong to the body.

Focus Group Question 6

The sixth question in the FG guide asked: What deliverance practices do you accept? Why? The FG saw this question²² as a follow-up to question five, thus none of the participants had any different opinion. The PFN leadership in Jos North accepts deliverance practices that are Bible-based, on the grounds that they are scriptural and do not contradict God's Word and principles.

Focus Group Question 8

The eighth question in the FG interview guide asked: What is the position of the PFN in Jos on demonic possession and spiritual deliverance? P1, a group member who, in addition to being the facilitator, also fit the criteria of other members of the group, was the only one who answered this question. He stated that the PFN believes in spiritual deliverance that is done in accordance to Scripture, without extorting the victims or taking advantage of them in any way, doing deliverance as a means of helping the victim actualize their purposes in life.

²²See appendix H, result of focus group discussion, remarks by the facilitator, P1(F).

Research Question 3B

Research Question 3B (RQ3B) states: What are the self-described practices of Pentecostals in Jos regarding spiritual deliverance? RQ3B was carried out by collecting data through a focus group consisting of six PFN leaders in Jos North. FG questions 7, 9, and 10 were used to collect data from respondents for RQ3B. For a full transcript of the FG, with each of the participant's responses to the questions, see appendix G; for a more detailed report of the FG interaction, see appendix H.

Focus Group Question 7

The seventh question in the FG guide asked: What deliverance practices do you condemn? Why? The participants²³ agreed that they condemned the practices that go against the Scriptures, such as charging money before conducting deliverance on a victim and syncretism, the mixture of the Bible and evil tradition by using the Bible in one hand and using jazz and charms in the other hand. They condemn these practices because they are unscriptural (see appendix G).

The emergent themes from FG question 7 reveal that all the participants agree that those in the PFN condemn any deliverance practices that have no scriptural support. They are also against syncretism in deliverance practices.

Focus Group Question 9

The ninth question in the FG guide asked: Do all the PFN pastors in Jos North practice the same thing on spiritual deliverance? Two participants responded to this question. They agreed that the pastors do not practice the same thing in terms of methods

²³See appendix H, result of focus group discussion, responses to question 7.

used in conducting deliverance, even though they follow scriptural precedent. The emphasis here is on the way things are done, or the deliverance process.²⁴ The understanding is that churches believe that deliverance should be done in the name of Jesus; however, the way they go about this differs according to the style adopted by each pastor or president and founder.

Focus Group Question 10

The tenth question in the FG guide asked: In what ways do the pastors differ in their practices? All participants²⁵ stated that the question was already answered. Further emphasis was given to explain that the existence of any differences was a result of the leading of the Spirit of God and because the mandates of the churches were not the same. They illustrated this with the examples of Elijah and Elisha, who had different ways of doing the same miracle following the instruction they received from the Lord. They also gave a scriptural backing with 1 Corinthians 12 to say that there are diversities of ministries and churches in the city of Jos, yet it is the same Spirit that guides us in all that we do in line with the Holy Scriptures.²⁶

The FG ended with the participants saying that Jesus Christ must be at the center of all deliverance, warning that people should desist from bringing false prophecies to church which are responsible for tearing families apart in the name of deliverance. People everywhere are calling for deliverance from what they call ancestral curses, family curses, and business curses. These practices use false prophecies to bring the husband

²⁴See appendix H, report of focus group responses to question 9.

²⁵See appendix H, report of focus group responses to question 10.

²⁶See appendix H, report of focus group responses by P1(F), P3, and P4.

against his wife, and a child against the father because of ignorance.²⁷ The participants also expressed concern on how the church could help the delivered people maintain their deliverance, as this has been a challenge among the Pentecostals (see appendix G).

In summary, the focus group responses reveal that the meaning of spiritual deliverance, as understood by Pentecostals in Jos, involves a freedom from demonic possession, oppression, obsession, depression, torment, and manipulation. The problem of semantics influences their understanding. The FG also reveals that spiritual deliverance is for people who are oppressed, depressed, obsessed, possessed, or tormented by Satan, and that the presence of anything evil, bad, or negative, such as sin, sickness (of any kind), poverty, or depression (of any kind) requires spiritual deliverance. The FG, by a majority opinion, further reveals that born-again Christians cannot be possessed by demons. However, if Christians do not take their walk with God seriously, or have evil communication and become backslidden, they can be possessed (see appendixes G and H). Practices of spiritual deliverance in Jos, as revealed by the focus group, vary according to pastors and denominations. Some follow biblical patterns and the examples of Jesus and the apostles, while others do not. The leadership of PFN in Jos North condemns all extra-biblical practices of deliverance, most especially the practice of extorting money from the victims.

Questionnaire Report in Response to Research Question 3

A questionnaire was administered to three hundred members, five from each of the sampled sixty denominations of the PFN in Jos North. A total of twenty-five persons out of the three hundred declined participation in the survey. Therefore, the responses of

²⁷See appendix G, Focus Group Transcript, responses to “any other question?”

the 275 persons that participated in the study were used. A five-point Likert-type scale²⁸ was used to measure the responses. The items on the questionnaire were developed from the issues that emerged in the focus group responses to RQ3A and RQ3B. The purpose of the questionnaire was to further respond to RQ3A and RQ3B. The questionnaire items were divided into two parts: part one described the demographic characteristics of the participants, examining their age in years, highest educational qualification, and primary ministry position, while part two contained statements to which the participants were to respond (see appendix E).

In establishing the age bracket of the participants, the first question in part one of the questionnaire asked: How old are you? The responses are presented in table 5.1.

The data indicates the intent of the study to collect data from mature members of the church, people between the ages of eighteen and seventy-five who may be trusted to give reliable information.²⁹ The highest number shows a total of 83 respondents (30 percent) in the age bracket of 35–44 years.

Table 5.1. Demographic characteristics of participants' age

Age in years	Number	Percentage
<25	28	10
25–34	69	25
35–44	83	30
45–54	51	19
55–64	25	9
>64	19	7

²⁸See chapter 4, sections on instrumentation, questionnaire, and data-analysis procedures; McLeod.

²⁹See chapter 4, Methodology, section on research participants: the church members must be between the ages of eighteen and seventy-five. The reason for the age bracket is because maturity is associated with age: Mallum and Haggai, 58–59. A younger person of below eighteen years of age is considered a minor, and so may not be trusted to give reliable information: Sunday and Songden, interview by author, 2013.

In ascertaining the educational qualification of the participants, the second question in part one of the questionnaire asked: What is your highest educational qualification-accomplishment? Responses presented in table 5.2 show that all participants in the study have some level of educational attainment, and that they are drawn from all levels of educational certification.

Table 5.2. Demographic characteristics of participants' educational qualification

Highest educational qualification	Number	Percentage
High school graduation	41	15
Trade/technical/vocational training	16	6
Some academic credit	11	4
Diploma or associate's degree	53	19
Bachelor's degree	56	20
Post-graduate diploma or BA honors	42	15
Master's degree	30	11
Professional degree	12	4
Doctorate degree	14	5

To ascertain the primary ministry position of the participants, the third question in part one of the questionnaire asked: What is your primary ministry position? The responses presented in table 5.3 show that participants in the study cut across various Christian leadership and ministry positions. This shows the study achieved its goal of sampling respondents from both the clergy and laity.³⁰

Tables 5.4 to 5.20 present the descriptive statistics to the questionnaire report in response to RQ3A.³¹ In establishing the perceptions of Pentecostals in Jos regarding spiritual deliverance, the first statement in the second part of the questionnaire was: A Pentecostal Christian is one who speaks in tongues. Table 5.4 shows the descriptive

³⁰See chapter 4, Methodology, section on research participants.

³¹See appendix J, Result of Survey Opinions on spiritual deliverance in Pentecostal churches in Jos, Nigeria, showing items, responses, percentage and mean scores.

results of statement 1. The mean for the statement is 2.011, indicating they *agree*. The mode and median for the item are both 2.00, while the standard deviation is 0.979. From the above mean, it is clear that the respondents agree that a Pentecostal Christian is one who speaks in tongues.

Table 5.3. Demographic characteristics of participants' primary ministry position

Primary ministry position	Number	Percentage
Pastor	43	16
Elder	22	8
Deacon	36	13
Lay leader	28	10
Evangelist	40	15
Teacher	30	11
Member	76	28

Table 5.4. Responses to survey opinions statement 1

S/N	Item statement	Mean (\bar{x})	Mode	Median	Standard deviation	Practice expressed
1.	A Pentecostal Christian is one who speaks in tongues.	2.011	2.00	2.00	0.979	Agree

Table 5.5 reveals the descriptive result of survey item 2. It shows the response of the respondents with a mean of 1.782, representing *agree*. The mode and median for the item are both 2.00, and the standard deviation is 0.563. The meaning of this report, as indicated by the mean, is that the respondents agree that Pentecostal churches differ from non-Pentecostals in some of their theologies and practices.

Table 5.6 shows the descriptive result of survey item 3. It shows the responses of the respondents with a mean of 1.24, representing *strongly agree*. The mode and median for the item are both 1.00, while the standard deviation is 0.592. The indication by the

above mean shows that the respondents strongly agree that spiritual deliverance means to set a captive free from domination of Satan or his demons.

Table 5.5. Responses to survey opinions statement 2

S/N	Item statement	Mean (\bar{x})	Mode	Median	Standard deviation	Practice expressed
2.	Pentecostal churches differ from non-Pentecostals in some of their theologies and practices.	1.782	2.00	2.00	0.563	Agree

Table 5.6. Responses to survey opinions statement 3

S/N	Item statement	Mean (\bar{x})	Mode	Median	Standard deviation	Practice expressed
3.	Spiritual deliverance means to set a captive free from domination of Satan or his demons.	1.24	1.00	1.00	0.592	Strongly agree

Table 5.7 shows the descriptive result of survey item 4. It shows the responses of the respondents with a mean of 3.684, representing *disagree*. The mode and median for the item are both 4.00, while the standard deviation is 1.038. As indicated by the mean above, the report shows that the respondents disagree that only those that are possessed by demons need spiritual deliverance.

Table 5.7. Responses to survey opinions statement 4

S/N	Item statement	Mean (\bar{x})	Mode	Median	Standard deviation	Practice expressed
4.	In my opinion, only those that are possessed by demons need spiritual deliverance.	3.684	4.00	4.00	1.038	Disagree

Table 5.8 shows the descriptive result of survey item 5. It shows the responses of the respondents with a mean of 1.586, representing *agree*. It also indicates that the mode and median for the item are both 1.00, with a standard deviation of 0.964. The indication by the above mean shows that the respondents agree that preaching and teaching about spiritual deliverance occurs regularly in their churches.

Table 5.8. Responses to survey opinions statement 5

S/N	Item statement	Mean (\bar{x})	Mode	Median	Standard deviation	Practice expressed
5.	Preaching and teaching about spiritual deliverance occurs regularly in my church.	1.586	1.00	1.00	0.964	Agree

Table 5.9 shows the descriptive result of survey item 6. It shows the response rate of the respondents with a mean of 2.251, representing *agree*. It indicates that the mode and median for the item are 2.00, while the standard deviation is 0.871. The respondents, as indicated in the mean above, agree that anyone who is saved can minister spiritual deliverance.

Table 5.9. Responses to survey opinions statement 6

S/N	Item statement	Mean (\bar{x})	Mode	Median	Standard deviation	Practice expressed
6.	In my opinion, anyone who is saved can minister spiritual deliverance.	2.251	2.00	2.00	0.871	Agree

Table 5.10 shows the descriptive result of survey item 7. The result shows the mean response rate of the respondents of 1.56, representing *agree*. It also indicates that the mode and median for the item are 1.00, and the standard deviation is 0.912. From the

mean above, the respondents agree that interviewing and praying for the demon-possessed person is the process of conducting spiritual deliverance.

Table 5.10. Responses to survey opinions statement 7

S/N	Item statement	Mean (\bar{x})	Mode	Median	Standard deviation	Practice expressed
7.	Interviewing and praying for the demon possessed person is the process of conducting spiritual deliverance.	1.56	1.00	1.00	0.912	Agree

Table 5.11 shows the descriptive result of survey item 8. The result shows the mean response of the respondents of 4.16, representing *disagree*. It also indicates that the mode and median for the item are both 5.00, indicating *strongly disagree*. The standard deviation of 1.18 shows a high dispersion. Thus, the respondents disagree that once saved, there is no need for further spiritual deliverance.

Table 5.11. Responses to survey opinions statement 8

S/N	Item statement	Mean (\bar{x})	Mode	Median	Standard deviation	Practice expressed
8.	In my opinion, once saved, there is no need for further spiritual deliverance.	4.16	5.00	5.00	1.18	Disagree

Table 5.12 shows the descriptive result of survey item 9. It shows the responses of the respondents with a mean of 2.75. The mode and median for the item are the same, 2.00. The standard deviation is 1.17. The mean shows that the respondents cannot say with certainty that the Bible does not say if a Christian needs spiritual deliverance.

Table 5.12. Responses to survey opinions statement 9

S/N	Item statement	Mean (\bar{x})	Mode	Median	Standard deviation	Practice expressed
9.	The Bible does not say if a Christian needs spiritual deliverance.	2.75	2.00	2.00	1.17	Neutral

Table 5.13 shows the descriptive result of survey item 10. The result shows the responses of the respondents with a mean of 1.306, representing *strongly agree*. The result also indicates that the mode and median for the item are 1.00, indicating *strongly agree*. The standard deviation is 0.555, showing a low dispersion and clusters. The indication by the mean is that the respondents strongly agree that the practice of “Breaking of Curses” is a form of spiritual deliverance.

Table 5.13. Responses to survey opinions statement 10

S/N	Item statement	Mean (\bar{x})	Mode	Median	Standard deviation	Practice expressed
10.	The practice of “Breaking of Curses” is a form of spiritual deliverance.	1.306	1.00	1.00	0.555	Strongly Agree

Table 5.14 shows the descriptive result of survey item 11. The result shows the response of the respondents with a mean of 3.92, representing *disagree*. The result also indicates that the mode and median for the item are both 5.00, indicating *strongly disagree*. The standard deviation is 1.388, showing a high dispersion. The result shows that the respondents disagree that they personally experienced deliverance from demons after becoming a Christian. This data is further expressed in figure 1. This figure reveals that 152 persons, representing a majority of the respondents, strongly disagreed that they experienced deliverance from demons after becoming a Christian.

Table 5.14. Responses to survey opinions statement 11

S/N	Item statement	Mean (\bar{x})	Mode	Median	Standard deviation	Practice expressed
11.	I personally experienced deliverance from demons after becoming a Christian.	3.92	5.00	5.00	1.388	Disagree

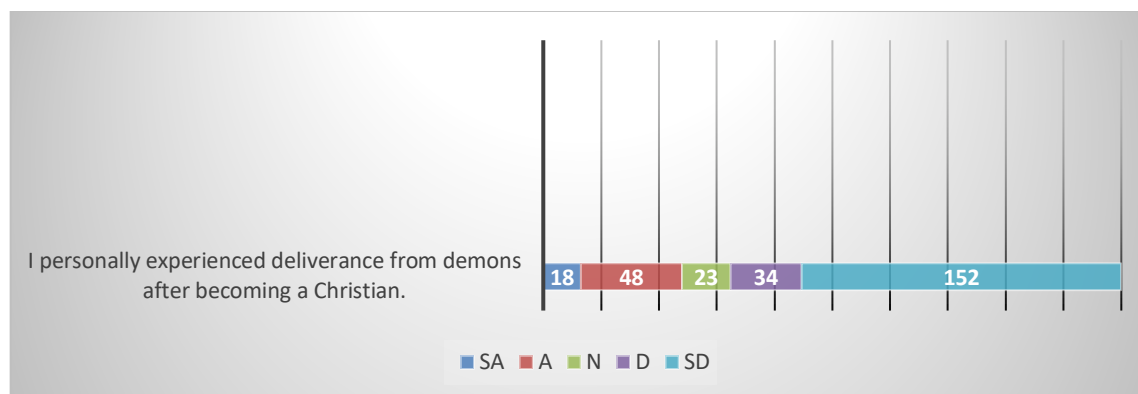


Figure 1. Responses to survey statement 11.

Table 5.15 shows the descriptive result of survey item 12. The result shows the mean response of the respondents as 3.53, representing *disagree*. The result further indicates that the mode and median for the item are both 5.00, while the standard deviation is 1.67. The result, from the mean above, gives an indication that a majority of the respondents disagree that it is possible to know that a person is possessed of a demon by their behavior.

Table 5.15. Responses to survey opinions statement 12

S/N	Item statement	Mean (\bar{x})	Mode	Median	Standard deviation	Practice expressed
12.	In my opinion, it is possible to know that a person is possessed of a demon by their behavior.	3.53	5.00	5.00	1.67	Disagree

Table 5.16 shows the descriptive result of survey item 13. The result shows the mean response of the respondents with 4.09, representing *disagree*. The result also indicates that the mode and median for the item are both 4.00, indicating *disagree*. The standard deviation is 0.633, showing a low dispersion. From the mean above, it shows that the respondents disagree that spiritual deliverance comes from ATR.

Table 5.16. Responses to survey opinions statement 13

S/N	Item statement	Mean (\bar{x})	Mode	Median	Standard deviation	Practice expressed
13.	In my opinion, spiritual deliverance comes from African Traditional Religion.	4.09	4.00	4.00	0.633	Disagree

Table 5.17 shows the descriptive result of survey item 14. The result shows the response of the respondents with a mean of 4.15, representing *disagree*. The result also indicates that the mode and median for the item are both 4.00, indicating *disagree*. The standard deviation is 0.675, which shows a low dispersion. The indication by the above mean is that the respondents disagree that Pentecostal practice in spiritual deliverance is the same as what the African traditional priests do.

Table 5.17. Responses to survey opinions statement 14

S/N	Item statement	Mean (\bar{x})	Mode	Median	Standard deviation	Practice expressed
14.	Pentecostal practice in spiritual deliverance is the same as what the African Traditional priests do.	4.15	4.00	4.00	0.675	Disagree

Table 5.18 shows the descriptive result of survey item 15. The result shows the mean response of the respondents as 3.62, representing *disagree*. The result further

indicates that the mode and median for the item are both 4.00, indicating *disagree*. The standard deviation is 1.061, showing a high dispersion. The indication by the mean is that the respondents disagree that every person who is yet to be delivered from demons belongs to Satan.

Table 5.18. Responses to survey opinions statement 15

S/N	Item statement	Mean (\bar{x})	Mode	Median	Standard deviation	Practice expressed
15.	In my opinion, every person who is yet to be delivered from demons belongs to Satan.	3.62	4.00	4.00	1.061	Disagree

Table 5.19 shows the descriptive result of survey item 16. The result shows the mean response of the respondents as 2.00, representing *agree*. The result also indicates that the mode and median for the item are 2.00, indicating *agree*. The standard deviation is 0.688, and shows a low dispersion. From the above mean, the result shows that respondents agree an immoral lifestyle is evidence that one is in need of spiritual deliverance.

Table 5.19. Responses to survey opinions statement 16

S/N	Item statement	Mean (\bar{x})	Mode	Median	Standard deviation	Practice expressed
16.	In my opinion, immoral lifestyle is evidence that one is in need of spiritual deliverance.	2.00	2.00	2.00	0.688	Agree

Table 5.20 shows the descriptive result of survey item 17. The result shows the response of the respondents with a mean of 2.22, representing *agree*. The result also shows that the mode and median for the item are both 2.00, indicating *agree*. The

standard deviation is 0.833, showing a low dispersion. The indication from the above mean shows that respondents agree mental illness is evidence that one is in need of spiritual deliverance.

Table 5.20. Responses to survey opinions statement 17

S/N	Item statement	Mean (\bar{x})	Mode	Median	Standard deviation	Practice expressed
17.	Mental illness is evidence that one is in need of spiritual deliverance.	2.22	2.00	2.00	0.833	Agree

In summary, the responses from the questionnaire reveal, according to the respondents, Pentecostal Christians are those who speak in tongues, Pentecostal churches differ from non-Pentecostals in some of their theologies and practices, spiritual deliverance means to set a captive free from the domination of demons, and only those that are possessed by demons need spiritual deliverance. The study also reveals the opinions of the respondents that preaching and teaching on spiritual deliverance occur regularly in Pentecostal churches in Jos North, anyone who is saved can minister spiritual deliverance, and interviewing and praying for the demon-possessed person is the process of conducting spiritual deliverance. The study reveals that the respondents disagree that once saved there is no need for spiritual deliverance, and that the Bible does not say if a Christian needs spiritual deliverance. The findings, as seen in figure 1, show that a majority of the respondents strongly disagree that they personally experienced deliverance from demons after becoming a Christian.

The study further reveals that the self-described practice of breaking of curses, understood by respondents to be a form of spiritual deliverance, is common among some Pentecostal churches in Jos North. Findings also reveal that in the opinions of the

respondents, it is not possible to know if a person is possessed of demons by their behavior, it is not true that everyone who is yet to undergo deliverance from demons belongs to Satan, and an immoral lifestyle and mental illness show that a person is in need of spiritual deliverance. The study also reveals that spiritual deliverance does not come from the ATR.

Semi-structured Interview Response for Church Leaders in Jos

A semi-structured interview guide containing twenty items (see appendix B) was used to sample the opinions of church leaders (clergy and laity) in Jos North for Research Question 3 (RQ3). Eleven out of the twenty items were used for RQ3A, while nine items were used for RQ3B. The items on the interview guide were developed from the issues that emerged in the focus group responses to RQ3; thus, the interview was to further respond to RQ3. Research Question 3A states: What are the perceptions of Pentecostals in Jos North regarding spiritual deliverance? Respondents are identified as IRP1 (Interview Response Participant 1), IRP2, IRP3, and so on.

Report of Interview Response for Church Leaders in Jos for Research Question 3A

Eleven out of the twenty interview questions were used for RQ3A. The items include questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19. The individual questions and the responses from participants are given below.

Interview question 1

In establishing the perception of Pentecostals in Jos North regarding spiritual deliverance, the first question in the semi-structured interview guide asked: What is your church affiliation (your denomination)? How long have you been in this church? Item 1

intended to find out if participants in the interview were drawn from different denominations in Jos. Findings reveal that ten out of fifteen respondents are from ten different denominations (Pentecostal churches) in Jos North. Five of the participants (IRP2, IRP7, IRP9, IRP11, and IRP13) did not specify their denominations. This, however, was in line with the instruction in the semi-structured interview guide, which stated, “If there are items you do not know the answer to or you do not want to answer, please skip them” (see appendix B). For a full list of the denominations whose leaders participated in the interview, see appendix K. The list further shows that the participants in the church leaders’ interview are from fifteen different denominations.

Interview question 2

The second question in the semi-structured interview guide asked: What do you understand by spiritual deliverance? Do you believe this understanding is peculiar to you, or others share similar view? Item 2 intended to find out what the respondents think spiritual deliverance means to them and the Pentecostal Christian community in Jos North. All fifteen participants agreed that spiritual deliverance involves freeing a person from demonic possession. They, however, expressed this using various terms: “set people free from Satanic bondage” (IRP1 and 7), “liberating...demon possessed” (IRP2 and 15), “delivering...from devil’s bondage” (IRP3), “setting free anyone possessed by devil” (IRP4), “setting free from oppression of devil” (IRP5), “setting free from demonic possession” (IRP6, 11, and 12), “liberate captives from satanic oppression” (IRP8), “breaking someone under the control of an evil spirit” (IRP9), “to free from satanic

manipulations, attacks, curses” (IRP10), “set free from satanic afflictions and devices” (IRP13), and the “ejection of strangers of darkness from...a believer” (IRP14).³²

Interview question 3

The third question in the semi-structured interview guide asked: What are your beliefs and practices on spiritual deliverance? Item 3 intended to find out what the respondents believe about spiritual deliverance. Respondents were generally of the opinion that they all believe in the reality of demons, demon possession, and the possibility of being set free through the Word of God and the authority of the name of Jesus. IRP5, 6, and 10 shared the belief that demonic possession is caused by living a sinful life, and that staying away from sin closes the door of one’s life to demons.³³ One respondent said, “These people encountered Jesus’ saving grace, the demons vacate their bodies.”³⁴ Twelve out of fifteen respondents believe that born-again Christians cannot be demon possessed, hence deliverance is conducted on a possessed person, usually a sinner.³⁵ Two of the participants specifically hold the opinion that spiritual deliverance is for everybody, both Christians and non-Christians.³⁶

³²Interview by author, Jos, Nigeria, 2018. Response to question 3. Transcript is available upon request.

³³Interview by author, Jos, Nigeria, 2018. Response to question 3. Transcript is available upon request.

³⁴Interview by author, Jos, Nigeria, 2018. Response to question 3. Transcript is available upon request.

³⁵Interview by author, Nassarawa Gwong, Jos, Nigeria, December 5, 2018. Transcript is available upon request.

³⁶Interview by author, Jos, Nigeria, 2018. Response to question 4. Transcript is available upon request.

Interview question 4

The fourth question in the semi-structured interview guide asked: Do you personally carry out deliverance? Do you sometimes see victims delivered from demons? The intention of this question was to find out if the respondents do personally practice spiritual deliverance. Findings show that thirteen out of the fifteen participants agreed that they have occasionally carried out deliverance on demon-possessed persons on a personal basis. Only two (IRP1 and 10) have not. On the second part of the question, all fifteen participants responded in affirmative that they have sometimes seen victims delivered from demons.³⁷

Interview question 9

The ninth question in the semi-structured interview guide asked: What does your church teach about spiritual deliverance? Explain what you mean. Item 9 intended to discover what individual denominations of the interviewees teach about spiritual deliverance. Findings reveal that all fifteen participants teach the reality of demon possession and the possibility of deliverance, which must be done through the name of Jesus and the Word of God. The findings further reveal that twelve out of the fifteen participants believe and teach that believers in Christ Jesus are free from demon possession because Christians are the temple of God, and demons cannot cohabit with the Spirit of God in the believer. Three participants hold the teaching that everyone, including Christians, needs to be delivered in order to be free indeed.³⁸

³⁷Interview by author, Jos, Nigeria, 2018. Response to question 8. Transcript is available upon request.

³⁸Interview by author, Jos, Nigeria, 2018. Response to question 14. Transcript is available upon request.

Interview question 14

The fourteenth question in the semi-structured interview guide asked: What do you think that makes some pastors to agree with each other on procedures of deliverance while others completely disagree? Item 14 intended to find out why church leaders in Jos disagree over the procedures of spiritual deliverance. Findings reveal that out of the twelve persons that responded to the question, six attributed the cause of disagreement to ignorance of Bible-based procedures, three say it is caused by unbiblical teachings, while three other respondents say it is immaturity.

Interview question 15

The fifteenth question in the semi-structured interview guide asked: How does the leadership of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) Jos react to the practices among Pentecostals on spiritual deliverance? What result does the reaction or non-reaction of the leaders yield in Jos? Item 15 intended to find out the role the PFN plays to monitor the practices of its Pentecostal Christians in Jos North regarding spiritual deliverance. Findings reveal that thirteen persons responded to the question. Of this number, nine respondents described the PFN leadership as non-reactive. Various³⁹ expressions were stated to describe this, such as “PFN is not in control” and “PFN is passive.” Four of the respondents described the PFN leadership as reactive through “warning against unbiblical practices” and “advising its members during meetings to follow Scriptures.”

³⁹Interview by author, Jos, Nigeria, 2018. Responses to question 15. Transcript is available upon request.

Interview question 16

The sixteenth question in the semi-structured interview guide asked: In your opinion, what is the highest theological qualification of the majority of Pentecostal pastors in Jos North? Do you think their theological qualification affects their perception and practices on spiritual deliverance? Explain clearly. Item 16 sought to discover the theological qualifications of Pentecostal pastors in Jos North, and to find out the relationship between their qualifications and the ways they practice spiritual deliverance. From the findings, twelve out of fifteen participants revealed that Pentecostal pastors in Jos North do not have theological qualification.⁴⁰

On the possible effect their theological qualifications may have on their perception and practices of spiritual deliverance, all fifteen participants agreed that those with theological training were doing their best in maintaining a balance in their teachings and practices. They further added that those without theological training were spoiling the work, as one cannot give out what one does not have.⁴¹

Interview question 17

The seventeenth question in the semi-structured interview guide asked: Give an example of past experiences of a spiritual deliverance incident you personally witnessed. Who was delivered, and from what? Item 17 intended to find out the respondents' personal experience with spiritual deliverance incidents. Findings reveal that ten participants who responded to the question had all witnessed such incidents of spiritual

⁴⁰Interview by author, Jos, Nigeria, 2018. Response to question 16. Transcript is available upon request.

⁴¹Interview by author, Jos, Nigeria, 2018. Response to question 16. Transcript is available upon request.

deliverance. However, they could not ascertain whether those delivered were born-again Christians. There was no indication if those delivered were church members or visitors.⁴² The findings further reveal that the victims were delivered from demons, cancer, and sicknesses.⁴³

Interview question 18

The eighteenth question in the semi-structured interview guide asked: In your opinion, can a Christian be demon possessed? Give one more explanation to support your conviction. Item 18 intended to find out the opinion of the respondent about whether or not a Christian can be possessed by demons. Findings reveal that thirteen out of fifteen of the respondents said that a Christian cannot be possessed by demons. They, however, agreed that if a Christian backslides, they can be possessed by demons. Only two participants⁴⁴ (IRP2 and 14) believe that a Christian can be possessed by demons.⁴⁵

Interview question 19

The nineteenth question in the semi-structured interview guide asked: In your opinion, are there mental health issues that have been mistaken for demon possession? Narrate an incident to illustrate this. Item 19 intended to find out if the respondent thinks there is any relationship between mental illness and demon possession. This question was

⁴²Interview by author, Jos, Nigeria, 2018. Response to question 17. Transcript is available upon request.

⁴³Interview by author, Jos, Nigeria, 2018. Response to question 17. Transcript is available upon request.

⁴⁴Interview by author, Jos, Nigeria. Responses to question 8 by IRP2 and IRP14. Transcript is available upon request.

⁴⁵Interview by author, Jos, Nigeria, 2018. Response to question 18. Transcript is available upon request.

answered by eight participants, with four saying they had no idea if a situation exists where mental health issues have been mistaken for demon possession. Four agreed that such a situation exists.⁴⁶ Two respondents described such a situation. The first shared:

There is some madness that may be caused by demons, like the case of the man who was possessed by legions of demons. However, there are instances where the mental problem is not demonic while people mistake it for demonic case. An incident is that of a brother in Tudun Wada few years ago. He had a psychiatric problem. Deliverance and prayer people gathered around him for days praying. His case grew worse until his pastor took him to a teaching hospital, and with the application of some drugs he became calm and normal.⁴⁷

The second participant narrated,

My father was a psychiatrist. There were some incidents when my then prayer warriors could “cast out” demons from purely medical case, and of course no demons came out because they were no demons there in the first place. These mentally sick people were never cured until my psychiatrist dad administered medications. I personally learned from these incidents.⁴⁸

These two narrations are examples the respondents gave to support their belief that a mental problem may sometimes be caused by demonic possession and may sometimes not be caused by demons.⁴⁹

Report of Interview Response for Church Leaders in Jos for Research Question 3B

Nine out of the twenty interview questions were used for RQ3B. The items include questions 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 20. The individual questions and the responses from participants are given below.

⁴⁶Interview by author, Jos, Nigeria, 2018. Response to question 19. Transcript is available upon request.

⁴⁷Interview by author, Nassarawa Gwong, Jos, Nigeria on December 5, 2018. Transcript is available upon request.

⁴⁸Interview by author, Rock Havens, Jos, Nigeria on December 10, 2018. Transcript is available upon request.

⁴⁹Interview by author, Jos, Nigeria, 2018. Response to question 19. Transcript is available upon request.

Interview question 5

The fifth question in the semi-structured interview guide asked: What are the self-described practices of your church on spiritual deliverance? Item 5 intended to find out what the churches in Jos North practice on spiritual deliverance. Findings reveal that churches in Jos North practice spiritual deliverance in a variety of ways. The various ways include using the name of Jesus (n=4), interviewing victims and laying hands on them (n=2), counseling victims and prescribing specific days for them to fast and pray (n=2), teaching members that every Christian can cast out demons (n=2), and using anointing oil as well as serving communion to victims (n=1).⁵⁰

Interview question 6

The sixth question in the semi-structured interview guide asked: In your opinion, do you think your church practice of spiritual deliverance is consistent with the Bible? Item 6 intended to find out if the practices of Pentecostal churches in Jos North on spiritual deliverance are in agreement with biblical teachings or not. The responses reveal that all fifteen participants agree that their church practices on deliverance are consistent with the Bible.⁵¹

Interview question 7

The seventh question in the semi-structured interview guide asked: Give a brief narration of an incident of deliverance practiced in your church. Item 7 intended to find out incidents where spiritual deliverance took place in the respondent's church. Findings

⁵⁰Interview by author, Jos, Nigeria, 2018. Response to question 5. Transcript is available upon request.

⁵¹Interview by author, Jos, Nigeria, 2018. Response to question 6. Transcript is available upon request.

reveal that five out of the eleven persons that responded to the question narrated incidents where demon-possessed victims were delivered in their local churches. From one of the narrations, “A demon-possessed girl was manifesting strange behaviors during a prayer fellowship. The spirit in her was rebuked. She flailed on the floor vomiting. She was delivered by the name of Jesus.”⁵²

Interview question 8

The eighth question in the semi-structured interview guide asked: How often does your church teach about spiritual deliverance? Explain. Item 8 intended to find out if teaching about spiritual deliverance is a frequent practice in Pentecostal churches in Jos North. Findings reveal that teaching about spiritual deliverance in Pentecostal churches in Jos North is mostly done occasionally as the need arises (n=10), but is done weekly in some churches (n=3).⁵³

Interview question 10

The tenth question in the semi-structured interview guide asked: Do you think Pentecostals practice what the Bible teaches about spiritual deliverance? Narrate what Pentecostals do which agree with what is written in the Bible. Item 10 intended to find out whether the practices of Pentecostal churches in Jos North regarding spiritual deliverance are in accordance with the Bible. Findings reveal that all fifteen participants agree that some churches follow the Bible, while others do not. The participants further narrated that those who follow the Bible pray for victims in the name of Jesus, and

⁵²Interview by author, Jos, Nigeria, 2018. Response to question 7. Transcript is available upon request.

⁵³Interview by author, Jos, Nigeria, 2018. Response to question 8. Transcript is available upon request.

deliver them by binding and commanding the demons out. Those who do not follow the Bible charge money, flog, slap, and pour water and oil on the victims.⁵⁴ These practices are not in accordance with biblical practices of spiritual deliverance. The idea of trading the grace of God for money was opposed by Peter, who rebuked Simon, describing his idea of paying money to receive the Holy Spirit as wickedness (Acts 8:18–21).

Romancing with unscriptural practices could result in a paradigm shift from Christianity to traditional religion, or a combination of both, resulting in syncretism, even without it being noticed by the practitioners.

Interview question 11

The eleventh question in the semi-structured interview guide asked: Give me some examples of the practices on spiritual deliverance among Pentecostals in Jos North that are acceptable to you. What are the reasons for your answer? Item 11 intended to find out if there are practices by Pentecostal churches in Jos North on spiritual deliverance that the respondents accepted, and reason for the acceptance. Findings reveal that twelve out of the thirteen persons who responded to the question agree that they accept any practice that is Bible based. Five persons out of the thirteen respondents specifically identify the practices of laying of hands, praying for the victims in the name of Jesus, and using God's Word to command the demons to leave. They agree that they accept these practices because they are scriptural.⁵⁵

⁵⁴Interview by author, Jos, Nigeria, 2018. Response to question 10. Transcript is available upon request.

⁵⁵Interview by author, Jos, Nigeria, 2018. Response to question 11. Transcript is available upon request.

Interview question 12

The twelfth question in the semi-structured interview guide asked: Give me some examples of the practices on spiritual deliverance among Pentecostals in Jos North that are not acceptable to you. Tell why you don't accept them. Item 12 intended to find out if there are practices by Pentecostal churches in Jos North on spiritual deliverance that the respondents do not accept, and the reason for the unacceptance. Findings reveal that from the thirteen out of fifteen that answered this question, twelve agree that they do not accept practices that do not conform to the Bible. They identified unbiblical practices as: using eggs, coconut water, animal sacrifice, giving oil to drink, and flogging victims (n=6), charging money (n=3), and praying for the enemies of the victims and the spirits in them to fall down and die (n=2). They concluded these practices are not scriptural.⁵⁶

Interview question 13

The thirteenth question in the semi-structured interview guide asked: Can you please list some of the common ways the leaders/pastors use when conducting deliverances? Item 13 intended to find out some of the common ways Pentecostal leaders/pastors in Jos North use when conducting deliverance that are known to the respondents. The methods mentioned include laying on of hands, praying in the name of Jesus, using God's Word to command demons, and counseling (n=8) and teaching and leading victims to Christ after deliverance prayer (n=2).⁵⁷

⁵⁶Interview by author, Jos, Nigeria, 2018. Response to question 12. Transcript is available upon request.

⁵⁷Interview by author, Jos, Nigeria, 2018. Response to question 13. Transcript is available upon request.

Interview question 20

The twentieth question in the semi-structured interview guide asked: Are there practices of deliverance by Pentecostals in Jos that are similar to what the African traditional worshipers do? Narrate an incident to illustrate this. Item 20 intended to find out if there are practices of spiritual deliverance among Pentecostal churches in Jos North that are similar to what ATR practices. Findings reveal that eleven out of fifteen participants agree that some of the practices of Pentecostal churches in Jos are similar to what ATR priests do. They identified these practices as: using objects such as sand, salt, coconut water, and fruits; flogging the victim (n=6); and animal sacrifice (n=2).⁵⁸

In the second part of the question, which asks respondents to narrate an incident to illustrate their response, two of the participants gave their narration. One participant narrated that

some deliverance ministers use broom to sweep away the demons, burning pieces of papers that carry prayer requests to send away the evil spirits, bathing the possessed person, giving coconut water to drink, giving olive oil (anointing oil) to drink, tying the victim with new rope, burning incense, and calling the person's name loudly for a particular number of times, usually seven or seventy-seven times.⁵⁹

The above narration shows that the narrator is associating these practices with ATR rather than biblical Christianity. The second participant narrated that “some pastors practice syncretism and call it spiritual deliverance. There was a case when a minister used eggs in water in a small bowl and gun powder with one large Bible in a bid to cast

⁵⁸Interview by author, Jos, Nigeria, 2018. Response to question 20. Transcript is available upon request.

⁵⁹Interview by author, Nassarawa Gwong, Jos, Nigeria on December 5, 2018. Transcript is available upon request.

out an ‘ancestral demon’ he believed possessed his deliverer.”⁶⁰ The point of the argument in this narration is that some Pentecostal pastors/churches import the practices of ATR into Christianity, which is syncretism. Another example of similarity between the practices of Pentecostals in Jos and African traditional worshipers on spiritual deliverance is that just as traditional worshipers consult traditional priests to kill their enemies, in the same way churches/pastors pray that their “enemies must fall down and die, sprinkling sand in the four corners of the earth, going to junctions and sprinkling what they called the blood of Jesus and going there to pray. It is the same with African traditional religion, which goes to junction and do some incantation.”⁶¹ This respondent categorically stated that there is no difference between what some Pentecostals do and what traditional worshipers do in the name of spiritual deliverance.⁶²

Summary

The research study set out to discover what constitutes a biblically sound and contextually relevant theology of spiritual deliverance among Pentecostal believers in Jos North, Nigeria. The study therefore examined the perceptions and practices of Pentecostal Christians in Jos North regarding spiritual deliverance. Three research questions were developed (RQ1A, B, and C; 2A and B; and 3A and B) to guide the study. Three instruments (focus group, self-administered questionnaire, and semi-structured interview guide) were used to elicit data from respondents, while the ICA method was

⁶⁰Interview by author, Rock Haven, Jos, Nigeria, December 10, 2018. Transcript is available upon request.

⁶¹Interview by author, Gada Biyu, Jos, Nigeria, December 14, 2018. Transcript is available upon request.

⁶²Interview by author, Jos, Nigeria, 2018. Response to question 20. Transcript is available upon request.

used for the biblical and social-science literature. The focus group sampled the opinions of Pentecostal leaders in Jos North, the self-administered questionnaires sampled the responses of members of Pentecostal churches in Jos North purposively drawn from sixty denominations, and the semi-structured interview guide sampled opinions of Pentecostal pastors/lay leaders in Jos North.

RQ1 sought to discover what the biblical literature reveals about spiritual deliverance. The biblical literature reveals that spiritual deliverance is a process by which a demonic spirit is expelled from a victim, with the ultimate goal of setting the person free. Various terms used in the Bible for spiritual deliverance were also described. Three scriptural passages (Matthew 8:16–17, Matthew 12:43–45, and Luke 13:10–13) were exegetically studied. The passages reveal that there is no reference to a Christian being delivered of demons, and invariably no instance of a Christian being demonized or possessed.

RQ2 sought to discover what the precedent literature reveals about Christians and deliverance from demons. It also sought to discover what the African culture and traditional religion reveal about deliverance from demon possession. Findings reveal that there is no evidence among the various authors that a Christian was ever delivered from demons. The African traditional belief recognizes the existence of spirit beings and their activities among humans. This includes the good as well as the bad spirits. The findings further reveal that, according to African traditional belief, bad spirits or demons cannot inhabit or possess good people.

The questionnaire was used to collect data from members of Pentecostal churches in Jos North to partially answer RQ3. The survey data reveal that Christians in Jos North

agree that it is people who are possessed by demons that need spiritual deliverance, and that every person who is born-again can minister spiritual deliverance. The findings of the survey indicate that the respondents are of the opinion that the Bible does not say if a Christian needs spiritual deliverance. They agree, however, that they never personally experienced deliverance from demons after becoming a Christian.

The responses to the interview were drawn from fifteen different Pentecostal churches in Jos North. Findings reveal that spiritual deliverance involves the freeing of a victim from demonic possession, and that the practices of deliverance vary from denomination to denomination. Some of the practices are in agreement with biblical teaching, but others are not. The data also reveal that the PFN does not exercise control over the activities of the different Pentecostal churches in Jos, though it gives instruction, advice, and warning to members who attend its meetings. The findings also reveal the opinions of the respondents, who agree that a Christian cannot be possessed by demons. Respondents, however, agree that if a Christian backslides, they can be possessed by demons. The data reveal that the respondents are of the opinion that a mental problem may sometimes be caused by demonic possession, and sometimes not by demons. The findings further reveal that some of the practices of Pentecostal churches in Jos are similar to what African traditional religious priests do. These include such practices as flogging or beating victims of demon possession as a deliverance process, charging or asking for money as ransom payment for deliverance, and breaking of coconut and eggs as a requirement for the deliverance.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

In an attempt to discover a biblically sound Pentecostal perspective of spiritual deliverance, as it relates to Pentecostal churches in Jos, Nigeria, an investigation was carried out that involved a critical examination of biblical-theological literature and social-science literature, and a field study was done of selected Pentecostal churches in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State, Nigeria. Having presented the results of the findings,¹ this chapter first presents a summary of the findings, with conclusions. It then submits the implication of the study, recommendations, suggestions for further study, and a summary.

Summary of Findings

This section of the study gives the summary of findings from the study. Beginning with research question one, it summarizes findings under research question 1A, B, and C. It also summarizes findings from research question 2A and B. Under research question 3A and B, the section summarizes the findings from the focus group, questionnaire, and semi-structured interview.

¹See chapter 5. Chapter 5 presented the result of the biblical-theological literature, the result of social-science literature, and the result of the field study realized through the survey of opinions on spiritual deliverance in Pentecostal churches of Jos, focus group discussion on spiritual deliverance among leaders of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria, Jos North chapter, and interview on spiritual deliverance conducted among Pentecostal church pastors/lay leaders in Jos.

Research Question One

Research Question 1A

Research Question 1A states: What does Matthew 8:16–17 reveal about the deliverance of a Christian from demons? The biblical-theological literature in Matthew 8:16–17 reveals that spiritual deliverance refers to setting free from satanic possession. The exegetical and critical analysis of Matthew 8:16–17 reveals that the beneficiaries of Jesus' deliverance from demons were not Christians. The data also reveals that the demon possessed brought to Jesus (v. 16) were hopeless and helpless sinners who were presented to him for his help and mercy upon them. The literature reveals the remarks of Matthew in verse 17, that the incident was to fulfill the prophesy of Isaiah that Jesus "took up our infirmities and carried our diseases." The literature further reveals that the reference to the Isaiah passage (53:4–5), "He took up our infirmities...and by His stripes we are healed," essentially refers to the atonement and the blessings accrued to it.²

Research Question 1B

Research Question 1B states: What does Matthew 12:43–45 reveal about the deliverance of a Christian from demons? The biblical-theological literature in Matthew 12:43–45 reveals that there is no reference to a Christian being delivered from demons. The literature reveals that Jesus reacted against the Pharisees for their blasphemy and unbelief. The literature further reveals that the phrase, "When an evil spirit comes out of a man" (v. 43), which may connote a deliverance from an evil spirit, does not imply

²See chapter 2, section on exegesis of Matthew 8:16–17 on spiritual deliverance.

freedom from sin. Therefore, the passage does not give an indication that a Christian can be demon possessed or that a Christian was once delivered from demon possession.³

Research Question 1C

Research Question 1C states: What does Luke 13:10–16 reveal about the deliverance of a Christian from demons? The biblical-theological literature reveals that the description of the woman whom Jesus set free from demons as a “daughter of Abraham”⁴ does not suggest that she was a Christian. The literature reveals that Jesus was rebuking the Pharisees for their hypocrisy by comparing and contrasting the saving of an animal from starvation and thirst on the Sabbath by its owner (invariably the Pharisees) and the saving of a “daughter of Abraham,” (a Jew) and, in fact, any human, from Satan’s bondage on the Sabbath by her owner (the God of Abraham).⁵ The literature further reveals that the nature of the woman’s sickness, though caused by demons, does not give an indication that the demon was residing in her when Jesus met her.⁶

Research Question Two

Research Question 2A

Research Question 2A states: What does the precedent related/relevant literature reveal about Christians and deliverance from demonic possession? The social-science literature reveals that beliefs about spirit possession and deliverance exist all over the world among peoples of diverse cultures, with some kind of homogeneity of experiences.

³See chapter 2, sections on exegesis of Matthew 12:43–45 on spiritual deliverance.

⁴See chapter 2, “daughter of Abraham.”

⁵Beale and Carson, 334.

⁶See chapter 3, sections on exegesis of Luke 13:10–16 on spiritual deliverance.

The literature also reveals that victims of spirit possession vary from culture to culture, but most predominantly among them are women, children, and the poor.⁷ The literature further indicates that there is no evidence of a Christian being delivered from demonic possession, though the possibility cannot be completely denied. Finally, the literature shows that though individuals with personality disorders may be thought to be demon possessed, the presence of the demonic stands out from other abnormal behavior during clinical counseling.⁸

Research Question 2B

Research Question 2B states: What does African culture and traditional religion reveal about deliverance from demonic possession? The social-science literature indicates that Africans have a culture and tradition that gives more emphasis and attention to the spiritual world. African culture reveals that the family is both physical and spiritual, visible and invisible, and its members include both visible and invisible beings because their departed fathers and loved ones remain the invisible members of the visible family on earth.⁹ The literature also shows that Africans believe in a variety of deities, both good and bad spirits, including demons. The practice of exorcism, which involves the process of persuading the spirits to depart or to keep their distance,¹⁰ is carried out by African traditional priests.¹¹ The literature further reveals that it is not possible for demons to

⁷See chapter 3, sections on anthropological perception of spiritual deliverance.

⁸Thomason.

⁹Gehman, 122–123.

¹⁰Frimpong, 164.

¹¹See chapter 3, sections on spiritual deliverance in African culture and traditional religion.

possess every person. People become possessed by spirits as a result of spiritual weakness, when they have no spiritual power over their bodies, and the laws of retribution, when they have performed an action in the past or present life, therefore rendering their body possessable by evil spirits.¹²

Research Question Three

Research Question 3A

Research Question 3A states: What are the perceptions of Pentecostals in Jos regarding spiritual deliverance? RQ3A sampled the opinions of the PFN leaders in Jos North¹³ through a focus group, the opinions of members of Pentecostal churches in Jos North through a questionnaire, and the opinions of pastors and lay leaders of Pentecostal churches in Jos through a semi-structured interview guide.

Focus group findings on RQ3A

The focus group responses reveal that spiritual deliverance, as understood by Pentecostals in Jos, means freedom from demonic possession, oppression, obsession, depression, torment, and manipulation. The FG also reveals that Pentecostals in Jos believe that spiritual deliverance is for people who are oppressed, depressed, obsessed, possessed, or tormented by Satan. It further reveals that Pentecostals in Jos believe that born-again Christians cannot be possessed by demons. However, if Christians become backslidden, they can be possessed.¹⁴ The findings also reveal that practices of spiritual deliverance in Jos vary according to pastors and churches. Some of the practices are

¹²Bannerman-Richter, 51.

¹³See appendix A: Tables of Research Methodology Options, Table 3, RQ3A.

¹⁴See appendixes G and H.

Bible based, while others are not. The leadership of PFN in Jos North condemns all extra-biblical practices of spiritual deliverance.

Questionnaire findings on RQ3A

Findings from the questionnaire reveal that, according to Pentecostals in Jos, Pentecostal Christians are those who speak in tongues, Pentecostal churches differ from non-Pentecostals in some of their theologies and practices, and spiritual deliverance means to set a captive free from the domination of Satan or his demons. The data reveals that Pentecostals in Jos believe it is only those who are possessed by demons that need spiritual deliverance. The study shows that a majority of the respondents disagree that once saved there is no need for spiritual deliverance, and that, according to Pentecostals in Jos, the Bible does not say if a Christian needs spiritual deliverance. According to the findings, a majority of the respondents reported that they never experienced deliverance from demons after becoming a Christian. The data further indicates that a majority of the respondents believe that it is not possible to know if a person is possessed of demons by their behavior, and that it is not true that everyone who is yet to be delivered from demons belongs to Satan. However, an immoral lifestyle and mental illness can be evidence that one is in need of spiritual deliverance. Findings also reveal that a majority of the respondents do not believe that spiritual deliverance comes from the ATR.

Semi-structured interview findings on RQ3A

Findings from the interview with pastors and lay leaders of Pentecostal churches in Jos North reveal that spiritual deliverance involves freedom from demonic possession. A majority of respondents believe that born-again Christians cannot be demon possessed, and that deliverance is conducted on a possessed person. Respondents have witnessed

victims delivered from demons, vary in their teachings regarding spiritual deliverance, and believe that disagreement among pastors on spiritual deliverance is caused by ignorance, immaturity, and unbiblical teachings. The leadership of the PFN warns members during meetings against unbiblical practices. Respondents believe that a majority of Pentecostal pastors in Jos North do not have theological qualification, and that those without theological training are likely to have a limited biblical understanding of spiritual deliverance. The findings further reveal that the respondents believe that they could not ascertain whether those delivered in churches were born-again Christians, church members, or visitors. The findings show that the respondents believe that the victims were delivered from demons, cancer, and other sicknesses. The data also indicates that the respondents had mixed opinions on whether a mental problem may sometimes be mistaken for demonic possession. However, two narrations were given by those with affirmative response as examples to support their belief that a mental problem may sometimes be caused by demonic possession, and sometimes not by demons.¹⁵

Research Question 3B

Research Question 3B states: What are the self-described practices of Pentecostals in Jos regarding spiritual deliverance? RQ3B data was collected through a focus group comprising the PFN leaders in Jos North, a questionnaire administered to members of Pentecostal churches in Jos North, and a semi-structured interview guide used among pastors and lay leaders of Pentecostal churches in Jos.

¹⁵Interview by author, Jos, Nigeria, 2018. Transcript is available upon request.

Focus group findings on RQ3B

Findings from the focus group on RQ3B reveal that the respondents believe that most pastors and members of Pentecostal churches in Jos North conduct spiritual deliverance in accordance with the Scripture and in accordance with the leading of the Holy Spirit. The respondents believe that others use unscriptural practices in conducting spiritual deliverance due to ignorance, as most of them lack theological education. The findings further reveal that respondents believe that the PFN leadership in Jos North, however, condemns any deliverance practices that have no scriptural support. It also condemns all forms of syncretism in spiritual deliverance. The findings also indicate that Pentecostal pastors in Jos North differ in their practices of spiritual deliverance, which they attribute to the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the apostolic mandate received by the president and founder of each denomination. The findings further indicate that the use of unscriptural practices on spiritual deliverance is responsible in tearing families apart in Jos North.¹⁶ The participants also expressed concern on how the people who had been delivered could be helped to maintain their deliverance, as this has been a challenge among the Pentecostals (see appendix G).

Questionnaire findings on RQ3B

The findings from the questionnaire on RQ3B reveal that preaching and teaching on spiritual deliverance occur regularly in Pentecostal churches in Jos North. Spiritual deliverance is conducted by interviewing and praying for the demon-possessed person. Findings further reveal that the practice of breaking of curses as a form of spiritual deliverance is carried out in Pentecostal churches in Jos North.

¹⁶See appendix G, Focus Group Transcript, responses to “any other question?”

Semi-structured interview findings on RQ3B

Findings from the interview questions on RQ3B indicate that churches in Jos North practice spiritual deliverance in a variety of ways. Some pastors and churches use Bible-based practices, while others do not. The participants narrated the activities of those who do not follow the Bible in their practices, but accept any practices that are Bible-based, such as laying of hands, praying for the victims in the name of Jesus, and using God's Word to command the demons to leave.¹⁷ The findings also indicate that some of the practices of Pentecostal churches in Jos are similar to what African traditional religious priests do.¹⁸

Conclusions

This section intends to answer the problem statement of the study, which states: What constitutes a biblically sound and contextually relevant theology of spiritual deliverance in Jos, Nigeria, given the current beliefs and practices of its Pentecostal pastors and laity? This is done through a critical evaluation of the summary of findings of the study in order to formulate necessary theory.

A review of biblical-theological literature reveals that the Scriptures commonly used to argue for a Christian being possessed by demons, taken in context, show they do not support the teaching or give examples of it. Similarly, there is no reference to a Christian being delivered from demons in the Scriptures examined. It also reveals that the beneficiaries of Jesus' deliverance from demons were not born-again Christians, but hopeless and helpless sinners who were brought to him for his help and mercy. From the

¹⁷Interview by author, Jos, Nigeria, 2018. Transcript is available upon request.

¹⁸Ibid.

exegetical and critical analysis of the biblical passages, it is clear that those who attempt to teach that a Christian can be demon possessed do not have an understanding of sound biblical-theological teaching about spiritual deliverance. Saying what the Bible does not say is tantamount to showing or displaying one's ignorance of the Bible on the particular subject.

The social-science literature shows that beliefs about spirit possession and deliverance exist all over the world, among peoples of diverse cultures, with some homogeneity of experiences. This means beliefs about the existence of demons and their activities in the human experience, including possession and deliverance, is a global concept, hence no longer an issue. The issue, however, is who the victims of demonic possession and therefore candidates for spiritual deliverance are. The literature reveals that victims of spirit possession are predominantly women, children, and the poor; this shows that the vulnerability of these groups, which is so pronounced all over the world in different aspects of life, is also pronounced in the aspect of spiritual deliverance. However, the literature illustrates that demons can possess anybody, irrespective of sex and age, except the born-again believer in Christ. The implications for this are that although women, children, and the poor are predominantly the victims of demon possession and deliverance, born-again Christians, irrespective of demographics, are not vulnerable to demon possession. The literature also reveals that though individuals with personality disorders may be thought to be demon possessed, it is wrong to attribute every abnormal behavior to demon possession. There are certain personality disorders or abnormal behaviors which are sometimes mistaken for demonic possession. Where this happens, the victim of such personality disorders are made to believe that they had

demons, and in a situation where such individual is a Christian, it would then be wrongly concluded that a Christian was possessed and subsequently delivered from demons.

The social-science literature further shows that Africans have a culture and tradition that gives more emphasis and attention to the spirit world. An example is the belief that the family is both physical and spiritual, visible and invisible, and its members include both visible and invisible beings because their departed fathers and loved ones remain the invisible members of the visible family on earth. The belief in a variety of deities, both good spirits and bad, including demons, and the belief that spirits do inhabit humans and carry out their activities through them, are other examples. These beliefs about the spirits have made African traditional priests engage in the practice of exorcism. Interestingly, however, the bad spirits or demons do not possess good people. The implications of this are that a Christian cannot be demon possessed, judging from the African perspective that bad spirits or demons do not possess or inhabit good people. Christians are not just *good people* in terms of moral goodness, being good by loving one's neighbor, not thinking evil against fellow humans, and helping the needy; Christians have more than moral goodness, they have Jesus Christ in their lives. One of the fundamental truths about Christianity is that a believer is a person who is delivered from the devil and indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, those in favor of the view that a born-again Christian cannot be possessed by demons see it as unthinkable that one who is delivered from the devil would still be indwelt by a demon, or that the Holy Spirit could live in the same person with these evil spirits.

The field research findings demonstrate that spiritual deliverance, as understood by Pentecostals in Jos, means freedom from demonic possession, oppression, obsession,

depression, torment, and manipulation. Spiritual deliverance is for people who are oppressed, depressed, obsessed, possessed, or tormented by Satan or his demons. Born-again Christians, according to a majority view, cannot be possessed by demons. However, if Christians become backslidden, they can be possessed. Teachings and practices of spiritual deliverance in Jos vary according to pastors and denominations. Some are Bible-based, while others are not. Some teach that Christians are free from demon possession because they are the temple of God, and demons cannot cohabit with the Spirit of God; others teach that everyone, including Christians, needs spiritual deliverance. Disagreement among pastors on spiritual deliverance is caused by ignorance, immaturity, and unbiblical teachings. The majority of Pentecostal pastors in Jos North do not have theological qualification. Those with theological training attempt to follow the Bible in their teachings and practices on spiritual deliverance, while those without theological training express a limited biblical understanding of spiritual deliverance. Some Pentecostal pastors in Jos use unscriptural practices in conducting spiritual deliverance. They use practices such as breaking coconut; breaking eggs; flogging or slapping victims; pouring water and oil on the victims; giving oil, coconut water, or another concoction to drink; sacrificing animals; praying for the enemies of the victims and the spirits in them to fall down and die; and requiring payment of a prescribed amount of money before deliverance is carried out on victims. They use false prophecies to bring the husband against his wife and a child against the father, because of ignorance. Some of these practices are similar to what African traditional religious priests do, such as using objects like sand, salt, coconut water, or fruits; flogging victims; and sacrificing

animals. This means that some Pentecostal pastors/churches import the practices of ATR into Christianity, which is syncretism.

These are some components of a theology of spiritual deliverance that are informed by the perceptions, beliefs, and practices of Pentecostal Christians in Jos North, Nigeria. All the leaders sampled for the study, including the Pentecostal leaders in Jos North and pastors and lay leaders, showed a common characteristic regarding the meaning of deliverance and the candidate for deliverance. This common characteristic involves the problem of semantics. They do not seem to see the difference between the word *possession*, and other words such as *oppression*, *obsession*, *depression*, *torment*, and *manipulation*, which they use synonymously with the former. The implications of this are that there is a misunderstanding regarding the biblically sound concept of demonic possession and deliverance. Moreover, by not being biblically specific in the choice of word, the tendency is to include everyone among those needing deliverance, since anyone can be oppressed, manipulated, or tormented by demons. This could be responsible for the opinion of the few who say everyone needs spiritual deliverance, including Christians, even though a majority agree that Christians cannot be possessed by demons unless they backslide. The word *backslide*, as used by the pastors and lay leaders in Jos, does not state at what level of a Christian's backsliding demons can possess them. This poses some problems, considering the fact that backsliding is a gradual process of losing one's relationship with Christ and possibly ultimately losing one's faith. Additionally, there is hope for backsliders if they return to God; hence, they are usually called upon to return to God.

It is also important to consider what happens in the nature of man at salvation. At salvation, the various aspects of man are affected. Salvation not only saves man, but also provides him with safety. It not only affords him a change of status from sinner to saint, but also gives him a change of ownership, from property of Satan to temple of God, the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit, a child of God, thus qualifying him to share in the inheritance of the saints.¹⁹ The question is, does backsliding immediately and automatically dispossess the backsliding Christian of the presence of the Holy Spirit? Does the Holy Spirit walk out of the Christian and walk in again, following the behaviors of the Christian, so that one is a Christian today, the next day not, and then maybe a Christian again, until finally they either are or are not? The implications of this are that it is likely the church leaders are using the wrong word when they say Christians can be possessed by demons if they *backslide*, thereby the problem of semantics is seen again. If this is so, it becomes necessary to address the issue from a biblically sound theology of spiritual deliverance.

All pastors and laities interviewed, and the PFN leaders who expressed their opinions through the focus group, attest to the fact that the majority of Pentecostal pastors in Jos North do not have theological training or qualification, or a secular education beyond a secondary school level. The results of this are not far-fetched. No wonder there is disagreement among the pastors due to ignorance, immaturity, and unbiblical teachings. No wonder they vary and differ in their teachings and practices, with some following the Bible, while others do not. No wonder some of the practices of the Pentecostal pastors and churches in Jos are similar to what the ATR priests do, hence a syncretism of religion. The implication of this is that the fundamental problem that

¹⁹See chapter 2, section on what happens to man in salvation.

challenges the perceptions, beliefs, and practices of the Pentecostal pastors and churches in Jos is the problem of ignorance of what constitutes a biblically sound and contextually relevant theology of spiritual deliverance. In the same vein, another implication is the problem of a lack of a culture of training for pastoral ministry. Therefore, there is need to develop a biblically sound and contextually relevant theology of spiritual deliverance in Jos, Nigeria, such that would also create among Pentecostals in Jos the culture of training for ministry.

Intentional Biblically Sound and Contextually Relevant Theology of Spiritual Deliverance in Jos, Nigeria

The perceptions, beliefs, and practices of Pentecostal Christians in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State, Nigeria on spiritual deliverance have informed this proposed intentional biblically sound and contextually relevant theology of spiritual deliverance in Jos. These conclusions have emerged from the findings of the study and will be stated critically, analytically, and visually.

Components of a Biblically Sound Theology of Spiritual Deliverance

For any theology of spiritual deliverance to be biblically sound, it must be Bible-based in all its ramifications. This would involve defining the following components:

1. Spiritual deliverance
2. Beneficiary of spiritual deliverance
3. Biblical-theological word for demon possession
4. Nature of man before salvation
5. Nature of man at salvation
6. Christians and spiritual deliverance

Spiritual Deliverance

The biblical-theological literature reveals that spiritual deliverance involves the expulsion of unclean spirits from a person. It is the process of setting a captive free by getting rid of indwelling demons. It means to free people from the dominion of demons by casting out evil spirits from the victims, or the process whereby a demonic spirit's influence over an individual is broken and the freedom to choose is restored.²⁰ These various usages paint a picture of slavery, which presents the evil spirits as a slave-master and the human victim as a helpless slave who must exhibit traits that befit the life and the expectations of the slave-master. Therefore, a biblically sound theology of spiritual deliverance must clearly state that in spiritual deliverance there is a spiritual personality, demon or demons; that this spiritual personality inhabits or indwells the human body of its victim; and that at the instance of deliverance, the spiritual personality is evicted or expelled out of the human's body.

Since deliverance from demons is not synonymous with new birth, the person delivered from demons must personally repent and accept Christ as Lord and personal Savior to become a believer in Christ or born-again Christian. When this happens, the Holy Spirit takes over the person's life, and they begin a life of walking in the Spirit. As revealed from the findings, the believer receives a new nature at salvation alongside the old nature known as *flesh*.²¹ The old nature makes the believer vulnerable to sin, whereas the new nature helps the believer to hate, resist, or fight against sin. Thus, the flesh is put under check, as any "direction of the unchecked flesh is to broken relationships and

²⁰See chapter 2, section on the theological understanding of spiritual deliverance, defining spiritual deliverance.

²¹Unger, *What Demons Can Do*, 60.

personal harm, which are antithetical to the work of the Spirit in the lives of believers.”²² Meanwhile, fighting the old nature or the flesh is not fighting the demon. Hence, the believer, though not possessed by demons, does not cease from fighting the flesh to be able to live a life that is in conformity with the new nature in Christ.

Beneficiary of Spiritual Deliverance

Regarding the beneficiary of spiritual deliverance, the study reveals that to contemplate spiritual deliverance is to contemplate spiritual possession, otherwise called *demon possession*. The term describes the presence of demons in a person, whose life is under the control and influence of the demon. Therefore, a biblically sound theology of spiritual deliverance must show that spiritual deliverance is for people who are possessed by evil spirits, whose lives are controlled by the evil spirits in them, and who act in accordance with the wishes of the evil spirits in them.²³

Biblical-Theological Word for Demon Possession

The study reveals that the term *demon possession* is used to describe a person under the influence or control of one or more demonic spirits. The term *demon possession*, from the Greek word *daimonizomai*, means “demonized,” to “have a demon,” or to be “under the influence of a demon.”²⁴ To be demonized means the attempt by demons to keep a person under their control, to keep a person under fear and cause him to act in strange and even supernatural ways. These strange and supernatural behaviors have become the symptoms of demon possession. Some of these bizarre symptoms include

²²Assemblies of God, “Spiritual Warfare.”

²³Dickason, *Demon Possession*, 41–47. See discussion in chapter 2.

²⁴Dickason, *Demon Possession*, 41–42. See discussion in chapter 2.

histrionic behavior, incoherent speech, uncontrollable physical movements, extraordinary feats of physical strength, alteration of voice, clairvoyance, the ability to speak in foreign languages, and sometimes behavior that is self-destructive or destructive to others. These experiences vary from one individual to another.

Daimonizomai, or demon possession, is viewed by most scholars and some Christian groups as different from demon oppression, demon obsession, or demonic manipulation. The distinction shows *possession* (from inside a person) and *oppression* (from outside the person),²⁵ thus *daimonizomai* emphasizes internal activities of demons.²⁶

Generally, demons attack different aspects of human personality (body, soul, spirit); thus, their activities involve enticement, harassment, torture, compulsion, enslavement, addictions, defilement, deception, and attacks on the physical body such as epilepsy, blindness, deafness, and muteness, among others. Demon possession focuses mainly on the human's emotion and attitudes, the mind, the tongue, sex, and physical appetites. It must, however, be understood that Scripture represents many sicknesses such as dumbness, deafness, and paralysis as due to demon inhabitation (Matt. 9:32–33, 12:22; Mark 5:5, 9:17–18). However, since all who were dumb, deaf, or paralyzed are not described as demonized, it is evident that all physical or even mental disorders of the same class are not ascribed to the same cause. Some may be natural, while others may be demonic.²⁷ It must be understood that the presence of the symptoms in the demon-

²⁵Sappington. See discussion in chapter 2.

²⁶Fanning; Thayer. See discussion in chapter 2.

²⁷See chapter 2, section on spiritual deliverance and demon possession.

possessed person do not characterize the general traits the person exhibits every time of the day; they occur during the time of the attacks.²⁸ Therefore, a biblically sound theology of spiritual deliverance must show that demon possession, which describes the status of any person who needs spiritual deliverance, is different from demon obsession and demonic oppression, or *demonic attack* as a general term.

Most Pentecostals in Jos North make everything a case for spiritual deliverance. They view as demonic in origin all negative or sinful behavior, and subsequently approach such behavior with unique vocabulary, such as describing a person who gets angry as one with a “demon of anger,” and a person who is depressed as having a “demon of depression.” Others include: demons of dejection, demons of unhappiness, demons of hopelessness, demons of self-unworthiness, demons of fevers, demons of malarial, and demons of forgetfulness.²⁹ These phenomena could be attributed merely to human’s feelings, because “not every human problem has a demonic origin.”³⁰ In particular, anger has to do with a strong feeling of being upset, which shows an increased activity in the body chemistry of the victim of anger, a situation which is prone to all human beings.³¹

Nature of Man before Salvation

Regarding the nature of man before and after salvation, the study reveals that man was created by God, and in the image of God (Gen. 1:26–27). He was created a triune being, meaning that man exists in three parts—spirit, soul, and body. This triune aspect of human nature helps man to relate to God and to have physical dealings on the physical

²⁸See chapter 2, section on spiritual deliverance and demon possession.

²⁹Blumel.

³⁰Kinnaman, 159.

³¹Okoroafor, 327.

earth. Man was created with the capacity to interact with his environment (physical and spiritual). This interaction, and the resultant effect, largely determines man's health status; namely, man's physical, social, mental, and spiritual well-being. Thus, man's nature is made in such a way that his behavior at any given time is determined by certain variables within the environment. Some of the variables operate internally within humans, while others come from external sources. Hence, it is not possible to attribute all human actions, reactions, and dispositions to external forces, and vice versa.³²

Prior to the fall, man was in control, with everything having been put under his feet (Gen. 1:28, Ps. 8:4–6), including Satan and his demons (cf. Luke 10:17–20). God created humans perfect; to think, act, and feel, as well as be in relationship with other humans. However, at the fall of man, when Adam and Eve gave in to Satan's temptations, they "forfeited God's perfect human creation" and subsequently led the way for all humanity to be marred and flawed by this sinful nature.³³ Thus, the fall placed man under the control of Satan and sin (John 8:44–45; 1 John 3:8). Some of the areas of inquiry in psychology and human nature lie in the biological, psychological, and social realms. In the biological realm of human nature, psychology explores "brain activity and specifically neurotransmitters that affect mood, memory, learning, sleep," among others. The psychological realm of human nature explores various mental disorders that impact people everywhere. Knowledge of how to diagnose and treat these disorders would help to restore a person to physical, psychological, and spiritual health.³⁴

³²See chapter 2, section on the nature of man.

³³Christians.

³⁴See chapter 2, section on the nature of man.

Nature of Man at Salvation

In salvation, every aspect of man's problem is taken care of, especially the spiritual one. In salvation, a price is paid to redeem the lost human and the disfellowshipped human is brought back to the family. In salvation, God's anger is appeased; man realizes his lost estate and willingly turns away from his sins by surrendering his life to Christ by faith. In salvation, there is forgiveness and new life is given, while divine ability to live the new life through holiness or sanctification is provided. Salvation not only saves people, but provides them with safety. It not only affords them a change of status from sinners to saints, but also gives them a change of ownership, from property of Satan to temple of God, the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit, children of God, thus qualifying them to share in the inheritance of the saints. Among other things that happen in one's life when one becomes a Christian is the blessing of deliverance, "For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son" (Col. 1:13). Thus, man is made a "spiritual house" (1 Pet. 2:5), "a royal priesthood" and "God's special possession" (1 Pet. 2:9), and fully protected and secured both now and in the future (1 Pet. 1:5).³⁵

Therefore, a biblically sound theology of spiritual deliverance must show that before the fall, man was perfect, sinless, and free from the influence, dominion, and control of Satan and his demons. It must show that man, after the fall and prior to salvation, is imperfect, sinful, and under the influence, dominion, and control of Satan and his demons as children of the devil. It must also show that at salvation, man is saved from sin, delivered from the domain of darkness, and transferred to the kingdom and control of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Hence, man now enjoys a new ownership.

³⁵See chapter 2, section on what happens to man at salvation.

Christians and Spiritual Deliverance

Regarding Christians and spiritual deliverance, the study reveals that some Pentecostals in Jos believe that a Christian cannot be possessed by demons. They believe that it is impossible for a Christian to be indwelt by the Holy Spirit, which is the essence of being a Christian (Rom. 8:9, 14), and at the same time be indwelt by demons, which is the essence of being demon possessed (Mark 5:1–20). When a sinner accepts Christ as their Savior, they are *possessed* by Christ, who now dwells in them. This results in a change of ownership and occupancy. It is impossible for a person to be an effective part of two opposite kingdoms. Thus, it is unimaginable that one who is actively serving Christ and casting out demons can at the same time be possessed by demons. It is impossible for a Christian to be demon possessed because there is no such thing as *joint ownership* or *joint occupancy* in the spiritual world, and having become Christ's possession, believers cannot become Satan's possession at the same time, as long as the believer remains a believer and keeps the faith. Satan may afflict the believer, may cause them to stumble, and may influence their behavior, but certainly cannot *possess* them. The backslider, one who has denied faith in Christ, however, stands the chance of being demonized.³⁶

What salvation did not accomplish for human nature in the present life, however, was the ultimate deliverance from the flesh, even though man has been empowered to conquer it in the continuous battle between the spirit and the flesh. The presence of the flesh, coupled with its activities, makes it difficult to decipher between a demon-

³⁶Pentecost, 140; Assemblies of God, "Spiritual Warfare"; Sumrall, 111; Reddin, 162–163; Subritzky, *Deliverance from Demons*. See discussion in chapter 2, section on the Christian and demon possession.

possessed life and a life in the flesh. Most Christians confuse the flesh with demons because they do not have the understanding that *flesh* is to be crucified whereas *demons* are to be cast out. Therefore, many “come for deliverance...seeking to cast out the flesh and crucify demons,” which is not possible. *Flesh*, from the Greek *sarx*, which is also called *sinful nature* (Gal. 5:16–19), is not in itself sinful. It is the aspect of human nature that makes a believer susceptible to sin, a nature that will remain in humans until the resurrection. Flesh is not removed at the time of new birth, but demons are removed prior to or at the time of new birth. Flesh is part of human personality, but demons are alien personality. Flesh can be crucified, but demons are to be cast out. Flesh is not evil in itself, but demons are totally evil, and while flesh makes it possible for believers to sin, demons inside people make it impossible for the people not to sin. Flesh is internal, but demons are external, until they invade or gain access into people’s lives.³⁷

Biblically sound theology of spiritual deliverance, therefore, must establish that there is no reference in the Bible to a born-again Christian being possessed by demons. It must show that, although Christians can be afflicted, oppressed, and tormented by demons, and their behaviors influenced negatively, they cannot be demon possessed, except where the Christian backslides from the faith, then possession can be possible. It must show that although the works of the flesh often correspond to the activities of demons, the two (flesh and demons) are different. It must also show that when the born-again Christians lose their faith, they open up their lives for the demons to access and possess them.

³⁷See chapter 2, section on the Christian and demon possession.

Model Theology of Spiritual Deliverance for Pentecostal Christians in Jos

The proposed model of biblically sound and contextually relevant theology of spiritual deliverance for Pentecostal Christians in Jos will do the following:

1. Reiterate the biblical beliefs and practices regarding spiritual deliverance
2. Show the current beliefs and practices on spiritual deliverance among Pentecostal Christians in Jos
3. Formulate or establish a contextually relevant theology of spiritual deliverance, which should serve as a way forward among Pentecostals in Jos
4. Develop a culture of training for ministry, relevant for Pentecostal ministers in Jos

The first, second, and third components of the model are presented in a table form below, while the fourth component is treated separately under a sub-heading. The proposed model will work effectively in an interactive framework among Pentecostal Christians in Jos through the culture of training for ministry.

First Three Components of the Model Theology of Spiritual Deliverance

The first three components of the model theology of spiritual deliverance for Pentecostal Christians in Jos are presented in table 6.1. The table contains items/description, biblically sound beliefs and practices of spiritual deliverance, current beliefs and practices on spiritual deliverance among Pentecostals in Jos, and the contextually relevant beliefs and practices on spiritual deliverance of Pentecostals in Jos.

Table 6.1. Components of model theology of spiritual deliverance for Pentecostals in Jos

Items/Description	Biblically sound beliefs and practices of spiritual deliverance	Current beliefs and practices on spiritual deliverance among Pentecostals in Jos	Contextually relevant beliefs and practices on spiritual deliverance of Pentecostals in Jos
Meaning of spiritual deliverance	Process of expulsion of unclean spirits or demons from a person. Setting a captive free from indwelling demons.	Freedom from demonic possession, oppression, obsession, depression, torment, and manipulation	To free a person from evil spirits that live inside the person so as to set the person free. It is different from affliction or oppression, which faces every human.
Candidate or object of spiritual deliverance	Any person who is possessed or indwelt by demons.	Any person who is oppressed, depressed, obsessed, possessed, or tormented by demons.	People who have evil spirits in their lives. Does not include people who are suffering from poverty and diseases like cancer. Not a continuous work of harassing a Christian who was once a victim.
Demon	Spiritual personality with will, emotion, and great intelligence, which constantly seeks to inhabit a life, especially humans. Not the same thing as the flesh. Not an idea or a metaphor for an evil or bad thing.	Evil spirit, any evil appearance. Any negative lifestyle or situation. The presence of pains and suffering and failure, including business failure.	Demons must be understood as real spirit beings in existence, just as the existence of the spirit of a dead ancestor cannot be denied. They are bad spirits that enter people to control their lives, and destroy them at the end.
Meaning of the term demon possession	From the Greek, <i>daimonizomai</i> , for demon possession or demonized, it means to have a demon. It is different from demonic affliction, oppression, obsession, and manipulation.	To suffer oppression, affliction, torment, and any form of negativity. To come under attack by demons.	Demon possession must be seen as being under slavery, with an evil spirit living inside and controlling the life of the victim.
Nature of man before salvation	Man, ever since the fall, is under the control of Satan and sin.	Not specified.	Man, because of the fall, continues to live under the rulership and dictates of Satan. Demon occupies the position of <i>oga</i> (master) in man.
Man at/after salvation	Man has a change of status, from sinner to saint, and a change of ownership, from child of the devil to child of God, being indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Man becomes a temple or house of God.	Man is indwelt by the Holy Spirit at salvation. Christians who backslide are indwelt by demons.	Man is free from the control of demons. Man now has a new <i>oga</i> , Jesus, whose orders he now obeys.

Table 6.1 Continued

Items/Description	Biblically sound beliefs and practices of spiritual deliverance	Current beliefs and practices on spiritual deliverance among Pentecostals in Jos	Contextually relevant beliefs and practices on spiritual deliverance of Pentecostals in Jos
Christian and demon possession	Born-again Christians cannot be demon possessed. No evidence that a Christian was ever possessed and/or delivered from demons occurs in the Bible.	Christians cannot be possessed by demons except when they backslide.	A child of God cannot have two <i>oga</i> , or two kings, God and demons, on the throne of his life. The Spirit of God rules and controls the life of a child of God. Any Christian who loses his faith and becomes possessed by evil spirits cannot be identified as a child of God, but a child of the devil, because his status changes the moment he becomes an apostate. In that case, the demon cannot be said to have possessed a Christian.
Practices of spiritual deliverance	All believers in Christ shall, and can, cast out demons. Demons are cast out in the name of Jesus.	Pastors and churches vary in their practices. Some follow the Bible, others imitate African Traditional Religion. Some use the name of Jesus, anointing oil, water, coconut water, animal sacrifice, oil, salt, flogging of victim, charging of money.	The name of Jesus should be used in casting out demons. The name of Jesus is exalted above all other names. His name is higher than olive oil, water, coconut water, or animal sacrifice. Jesus never flogged the demonized persons brought to him. Where one feels led to use any physical material, like anointing oil or water, the practice should not become a norm.

Table 6.1 is a direct reflection of the research study, an attempt to answer the problem statement regarding what constitutes a biblically sound and contextually relevant theology of spiritual deliverance in Jos, Nigeria, given the current beliefs, perceptions, and self-described practices of its Pentecostal pastors and laity. It also addresses the purpose statement of the study, which aims at examining the perceptions and practices of Pentecostal Christians in Jos regarding spiritual deliverance, and to compare the findings to biblical teaching on the subject. This was to ascertain the points of agreement and/or departure between the beliefs and self-described practices of Pentecostal Christians in Jos and biblically acceptable beliefs and practices on spiritual deliverance.

Culture of Training: Fourth Component of the Model Theology of Spiritual Deliverance

This section focuses on the development of a culture of training for ministry that will be relevant to Pentecostal ministers in Jos. It is concerned with the specifics necessary in developing the training element. A culture of training creates the necessary environment and opportunity for people to learn and improve. This culture of training for ministry among Pentecostal Christians in Jos is based on the theoretical framework of a learning culture, by Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic and Josh Bersin, as well as Tala A. Nabong. Chamorro-Premuzic and Bersin believe that “the single biggest driver of business impact is the strength of an organization’s learning culture.”³⁸ Nabong sees a learning culture as a collection of organizational conventions, values, practices, and processes. He asserts that “an organization with a learning culture encourages continuous learning and believes that systems influence each other” and provides the opportunity for continuous transformation for the better.³⁹ Some of the benefits of putting a training or learning culture in place include: an improved mindset among participants, a developed sense of ownership and accountability, ease in succession/transition, a culture of knowledge inquiry and sharing, increased efficiency and productivity, and an enhanced ability to adapt to change.⁴⁰

Creating a training culture involves the following necessary steps: (1) formalize the training and development plans, (2) reward, (3) get feedback, (4) learn by example,

³⁸Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic and Josh Bersin, “4 Ways to Create a Learning Culture on Your Team,” Harvard Business Review, <https://hbr.org/2018/07/4-ways-to-create-a-learning-culture-on-your-team?autocomplete=true> (accessed March 18, 2020).

³⁹Tala A. Nabong, “Creating a Learning Culture for the Improvement of Your Organization,” Training Industry, <https://trainingindustry.com/articles/professional-development/creating-a-learning-culture-for-the-improvement-of-your-organization/> (accessed March 18, 2020).

⁴⁰Ibid.

and (5) hire or use curious people.⁴¹ Creating a culture of training for Pentecostal ministers in Jos requires the application of these steps to help them imbibe the biblically sound and contextually relevant beliefs and practices of spiritual deliverance.

1. Formalize the training and development plans

This involves an attempt to making the training mandatory for all members; otherwise, it will run the risk of not being taken seriously, and as a result, will not be implemented.⁴² Pentecostal Christians are familiar with mandatory meetings of the church. Examples are PFN national and Plateau State call to prayer for the nation (where churches observe a time to pray with other Christians); pastors' books project meetings (where all pastors come out and register, attend a seminar, and receive free books); inter-denominational meetings toward a city-wide crusade, like the Reinhard Bonke crusade (where each church is represented in one committee or another); church growth seminars (where pastors and laity receive teachings on how to grow their local churches); and security meetings (where church leaders meet for security information sensitization from relevant authorities). Therefore, making a training and development plan mandatory will promote and enhance participation.

2. Reward

This involves giving recognition to learning. Those who have successfully learned new skills and abilities should be recognized, while encouraging others to follow suit.⁴³

According to Chamorro-Premuzic and Bersin, "It is impossible to trigger deliberate

⁴¹Chamorro-Premuzic and Bersin.; Nabong.

⁴²Nabong.

⁴³Ibid.

changes in your team's or organization's culture unless you actually put in place formal reward systems to entice them."⁴⁴ Past experience has shown that meetings where there is a formal reward system are usually attended by all the church leaders. An example is Pastors' Book Project, seminars and workshops where participants are given books and served food (breakfast, lunch, and/or dinner) as a means of encouragement. Some rewards take the form of rotating the venue for meetings among participating member-churches, or assigning special responsibilities to leaders of the various denominations involved. Therefore, Pentecostal leaders in Jos, in an attempt to maintain a culture of training, should make provision for a reward for continuous learning.

3. Get feedback

Getting feedback involves more than using information made available to evaluate the benefits of the training, it also involves discovering the limitations of the training. Feedback should, therefore, be holistic. It should be meaningful and constructive. In an age where many people focus on strengths, where people feel that their strengths have replaced flaws and weaknesses, "it is easy to forget the value of negative feedback. However, it is hard to improve on anything when you are unaware of your limitations, fully satisfied with your potential, or unjustifiably pleased with yourself."⁴⁵ Since people are generally unaware of their ignorance and limitations, feedback from others is necessary in helping them improve. Feedback encourages the culture of sharing information. Chamorro-Premuzic and Bersin state, "People will be

⁴⁴Chamorro-Premuzic and Bersin.

⁴⁵Ibid.

more encouraged to share knowledge and information if they are required to do so.”⁴⁶

Therefore, the culture of training for Pentecostal ministers in Jos must provide a holistic feedback for proper evaluation of the training program for onward improvement.

4. Learn by example

Learning by example focuses on what the leaders do, with the intention of encouraging followers to imitate them. What leaders do is important because their “behaviors have a strong influence on the behavior and performance of their teams. Accordingly, if you want to nurture your team’s curiosity or unlock learning in your organization, you should practice what you preach.”⁴⁷ When leaders do what they preach, when they lead by example, it creates trust, confidence, and a sense of genuineness, thus attracting seriousness and commitment. Therefore, the culture of training for Pentecostal ministers in Jos should intentionally emphasize the exemplary lives of the PFN leaders.

5. Hire or use curious people

This component of the training culture looks at the importance of proper selection. This is because “it’s easier to prevent and predict than to fix and change...and good selection makes training and development much more effective because it is easier to augment potential than to go against someone’s nature.”⁴⁸ Curious people are interested in learning more; they are inquisitive and eager to investigate. Hiring the right people at the helm of affairs to handle a particular task is one way to drive and sustain growth. Therefore, the training culture for Pentecostal ministers in Jos must put in place the culture of proper selection of the resource persons for the training program. For

⁴⁶Nabong.

⁴⁷Chamorro-Premuzic and Bersin.

⁴⁸Ibid.

example, a preacher or teacher invited to handle a seminary or workshop on how to conduct deliverance should be one who is biblically sound in the knowledge of spiritual deliverance.

Implications

The model for biblically sound and contextually relevant theology of spiritual deliverance formulated for Pentecostal Christians in Jos emerged from the findings of the research study. The model theology of spiritual deliverance is intended to be an intentional, interactive framework among Pentecostal Christians in Jos through a culture of training for ministry. As the leadership of the PFN organizes special programs for the pastors in Jos, calling them together for ministers' breakfast, lunch, or dinner, ministers' seminars and workshops, and ministers' get-togethers, the intentional aspect of the model is embedded. The interactive aspect of the model is realized as participants share views with the resource persons, who are also intentionally invited with the knowledge that their position regarding the beliefs and practices of spiritual deliverance are biblically sound and contextually relevant. To create a culture of training among ministers in Jos, the model shall be made available to participants (pastors and lay leaders) during meetings for them to reflect on it as they discuss together.

The model theology of spiritual deliverance is not proposed to be the only tool for establishing a biblically sound and contextually relevant theology of spiritual deliverance in Jos. However, it is one that is likely to have a significant effect in correcting the unscriptural perceptions, beliefs, and practices of spiritual deliverance among Pentecostal Christians in Jos. If the implementation of this model becomes a part of the culture among Pentecostal ministers (pastors and lay leaders) in Jos, the leaders will develop in

content as well as in character the relevant perceptions, beliefs, and practices of biblically sound and contextually relevant theology of spiritual deliverance. The implications of these findings will hopefully be relevant to the education of pastors and lay leaders, not only in Jos North, but in Plateau State and Nigeria at large.

Recommendations for Further Study

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made for further study. These recommendations show areas that are not known regarding the study. If investigations are carried out in these areas, findings would help to clarify certain aspects of this study.

Carry Out a Comparative Study of the Works of Demons and Works of the Flesh

Agreeing that Christians can only crucify the flesh but cast out demons, and that ascribing to flesh what is really demonic will only lead to endless frustration on the part of the Christian and a wrong treatment strategy on the part of the counselor,⁴⁹ there is a need to do a comparative study of the two. The works of the flesh do manifest (Gal. 5:19–21), and the symptoms of demonic possession do show up, such as enticement, harassment, torture, compulsion, enslavement, addictions, defilement, deception, and attacks on the physical body such as epilepsy, blindness, deafness, muteness, and arthritis.⁵⁰ Since certain symptoms come in the form of the activities of the flesh, it becomes necessary to ascertain when a behavior can be attributed to the work of the flesh, and when it should be attributed to demons, or both.

⁴⁹Appleby, 3–4.

⁵⁰Prince, *They Shall Expel Demons*, 165–166, 180–195.

Agreeing that flesh is not removed at the time of new birth, but demons are removed prior to or at the time of new birth, and that flesh is part of human personality, but demons are alien personality, it is necessary to attempt to determine the activities of the flesh in a Christian that may be misunderstood as symptoms of demonic possession. This is important even as Appleby claimed he has witnessed not less than “400 cases where genuine Christians who were inhabited by demons were delivered,”⁵¹ but does not give the parameter for determining who is a genuine Christian and who is not.

Developing an Intentional Alternative Training Program for Pentecostals in Jos

Leaders of the PFN who took part in the focus group, and the pastors and lay leaders who participated in the interview, informed that a majority of Pentecostal pastors in Jos North do not have theological training for ministry. Those with theological training are doing their best to maintain a balance in their teachings and practices on spiritual deliverance, while those without theological training are likely to have a limited biblical understanding of spiritual deliverance.⁵² An intentional alternative training program for Pentecostal ministers in Jos may employ formal or non-formal approaches to reach the generality of Pentecostal pastors and churches in Jos. The Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State is comprised of three hundred Pentecostal denominations. Out of this number, 142 are registered members with the PFN, while 158 are non-registered members.⁵³ The intentional alternative training program would help to bridge the gap between the registered (participating) members of the PFN and the non-registered (non-

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²See appendix G and L, focus group transcripts and transcripts of interview responses from church leaders in Jos. Transcript is available upon request.

⁵³Ezekiel Saje, interview by author, RamunGyel, Jos, September 21, 2014.

participating) members. The program would be intentional in that it would seek a platform to bring all Pentecostal pastors and lay leaders under one umbrella for the purpose of training for ministry. It would be an alternative training program because it would be different from the normal, formal theological education carried out in Bible colleges and seminaries. It could take the form of a television broadcast, similar to the Christian Half Hour on the Nigeria Television Authority (NTA) Jos every Sunday evening. It could also take the form of a seminar or workshop.

There is a need, therefore, for a study on the development of an intentional alternative training program for Pentecostal ministers in Jos. The majority of Pentecostal pastors who have no theological training or qualification for ministry need information on how to do ministry, as well as biblically sound and contextually relevant theology in different areas of church doctrines and practices.

Development of a Discipleship Program for People Delivered from Demons

There is need for a discipleship program solely developed for people who are delivered from demon possession. A discipleship program for people delivered from demons would explore ways the local church can habilitate, follow up, and train people who were once victims of demon possession. A program of this nature would create in the disciples the consciousness of watching against the demons' continuous work of harassing people who were once their victim.

There is a need, therefore, for a study on the development of a discipleship program for people delivered from demon possession. Those delivered from demon possession need to be led to Christ, guided to seek for and receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit, and trained in the Word to believe the truth that they, too, can cast out demons.

Formulation of Intentional Awareness Program for Pentecostal Christians in Jos

Findings from the research study reveal that all over Jos North people are calling for deliverance from what they call ancestral curses, family curses, and business curses. These practices use false prophecies to bring husbands against their wives, and children against their parents, or vice versa, because of ignorance.⁵⁴ Most Christians fall victim to unbiblical practices due to lack of solid biblical knowledge about spiritual deliverance.⁵⁵

There is need for a study on the formulation of an intentional awareness program for Pentecostal Christians in Jos. The study would explore ways the leadership of the PFN can take the truth about biblically sound and contextually relevant theology of spiritual deliverance to the grassroots.

Summary

The focus of this study was on developing an intentional biblically sound and contextually relevant theology of spiritual deliverance for Pentecostal Christians in Jos. The components of the model theology were informed by the perceptions, beliefs, and practices of Pentecostal pastors and laity in Jos regarding spiritual deliverance. This was gleaned first from biblical-theological literature and precedent literature, and then also from field data.

The challenge facing the current Pentecostal pastors and churches in Jos, and Nigeria at large, is the emphasis on spiritual deliverance, which is at the expense of the biblical beliefs and practices on the subject. Church leaders and members have expressed

⁵⁴See appendix G, Focus Group Transcript, responses to “any other question?”

⁵⁵See appendix G, Focus Group Transcript, and appendix H, results of interview responses from church leaders in Jos.

discontent over the unbiblical practices of spiritual deliverance, and thus raised their concerns for the way forward.

Biblical-theological literature from this study informed that spiritual deliverance involves the expulsion of demons from people who are demon possessed. The biblical passages examined revealed that a born-again Christian cannot be possessed by demons; there is no indication that a Christian can be demon possessed, or was once delivered from demons.

Precedent literature informed that there is no evidence of a Christian being delivered from demon possession. From the African perspective, the study informed that the practice of exorcism involves the expelling of demons or bad spirits from victims, who are usually bad people. Good people, such as born-again Christians, are never inhabited by evil spirits.

Responses from the field show that the perceptions, beliefs, and practices of spiritual deliverance among Pentecostal Christians in Jos vary from pastor to pastor and from church to church. Some of the practices are Bible-based, while others are influenced by ATR. Christians cannot be possessed by demons, except backsliders. A majority of Pentecostal pastors in Jos do not have theological training or qualification for ministry. This has affected their perceptions, beliefs, and practices of spiritual deliverance.

The model theology of spiritual deliverance for Pentecostals in Jos formulated in this study is intended to be intentional, biblical, and contextual. The model will work effectively as an interactive framework among Pentecostal Christians in Jos through a culture of training for ministry.

In light of the various challenges that exist among Pentecostal Christians in Jos regarding spiritual deliverance, such as a lack of theological training for ministry, the model theology of spiritual deliverance for Pentecostals in Jos is formulated in this study. This model is not proposed to be the only tool for establishing a biblically sound and contextually relevant theology of spiritual deliverance in Jos. However, it is one that is likely to have a significant effect in correcting the unscriptural perceptions, beliefs, and practices of spiritual deliverance among Pentecostal Christians in Jos. If the implementation of this model theology becomes a part of the training culture among Pentecostal ministers (pastors and lay leaders) in Jos, the leaders will develop in content as well as in character the relevant perceptions, beliefs, and practices of biblically sound and contextually relevant theology of spiritual deliverance. The implications of these findings will hopefully be relevant to the training and re-orienting of Pentecostal pastors and lay leaders in Nigeria and Africa.

APPENDIX A

TABLES OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY OPTIONS

Table A1. Research Question 1

Research Question	Method(s)	Participants: Who, How many, etc.
RQ1: What does the biblical literature reveal about spiritual deliverance?	Exegetical and hermeneutical study using the Bible and Integrative Critical Analysis	Biblical-theological literature (study in library)
1A. What does Matthew 8:16–17 reveal about the deliverance of a Christian from demons?	Exegetical and hermeneutical study using the Bible and Integrative Critical Analysis	Study in library
1B. What does Matthew 12:43–45 reveal about the deliverance of a Christian from demons?	Exegetical and hermeneutical study using the Bible and Integrative Critical Analysis	Study in library
1C. What does Luke 13:10–16 reveal about the deliverance of a Christian from demons?	Exegetical and hermeneutical study using the Bible and Integrative Critical Analysis	Study in library

Table A2. Research Question 2

Research Question	Method(s)	Participants: Who, How many, etc.
RQ2: What does the social science literature reveal about spiritual deliverance?	Integrative Critical Analysis	Social science literature
2A. What does the precedent related/relevant literature reveal about Christians and deliverance from demonic possession?	Integrative Critical Analysis	Precedent related/relevant literature
2B. What does African culture and Traditional Religion reveal about deliverance from demonic possession?	Integrative Critical Analysis	Related/relevant literature of African culture and Traditional Religion

Table A3. Research Question 3

Research Question	Method(s)	Participants: Who, How many, etc.
RQ3: What are the perceptions and practices of Pentecostals in Jos North regarding spiritual deliverance?	Survey and interview	Pentecostals in Jos: -Pentecostal leaders (a 6-man purposive selected focus group) -Pastors (interview 30 pastors) -Church members (serve questionnaires to 500 persons from 30 local churches)
3A. What are the perceptions of Pentecostals in Jos regarding spiritual deliverance?	Interviews, focus group, and questionnaires	Pentecostal leaders, pastors, and members in Jos
3B. What are the practices of Pentecostals in Jos regarding spiritual deliverance?	Interviews, focus group, and questionnaires	Pentecostal leaders, pastors, and members in Jos

APPENDIX B
SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE

Hello Sir, my name is Sylvester Condi Uwah, a doctoral student with the Pan Africa Theological Seminary (PAThS) in Lome, Togo. I am collecting information from church leaders and members in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State of Nigeria to develop an accurate understanding on spiritual deliverance. To be more precise, I am examining the beliefs, perceptions, and practices of Pentecostals in Jos North Local Government Area on spiritual deliverance as part of the fulfillment of my doctoral dissertation. This interview, therefore, asks about your personal understanding about the beliefs, perceptions, and practices of Pentecostals in Jos North on spiritual deliverance. I expect you to please answer the questions to the best of your ability. If there are items you do not know the answer to or you do not want to answer, please skip them.¹ I have also provided an audio tape recorder for the interview. If you accept, your responses will be recorded, after which it will be played back to you to vet. Your responses will be kept confidential and will be used for academic purpose only as explained above. Moreover, your participation in the interview will not cause you any harm.²

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability:

¹Dissertation Recipes, <http://dissertationrecipes.com/wp-content/uokiads/2011/04/InterviewingpracticesX.pdf> (accessed August 30, 2013).

²Ibid.

1. What is your church affiliation (your denomination)? How long have you been in this church?
2. What do you understand by the term spiritual deliverance? Do you believe this understanding is peculiar to you or others share similar view?
3. What are your beliefs and practices on spiritual deliverance?
4. Do you personally carry out deliverance? Do you sometimes see victims delivered from demons?
5. What are the practices of your church on spiritual deliverance?
6. In your opinion, do you think your church practice of spiritual deliverance is consistent with the Bible?
7. Give a brief narration of an incident of deliverance practice in your Church.
8. How often does your church practice spiritual deliverance? If not often, how long ago did your church practice spiritual deliverance?
9. What does your church teach about spiritual deliverance? Explain what you mean.
10. Do you think Pentecostals practice what the Bible teaches about spiritual deliverance? Narrate what Pentecostals do which agree with what is written in the Bible.
11. Give me some examples of the practices on spiritual deliverance among Pentecostals in Jos North that are acceptable to you. What are the reasons for your answer?
12. Give me some examples of the practices on spiritual deliverance among Pentecostals in Jos North that are not acceptable to you. Tell why you don't accept them.

13. Can you please list some of the common ways the leaders/pastors use when conducting deliverances?
14. What do you think makes some pastors to agree with each other on procedures of deliverance while others completely disagree?
15. How does the leadership of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) Jos react to the practices among Pentecostals on spiritual deliverance? What result does the reaction or non-reaction of the leaders yield in Jos?
16. In your opinion, what is the highest theological qualification of the majority of Pentecostal pastors in Jos North? Do you think their theological qualification in any way affects their perception and practices on spiritual deliverance? Explain clearly.
17. Give an example of past experiences of a spiritual deliverance incident you personally witnessed. Who was delivered, and from what?
18. In your opinion, can a Christian be demon possessed? Give me more explanation to support your conviction.
19. In your opinion, are there mental health issues that have been mistaken for demon possession? Narrate an incident to illustrate this.
20. Are there practices of deliverance by Pentecostals in Jos that are similar to what the African traditional worshipers do? Narrate an incident to illustrate this.

APPENDIX C
FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

Hello Sir, my name is Sylvester Condi Uwah, a doctoral student with the Pan Africa Theological Seminary (PAThS) in Lome, Togo. I am collecting information from leaders of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State of Nigeria to develop an accurate understanding on spiritual deliverance. To be more precise, I am examining the beliefs, perceptions, and practices of Pentecostals in Jos North Local Government Area on spiritual deliverance as part of the fulfillment of my doctoral dissertation. This Focus Group discussion, therefore, asks about your personal understanding about the beliefs, perceptions, and practices of Pentecostals in Jos North on spiritual deliverance. I expect you to please answer the questions to the best of your ability in the course of the discussion. I will neither be in the room with you nor involved in the discussion. This is to give you the chance to have a free flow of discussions without an obstruction. If there are items you do not know the answer to or you do not want to answer, please skip them.¹ I have also provided an audio/video tape recorder for the discussion. If you accept, your responses will be recorded, after which it will be played back to you to vet. Your responses will be kept confidential and will be used for academic purpose only as explained above. Moreover,

¹Dissertation Recipes, <http://dissertationrecipes.com/wp-content/uokiads/2011/04/InterviewingpracticesX.pdf> (accessed August 30, 2013).

your participation in the interview will not cause you any harm.² I expect you to discuss the following questions which serve as an interview guide to the focus group discussion:

1. What does spiritual deliverance mean to you?
2. How should deliverance be conducted?
3. Who needs spiritual deliverance?
4. Can a born-again Christian be demon possessed?
5. Do you think Pentecostal Churches in Jos practice deliverance the Bible way?
6. What deliverance practices do you accept? Why?
7. What deliverance practices do you condemn? Why?
8. What is the position of the PFN in Jos on demonic possession and spiritual deliverance?
9. Do all the PFN pastors in Jos North practice the same thing on spiritual deliverance?
10. In what ways do the pastors differ in their practices?
11. Any other issues.

²Ibid.

APPENDIX D
INFORMED CONSENT FORM¹

Research Project:

Toward a Biblically Sound Pentecostal Perspective of Spiritual Deliverance: An Examination of Pentecostal Churches in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State of Nigeria

The objective of this phase of my study is to examine the perceptions, beliefs, and practices of Pentecostal Churches in Jos, Nigeria regarding spiritual deliverance, and to compare those findings to a biblically sound perspective on spiritual deliverance in order to ascertain the point of agreement and/or departure between the beliefs and practices of Pentecostal Churches in Jos and a biblically sound perspective on the subject.

For any information about the project, or your rights as a participant, you can contact Dr. Charles Wilson, who is acting as the supervisor for the project, at john.elliott@agmd.org.

I, _____, agree to participate in this project in accordance with the following conditions:

The interview I participate in and the information I disclose will be used solely for the purposes defined by the project. Essentially, my participation poses no risks to me.

¹Pan Africa Theological Seminary, 48.

At any time, I can refuse to answer certain questions, discuss certain topics, or even decide to stop the interview without prejudice to myself.

To facilitate the interviewer's job, the interview will be recorded and transcribed.

All interview data will be handled so as to protect my identity. Therefore, no names will be mentioned and the information will be coded.

Respondent's Signature: _____ Date _____

Interviewer's Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX E

SURVEY OF OPINIONS ON SPIRITUAL DELIVERANCE IN
PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES OF JOS, NIGERIA

Statement of Informed Consent

You are being asked to participate as a volunteer in a research study being conducted by Rev. Sylvester Uwah, a doctoral student at Pan-Africa Theological Seminary (PATHS) in Lome, Togo. This study is designed to gather information from Pentecostals in Jos north Local Government Area of Plateau State of Nigeria to develop an accurate understanding of Spiritual Deliverance in the Pentecostal tradition. The research is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Bob Braswell, Dr. Marvin Gilbert, and Dr. Chuck Wilson.

You are one of the approximately 500 *pastors and members* participating in this study within Jos. You are please informed, therefore, of the following:

1. Your participation in this project is voluntary; you will not be paid for your participation. You may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or harm of any type. If you decline to participate in or choose not to complete the questionnaire, the researcher will not inform anyone of your decision, and no foreseeable negative consequences will result.
2. Completing the questionnaire will require approximately 30 minutes. There are no known risks associated with completing the questionnaire. If, however, you feel uncomfortable in any way during this process, you may decline to answer any question, or not complete the questionnaire.
3. The researcher will not identify you by name in any report using information obtained from your questionnaire; your confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain guaranteed. Subsequent uses of data generated by this questionnaire will protect the anonymity of all individuals.
4. This research effort and this questionnaire have been reviewed and approved by the Dissertation Proposal Review Board, which functions as the Institutional Review Board for ethical research at PATHS. For research-related problems or questions regarding ethical research practices, please contact Dr. Chuck Wilson or Dr. Marvin Gilbert at info@pathseminary.org

For further information, including a copy of the results of this study, please contact:

Rev. Sylvester Uwah

Mobile: 080-34303225 or email: scuwahpowerline@yahoo.com

NOTE: By completing and submitting this questionnaire, you are indicating that you understand the statements above, and consent to participate in this study. **Do not put your name on the questionnaire;** your signature acknowledging that you understand the information presented above is not required.

Common Demographic Variables

How old are you? (tick one of the choices at right)..... Under 25 years of age
 25–34 years of age
 35–44 years of age
 45–54 years of age
 55–64 years of age
 65 or older

- How many years have you been a Christian? ___ years * Are you a member of a church?
- How many years have you been a member of this church? ___ years [fill-in response option]

What is your highest educational qualification-accomplishment?
 (tick one of the choices at right)

- High school graduation (with a school-leaving certificate; e.g., “matric”; “O”-level exams)
- Trade/technical/vocational training
- Some academic credit (no qualification)
- Diploma or associate’s degree
- Bachelor’s degree
- Postgraduate diploma or BA Honours
- Master’s degree
- Professional degree
- Doctorate degree

What is your primary ministry position (tick only one of the choices at right):

Pastor () Elder () Deacon () Lay Leader () Evangelist () Teacher () Member (.)

Instructions: Please carefully read each of the following statements and respond by ticking the response box that best reflects your opinion. Please be completely open and honest in your responses. Take as long as you need, but do not linger over any statement.

Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain or Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. A Pentecostal Christian is one who speaks in tongues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Pentecostal Churches differ from non-Pentecostals in some of their theologies and practices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Spiritual deliverance means to set a captive free from domination of Satan or his demons.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. In my opinion, only those that are possessed by demons need spiritual deliverance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Preaching and teaching about spiritual deliverance occurs regularly in my church.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. In my opinion, anyone who is saved can minister spiritual deliverance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Interviewing and praying for the demon possessed person is the process of conducting spiritual deliverance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. In my opinion, once saved, there is no need for further spiritual deliverance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. The Bible does not say if a Christian needs spiritual deliverance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain or Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10. The practice of "Breaking of Curses" is a form of spiritual deliverance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. I personally experienced deliverance from demons after becoming a Christian.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. In my opinion, it is possible to know that a person is possessed of a demon by their behavior.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. In my opinion, spiritual deliverance comes from African Traditional Religion.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Pentecostal practice in spiritual deliverance is the same as what the African Traditional priests do.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. In my opinion, every person who is yet to be delivered from demons belongs to Satan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. In my opinion, immoral lifestyle is evidence that one is in need of spiritual deliverance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Mental illness is evidence that one is in need of spiritual deliverance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

APPENDIX F

DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL REVIEWER BY THE RESEARCHER

The local reviewer to the instrument of this study, Prof. John Brown Okwii, is an African scholar from the Republic of Uganda who lives in Jos, capital of Plateau State of Nigeria. He is an ordained minister of the gospel by the General Council of the Assemblies of God Uganda, and the president of the LAWNA Theological Seminary, an affiliate of the University of Jos. He holds a PhD in Theology and Conflict Transformation, and a PhD in Leadership Studies, among other academic qualifications and professional titles. Prof. Okwii is an adjunct lecturer and the current chairman of the Thesis Committee of the Evangel Theological Seminary Jos, a graduate school of the Assemblies of God Nigeria, where the researcher serves as an academic faculty. He also teaches part-time in many Nigerian universities and theological seminaries, and is a friend to many Nigerian pastors and churches cutting across different denominations. The researcher feels a man of this repute is fit to serve as the local reviewer to the instrument of this study.

APPENDIX G
FOCUS GROUP TRANSCRIPT

Time: 00-10.00, Introduction of the research by the researcher and salutations. The researcher also explained what a Focus Group is, what he expects from the discussants as contained in the FG guide, and why he would not be in the room with them as they discuss, giving them a chance to have a free flow of interactions without him being an obstruction.

The researcher explained that the study is on the biblical sound perceptions, beliefs, and practices, that people practice different things based on the knowledge available to them. He stated he decided to sample the opinion of Pentecostal churches and leaders in Jos North, so they could take part in the interaction and contribute their quota and say their mind.

Main Discussion starts from 10.00 am.

Facilitator (P1): This is a research on biblical sound perspective of spiritual deliverance, an examination of Pentecostal churches in Jos North Local Government Area. So I start with:

Question One: What does spiritual deliverance mean to you?

P4: Thank you sirs...I'm (name withheld), to me spiritual deliverance means for an individual to be free from demonic oppression, possession, manipulation, and manipulation. Just briefly.

P3: I'm the Senior Pastor of (name of church withheld). Spiritual deliverance is the total or complete liberation and freedom, emancipation, liberation of people, destinies, families, or places from the oppressions of the wicked, from the afflictions of the enemy. A Scripture in the book of Exodus 3:7-8: I have seen the afflictions of my people which are in Egypt, vs. 8, I have come down to hear them...so it's a total freedom, emancipation and liberation either of a group of people or individuals from the oppression of the wicked.

Facilitator: Thank you, Pastor.

P2: I would like to add something. I'm...the Senior Pastor (name of church withheld). Just to make pluses to what we've said, spiritual deliverance, no matter how it is placed, if it's not done biblically, or done in the name of Jesus, and done with faith, it is completely out of what we are looking at. The name of Jesus, the blood of Jesus Christ is important for our deliverance, total emancipation and liberation of every soul, community, faith, family, or even lands. The name of Jesus is focal. It says a virgin shall give birth to a son and his name shall be Jesus Matt. 1:21, for he shall save his people from their sins. The bottom line of spiritual deliverance is the salvation of that person being delivered, that is the bottom line. The key part is to save from that which brought

the problem, which is sin and Satan. So, when we are delivered, the greatest part of it is to have Jesus as our Savior in our hearts.

Facilitator: Thank you for those contributions, we shall move to the second question.

Question Two: How should deliverance be conducted?

P6: Senior Pastor...and also a member of PFN.

I am of the opinion that spiritual deliverance should be done scripturally, we have a lot of things happening today, but the Bible makes it clear we should look unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith. Having Jesus as our role model, we need to study and observe how he conducted deliverance. From Luke 4:18, he came and declared his manifesto. He said “the Spirit of the Lord God is upon me to preach the gospel” and the list is endless. He declared, mentioned, that he is also here to proclaim liberty to the captive which is also spiritual deliverance. We are to look to the example he has laid for us in Scriptures and then follow in bringing deliverance to people, destinies, and places.

Recently, something happened just last month where deliverance was conducted to a family by means of breaking coconut and egg, here in Tudun Wada, and it got to my ears and I frowned at it because as far as I’m concerned, it’s not scriptural. When the coconut was broken, a piece of paper came out of it and they were able to pick it up and they saw the name of the man, his date of birth, and when he is to die, 17th of November specifically, and they said these people paid 6 million naira to eliminate him, so he has to pay 4.2 million naira to counter that evil and the man, his son works with me, that’s how I got to know about it. Later, he called me to be sure but they had gone far before I came in. It was when they wanted to pay the money, in fact he told them he doesn’t have the money, they said he should look for the money, so at the end of the journey, he gave them papers of his house in case he is not able to raise the money and the house is more than they agreed on, more than 15 million naira, so they collected the papers of the house and went. Thank God, a day after that, God helped him. There was something he had been waiting for, so they paid him 3.2 million naira into his account and he just called me and told me that this is what happened and I said, what? I have not been a part of you from the beginning but are you ready to do the sacrifice? Fine, if you agree with it, but me, I don’t believe in this, it is not scriptural. So at the end of the journey, I assured him if he is able to pay the money and they don’t bring back the papers, I will personally go ahead and get the papers for him. So, after assuring him, he paid the 3.2 million naira and they brought his land papers to him.

So, there are a lot of things happening today in the body of Christ. As far I’m concerned, this topic is timely and something we need to look into to help us see how we can help pastors to be on track instead of practicing occultism in the name of deliverance. I believe that deliverance should be done scripturally. Thank you, sir.

Facilitator: Rev...can you add something for us please?

P5: My name is (name withheld), I’m a minister serving...here in Jos. Just to add to what my brother has said about spiritual deliverance, how it ought to be conducted, I believe spiritual deliverance can be conducted in many different ways, but it must be as led by the Spirit of God. Why? Because since it’s an evil spirit that is involved, an evil spirit needs to be cast out not by human ability but by the Spirit of God. Now Jesus Christ, speaking in Matt. 8:16, the Bible says when evening was come, the people came to him, and he cast out the Spirit by his Word and healed all those who were sick. So for

anybody engaging in spiritual deliverance, he has to first of all allow the Holy Spirit to lead him on whichever method he needs to carry out and one of the chief methods of spiritual deliverance is through the Word of God. Thank You.

P3: In addition to that, the Word conduct talks about way, method, patterns by which things are done and I believe that the standard by which PFN stands on is the Word of God. So, the Word of God is a standard for our lives, we don't do anything outside of God's Word. So spiritual deliverance should be done in line with God's Word...if it is not in line with God's Word, it is not spiritual deliverance. It is a demonic deliverance; deliverances are in different ways. There is spiritual deliverance and demonic deliverance where people use all manner of things, they use cane to beat somebody, they use all manner of things, but those things are not in the Word of God. All Scripture is given for inspiration, correction, and instruction, that the man of God may be perfect wanting nothing so that is what I believe in and what most of us believe in in Pentecostal churches. God bless you.

Facilitator: Just to add to all that has been said because of the emphasis. The question said how should deliverance be conducted? Which I am Pastor of...of PFN Jos North. To add to what has already been said earlier. To the emphasis of how it should be conducted. My brothers have said it rightly; it has to be done in accordance with Scripture. But just to now throw light on the promises of the Scriptures for the deliverance. The provision of Scriptures for spiritual deliverance are:

1. The name of Jesus Christ. The Bible says at the name of Jesus Christ, every knee must bow, since deliverance has to do with the freedom from oppression of the wicked resulting from demonic affliction and so on and so forth, the name of Jesus is one of the scriptural provisions.
2. The Word of God, just like one of the ministers earlier said, Jesus cast out spirits by his Word, so the Word of God has the ability to cast out demons. Why? The Bible says in the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God and Jesus said, the Words that I speak to you, they are Spirit and they are life so God's Word has the ability to cast out devils.
3. Number 3 scriptural provision for deliverance is the blood of Jesus. The Bible says in Rev. 12:11, they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony. So the blood of Jesus has the ability to overcome the devil, it has the ability to overcome demons and these are the scriptural ways demons can be cast from a person. Just to throw more light on the scriptural provision that I mentioned. Thank you.

Facilitator: Alright, the third question is who needs spiritual deliverance? Pastor, can you respond?

Question Three: Who needs spiritual deliverance?

P4: I believe those people that will need spiritual deliverance are people who are having strange experiences that are contrary to Scriptures. The Bible says, if the Son of God will set us free, we are free indeed and if a child of God, or an individual is beginning to experience or have strange experiences either in the physical or in dreams of such like, I believe the person will need deliverance. For example, somebody in a dream, you are having some strange experience or see strange creature or animals are chasing you in the dream or even in the physical. You are having some strange experiences,

contrary to the Scripture, the person might need deliverance. In fact, the person will need deliverance. Thank you.

P2: Who will need spiritual deliverance? Well, anyone that is possessed by demons, by forces, they need deliverance, they need to be set free. To add to what our brother has said. Let me make a distinction between possession and tormentation, an attack of the enemy.

If one is possessed, and such a one manifests...possession, of course, means you have been overran, overtaken, mind overtaken by demons and other forces influencing you to do things contrary to the Word of God or contrary to human nature, then you will need to be set free...one who is possessed, one who is overtaken by the influence of Satan. But one who is intermittently probably attacked, in what we understand today as deliverance, they don't necessarily need a conducting of deliverance, that one can be prayed for if there is an attack, it's just like if a thief comes to your house, it is different from if a thief comes live in your house, because a thief comes to your house to steal and then goes, but if he comes to live in your house, he has to be sent out and arrested. But if he comes to steal your things, where do you see him to cast him out? You don't need to arrest him, of course he is out, you have to look for how to regain what he has gotten or prevent him entirely. But if he comes to your house, to dominate you, to own, to live in your house, you are not concerned with the things he may be taking, you are concerned with sending him away and so possession is, one who is possessed needs to be delivered. Let me cut it short.

P5: I would add that anybody who is oppressed of the enemy or obsessed or like my brother said, possessed, these are people who need spiritual deliverance and we know that the devil oppresses us in different ways. In fact, one of the other areas I know people need spiritual deliverance in, and they seem not be aware of when they are obsessed or oppressed by the spirit of fear, the Bible calls fear a spirit in 2 Tim. 1:7 and we live in a day and age where fear is gripping the hearts of so many, so anybody who is being tormented by fear needs deliverance. Thank you.

Facilitator: Just to add to all that has been said on who needs spiritual deliverance, there are four levels of demonic attack on people and anyone that comes under any of these four levels of attacks needs deliverance.

1. Obsession: This has to do with satanic afflictions on the mindset and once somebody is obsessed by something, he needs deliverance.
2. The second level of demonic attack on people is called depression. Depression has to do with emotions and is around the soulish realm and once someone is depressed by whatever situation, it's a demonic attack, he needs deliverance.
3. The third level of demonic attack in people is called oppression and oppression, just like Acts 10:38 how God anointed Jesus Christ of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed...so oppression has to do with an attack on your body, it could be sickness, it could be an accident, it could be what have you, where the human body is affected that requires deliverance, whoever comes under oppression.
4. The fourth level of demonic attack that requires spiritual deliverance is known as possession. This is a state where the spirit of a man is absolutely taken over by a demonic spirit and when that happens, the person needs spiritual deliverance.

Conclusion, anyone that comes under obsession, oppression, depression, possession, needs spiritual deliverance. Thank you

P2: To make it a little bit out of the things we have here, the Apostle mentioned if you are depressed, you need spiritual deliverance. I might have to vary a little bit and that is the essence of this. It is not every depression that is caused by demonic oppression but there are some that are circumstantial, there are some that are in families. There are some families that the spouse keeps doing certain things as a character, not because you are obsessed but it's a character that you have developed, it is not because demons came there to put somethings, and depression is a gradual process, no depression come *gbim* (at once) it's a process, discovering you are discouraged, from there you keep going down and it goes to that level of depression and where the demon comes in as demonic attack, as Apostle was saying, is where it leads to suicide, it now tells you do this, kill yourself, do this and you are...and I've learnt also a lot from what Apostle was saying, there is that obsession that I want to die, you are hopeless, that is important for us to understand that there are levels of depression that a demon totally causes, but there are some that...because either by lack, even continual lack and poverty that are not actually caused by...caused by, either by government policies or maybe the things around you that may lead you to depression. People are even having social depression, so I just wanted to mention that, so this also will be outside what we have in this place. Thank you.

Facilitator: Yes, we are talking for academic purposes.

P5: Yes, so we don't belabor this point, the truth is that anything negative that happens to man is sourced from the devil, so whether it is gradual or sudden, I believe, the devil is the source of every form of wickedness, every form of evil, every form of negativity, so even if the depression is caused by poverty, who is behind poverty? It is the devil, so like you analyzed, anybody that needs spiritual deliverance is the person who falls under those categories, if his body being oppressed, if his mind is being obsessed, if he is going through depression of whatever form-emotional or if he is possessed, his spirit is already being taken over, such a one needs spiritual deliverance.

P2: Let us remember this is academic and arguments are involved, so I don't believe that every depression or anything is actually from demons because this is academic work and we are talking about spiritual deliverance not just any kind of deliverance, if someone is actually troubled in the mind and take for instance...can you cast out demons with drugs? We have said here, yes you can do that from what we can say and Jesus has taught us and we know the Scriptures, but in psychiatric places, in fact my father was a psychiatrist, there are some certain factors you don't need prayers, you need drugs and their mentality will come back. This is because the root cause, in as much as my brother was talking about, yes, the sins are troubles from Satan, but it is not everything we need to pray and cast out. Remember, what we are talking about, deliverance. Prayer for somebody to be healed is actually different from what we are talking about here, the level of deliverance. We can pray for someone to be healed but we all know that deliverance as it is here, as we are talking about, as he (researcher) wants is different from just praying for somebody, "the Lord heal you." You can be delivered from sickness, I understand all that, but the level of what he was saying here, if you just pray for someone that is troubled, let's say the

person is troubled emotionally and you now say, let me conduct deliverance, from our own understanding of deliverance (Laughs). Do you understand what I'm saying, sir?

P5: If you say your own understanding, I think you should say our own understanding.

Facilitator: Thank you very much we are just trying to let everyone air their views, we are not discussing with the aim of coming to the "unity of the faith," so everybody is allowed to have their own opinion and that is how far we can go on that question, who needs spiritual deliverance.

The fourth question is can Born-again Christians be demon possessed?

P3: This is a very critical question. 2 Cor. 5:17 told us if any man is in Christ he is a new a man, Gal. 3:13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law...and on and on. A born-again Christian may be demon possessed and may not be depending on...deliverance actually starts at the point of salvation, that is where deliverance begins from. Once a man is born-again, he is redeemed, washed by the precious blood of Jesus, sanctified, he is delivered. Yes, the moment he is born-again, he is delivered even though there are certain renouncements especially if before he gave his life to Christ, he has served some idols and done certain things that engulfed him into certain things, but the moment you are born-again, you are cleansed and sanctified. There is a Scripture in Luke 13 and that made us understand that sometimes, a born-again may be demon possessed, Luke 13:16–17. Jesus was saying, ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham...a daughter of Abraham in this context means she is a child of God, she's part of the kingdom...whom Satan bound these 18 years. It means she has been oppressed, possessed, and under oppression for 18 years but a daughter of Abraham. "He said be loosed from these bonds, and when he had finished saying these things, His adversaries were ashamed." We know all that happened and on and on and we can also look at Matt. 12:43, as I begin to round up. The Bible says when an unclean spirit is gone out from a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest and finding none then he said, I will return to my house... When a born-again Christian who has been born-again, decided to go back again and engage himself into things that are not clean, that person... What he is saying is an invitation of demons. There are times that you invite demons either by your character, habit, the places you find yourself, so it is possible that a born-again Christian may be or can be demon possessed. It depends on the stand and at the place you find yourself at that point.

P4: I believe a genuinely born-again child of God shouldn't be demon possessed. If you are in your right standing with God, because the Spirit of God cannot cohabit with an evil spirit simultaneously. I would like to refer to the Scripture...quoted about that woman, whom Jesus Christ, said a daughter of Abraham. I believe Jesus Christ was referring to her as a Jew but not a genuinely born-again Christian, a Jew, a daughter of Abraham. But if a man is genuinely born again, you ought not to be. The Spirit of God resides inside of you and evil spirits supposed not to cohabit with the Spirit of the Living God in you. But where I come to agree with you, is where a Christian, born-again, filled with the Spirit of God, decided to be careless and decided to do what he ought not to do then it's an invitation for demons to possess such an individual as the Scriptures say, evil communication corrupts good manners. If a child of God begins to communicate with some ungodly

people, and he has been influenced, and you drop your guard, become careless, no longer read your Bible, decided to do what you ought not to do, you are carefree, then it is an invitation for demons to possess an individual. That means, you don't give the Spirit of God to take over your life, then you are now giving an opportunity for another Spirit. I would like us to understand there is a spirit behind everything that a man does, either positive or negative. Let me stop for now.

P2: Let me read this: it says, "can." That's the word, "can," is it possible for a born again, that's the focus, "Christian be demon possessed?" it is emphatically written here, written in capital letter. And then demon possession is the highest level of demonic activity in the human life. My stand is, no born-again Christian can be demon possessed. Yes, we can be tormented, yes we can be afflicted, we may go through other things but we cannot be possessed. Like some of my colleagues have said, if a born-again Christian backslides...there is a theology that says, once you are born-again, you are saved forever, I don't believe in that. I believe that once you are saved and you go back, you can be destroyed. So many people can be saved now and they backslide, so if you are backsliding, a demon can take over you, that's a different thing all together. But, if you are born-again, you cannot. God's Word says in Rom. 8, there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Now sir, let me get this. Possession is what we talking about. Now demonic possession, if we go by what it means, it means, a total ownership, a total influencing, just like mad people, those mad people have been completely taken over, their minds are no longer theirs. The child of God...where is the Holy Spirit when that born-again Child of God is...? Where is the Holy Spirit? Where is the Christ in Him? So, I don't believe that biblically speaking a born-again child of God... possession, no way!

P6: I want to agree with everyone here, that a child of God cannot be possessed but can be oppressed. That is my opinion from what all of us have said.

P5: In line with this question, I believe that a born-again Christian can be possessed by demons and it is not something that happens instantaneously. That you are born-again means the Holy Spirit owns you, but according to Scripture in Hebrews 6, it is possible for he who was once owned by the Holy Spirit or God, to lose the ownership of that person. So, in as much as we are living as Christians daily, we cannot be possessed by demons, but we can lose our salvation and a Christian becomes possessed.

Facilitator: So that we don't over flog this issue, a born-again Christian cannot be possessed by demon spirits. Born-again simply means the Holy Spirit has taken ownership of your spirit man. According to Titus 3:5, we are regenerated and renewed by the Holy Spirit. But a born-again Christian that is possessed must have backslide. Thank you.

Because of time, let us abide by the 2 minutes allocated please. A born-again Christian can be obsessed, oppressed, and depressed, but not possessed.

Facilitator: The fifth Question, do you think Pentecostal churches in Jos practice deliverance the biblical way?

Question five: Do you think Pentecostal churches in Jos practice deliverance the biblical way?

P5: Yes, I believe majority of the Pentecostal churches in Jos practice deliverance the biblical way. Just like we are analyzing from the beginning. Most

Pentecostal churches in Jos, particularly the one I attend, we conduct deliverance through administering the blood of Jesus, the Word of God, the name of Jesus and people get delivered. There are deliverance sessions that by the leading of the Holy Spirit, the people are asked to maintain fellowship in church and by reason of the fellowship, they get deliverance. So, I believe most of the Pentecostal churches that I know in Jos conduct deliverance the biblical way.

P6: And in PFN, we conduct monthly meetings where pastors are being taught how to operate and behave ethically, so I believe Pentecostal churches are being taught to behave ethically except someone chooses to operate otherwise. As for those coming for teaching every month, I believe they are adhering to what is being taught. Thank you, sir.

Facilitator: Just to round up, what they have said is correct. The challenge we have in Jos North in particular are Pentecostal ministers that don't associate with PFN, they are the ones that give us challenge in spiritual deliverance in Jos, because just like (name omitted) earlier said about someone coming to break coconut in the name of deliverance, you can't find such ministers as members of PFN, very rare so those Pentecostal churches that associate with PFN to a great extent try to practice deliverance biblically.

Question six: What deliverance practices do you accept?

Now this question is built on the 5th one. In case you have any different opinion, if you don't have you then we proceed to, "(Name withheld)? No?" Then let's move to question 7.

Question seven: What practices do you condemn and why?

P3: The ones that are not done in biblical ways are those we condemn.

P5: Any practice that is done outside the Scriptures.

P6: And also, we condemn those that are charging money before conducting deliverance because Jesus said freely you have received, freely give. If somebody chooses to appreciate you after he has been delivered, he is welcome, but for you to say a certain amount of money, 3 million or how many million before I conduct deliverance over you. Scripturally, I think we stand against that.

P2: The word is syncretism, that is the mixture of the Bible and evil tradition, not all traditions are evil, but evil traditions bring the Bible in one hand and bring other things, jazz or charms in one hand, we completely and totally condemn it. Why do we condemn it? It is unbiblical, we call it Jesus plus. How can you mix Jesus and Beelzebub together? It wouldn't rhyme, so we condemn syncretism.

Facilitator:

Maybe I should add a voice to the last question on practices condemned and answer this. Just like my fellow ministers have said, we condemn or personally, I stand to condemn spiritual deliverances that are not in line with scriptural positions, which we have defined in this forum earlier and such deliverances are done like others have said, those who go into deliverances for gains, we condemn it. Just like one of us said, Jesus said freely you have received, freely give and those who try to make deliverances look so complicated in order to extort their victims is condemned. Jesus came to make the gospel simple to us and we must not compound it.

Now, going to the question at hand, what is the position of PFN on spiritual deliverance?

Question Eight: What is the position of the PFN on demon possession and deliverance?

Facilitator: PFN believes in spiritual deliverance as we have said on this forum and believes in spiritual deliverance that is done in accordance to Scripture which is done in line with God's Word, The name of Jesus, the blood of Jesus and we believe in spiritual deliverance that is in line with spiritual provisions without extorting the victims and taking advantage of the victims in anyway, but to do it as a means of helping the victim actualize their purposes in life.

Question Nine: Do all the PFN pastors in Jos North practice the same thing in deliverance?

P5: In response to the question, if all the pastors in Jos North practice the same thing, the answer is no, reason being that each church, ministry has a mandate from God on what to do on any given situation, so we don't practice it in a uniform system. Each church practices spiritual deliverance as guided by the Spirit of God in line with the Holy Scriptures.

Facilitator: Just like we said, Pentecostal ministries, what differentiates Pentecostal ministries with our orthodox, mother churches, where we came from is the fact that each Pentecostal ministry has an apostolic mandate received by the president and founder of the ministry and that actually leads to some little differences in the way things are done even though all the ways are guided by Scriptures. For example, when Moses was called to release the children of Israel from Egypt, he was asked to cross the Red Sea by striking the river/waters with his rod and the sea parted.

When Joshua took over leadership to cross the Jordan, Joshua did not use the rod to part the Jordan, but he used the Ark of the Covenant and the priests leading the way, to part river Jordan, and what matters is that it was parted by instructions from the Lord. God spoke to Moses to use the rod, but the same God didn't ask Joshua to use the rod. So sometimes, our ways are not the same, but once we can see the Spirit and grace of God in that instruction, we accept it. So, in Pentecostal ministries, we don't do deliverance in the same way because each minister may receive a different instruction, but what guides us all is that such instructions must be proven from Scriptures and I think that's what I may say on this question.

Question Ten: In what ways do the Pastors differ in their practices?

Chorus answer by all participants: It has already been said.

P4: As we are led by the Spirit of God, but we are guided by Scripture. The Scripture is our basis, but we differ as being led by the Spirit of God, but we have the Scriptures to guide us.

P3: We differ in our practices because our mandates are not the same.

Facilitator: Just as I said earlier, Pentecostal ministries, each have their mandate and the mandate determines the pattern of each ministries operation and that is why we may differ in certain ways, but we are all guided by the provision of God's Word. So, we differ in different ways of doing things like I said earlier, God spoke to Moses to use the rod, God spoke to Joshua to use the ark and when you come to Elijah and Elisha, you see different ways of doing the same miracle but all that matters is that they received instruction from the Lord. John the Baptist came and was baptizing people as a sign of his ministry to get people saved, Jesus did not do baptism, but his disciples did, but he still drew people to salvation. We differ in ways

because of the mandate and instructions we receive, but all these instructions, like we all agreed are guided by God's Word.

P5: Maybe a few seconds to give scriptural basis to all you have said. In 1 Cor. 12, when the mention of the gifts of the Spirit was being rendered, it says there are diversities of administration but the same Spirit, diversities of operation, but the same Spirit. There are diversities of ministries and churches in the city of Jos, yet it is the same Spirit that guides us in all that we do in line with the Holy Scriptures. Thank you.

Facilitator: I believe that just the thing, some believe in casting devils by calling the demons by name, some believe in just speaking the word and believe that deliverance will occur. Some believe in laying of hands and you see them falling and deliverance is happening. So, the way differs. Some use anointing oil but like we said, all these ways are guided by God's Word, because we saw where the apostles were sent in Mark 6 and they anointed people and they were set free and were healed and we saw where hands were laid and there was spiritual manifestation, so we should ensure our ways have scriptural backing. That's what guides us in Jos North as a chapter and a city.

Any other questions?

P2: Yes, a few things I would want to point out. In every deliverance, there are motives, biblical motives and unbiblical motives. The greatest motive for deliverance as I said earlier is that such a person would know Jesus. If you deliver somebody and cast out the demons and they don't know Jesus, you have done well, but it doesn't add up. If you heal somebody and the sickness was caused by a demon, they cast out the devil of sickness and the person continues living in sin, you have done well but the kingdom...probably the person will not have eternal life. Jesus Christ should be at the center of it. If he's not, then there is a big problem. So Jesus Christ is the center of all deliverance we are doing. In all we do, Jesus must be at the center.

Another thing I must say because it's going all over the places and it's what people are calling deliverance, they call it ancestral curses, family curses, business curses, these are some of the things that are triggering some of the falsehood we are experiencing, not just in Jos but all over the world. When you come and see somebody wants to deliver somebody, and then they will now bring a husband and a wife's name to knock together, simply because they want this one...some of these people are empty. They are not Pentecostal people because if they were Pentecostal people, they would be led by the Spirit of God. So, what we are doing, even today, is to be able to differentiate/disassociate ourselves, the PFN from all these practices. So many of these families, instead of being delivered, the curses are even added. Because of false prophesy, a child will now fight against his father because he is the cause of the problem he is having, because of ignorance. The Bible says in Hosea 4:6, my people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. I believe in biblical knowledge, people not having biblical knowledge is the problem. Thank you.

P4: What I would like to do as we are rounding up is how to help our people who have been delivered to sustain their deliverance. That has been a major challenge when it comes to spiritual deliverance among the Pentecostal circle. Our people who

have been delivered are not taught and disciplined on how to maintain their deliverance and if care is not taken, our situation even becomes worse than at the beginning.

Facilitator: Thank you and closing remarks.

Closing prayer by (name withheld).

APPENDIX H

PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF FOCUS GROUP TRANSCRIPT

Results of Focus Group Discussion (FGD) carried out on December 11, 2018 at 10:00 am, at the Victory Assembly, Farin Gada, Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria.

Duration of FGD: Approximately 1 hour.

Participants: Six male Pentecostal pastors of different churches (all leaders of the PFN) in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State and all members of the Plateau State Chapter of the PFN.

The Facilitator was also a participant; the doctoral researcher excused the group to have unobtrusive discussions, without his presence being a hindrance. The names of the pastors, their positions of responsibility in the PFN, and their respective denominations are duly documented and filed with the researcher. This information, however, is not disclosed here for the purpose of confidentiality.

Demographic Details of Participants

Participant 1 (P1), Facilitator (F): a pastor and one of the leaders of PFN Jos North

Participant 2 (P2): a pastor and one of the leaders of PFN Jos North

Participant 3 (P3): a pastor and one of the leaders of PFN Jos North

Participant 4 (P4): a pastor and one of the leaders of PFN Jos North

Participant 5 (P5): a pastor and one of the leaders of PFN Jos North

Participant 6 (P6): a pastor and one of the leaders of PFN Jos North

Question One: What does spiritual deliverance mean to you?

The meaning of spiritual deliverance was answered by three out of the six participants (P3, P4, and P2), with responses indicating that spiritual deliverance means for an individual to be totally free and liberated from demonic oppression, possession, and manipulation of the enemy. P2 added that it must be done biblically, with faith in the name of Jesus, with the bottom line being the salvation of the person being delivered.

Question Two: How should deliverance be conducted?

Responses to this question were given by four of the six participants: P1(F), P3, P5, and P6. The four respondents all agreed that deliverance should be done scripturally, taking examples from Jesus and Scriptures. They asserted that deliverance must be done as led by the Spirit of God and by his Word as reported in Scripture. The Word of God is upheld by all respondents to this question as the final authority and manual for conducting deliverance. Respondent P6 gave an instance of a deliverance that was conducted by breaking coconut and eggs. He calls this unscriptural, stating that he frowned at that method of conducting deliverance.

Respondent P3 corroborated this by affirming that if it is not in line with God's Word, it is not spiritual deliverance. He further stated it is a demonic deliverance that uses cane to beat somebody, and uses all manner of things including ways, manner, and patterns that are not in line with God's Word.

The facilitator (P1), who is also a participant, specified three particular provisions for spiritual deliverance to include the name of Jesus, the Word of God, and the blood of Jesus.

Question Three: Who needs spiritual deliverance?

In proffering an answer to this question, again, four of the respondents had a lively discussion on trying to determine who needs spiritual deliverance. In the view of P4, anyone having strange experiences contrary to Scripture are candidates for deliverance. He stated such experiences could be physical or in dreams where a person sees strange creatures or animals chasing them. P2 noted that anyone who is possessed by demons needs to be delivered. He clarified the meaning of possession to mean a situation where one has been overran, overtaken, or whose mind has been overtaken by demons and other forces are influencing such a person to do things contrary to the Word of God or contrary to human nature. He noted that some deliverance cases may only need prayer and not a whole deliverance because of the intermittent demonic attack. He elaborated further by giving an analogy of a thief who comes to steal and a thief who comes to take up residence in a person's house; the person whose house is dominated and lived in by the thief will want to send the thief away, while the person who just had their goods stolen may not see the thief in order to arrest him but has to find a way to regain what he has gotten or prevent him entirely.

A person who is obsessed, oppressed, or possessed is a person who needs deliverance. This is the submission of P5. He specifically added that there are other areas people need spiritual deliverance in, and they seem to not be aware of when they are obsessed or oppressed by the spirit of fear, elaborating that anybody who is being tormented by fear needs deliverance. To further buttress the point, P1(F) enumerated four levels of attack that need deliverance: obsession, depression, oppression, and possession.

However, respondent P2 was not in agreement that a depressed individual is in need of spiritual deliverance. According to him, it is not every depression that is caused

by demonic oppression, as in some cases depression is a gradual process and does not happen at once. He also mentioned social depression, which is caused by poverty, continual lack, or government policies. He said he made this distinction as the study was for academic purposes. He noted that there are certain factors where drugs are needed to cure the sickness and not necessarily praying for somebody to be healed. This, according to him, is actually different from the level of deliverance pastors are used to, especially from the understanding of pastors of deliverance.

Respondent P5 impressed that anything negative that happens to man is sourced from the devil, so whether it is gradual or sudden, the devil is the source of every form of wickedness, every form of evil, every form of negativity. He further asked, if the depression is caused by poverty, who is behind poverty? It is the devil. He concluded by saying anyone that falls under this category needs spiritual deliverance.

Question Four: Can a Born-again Christian be demon possessed?

On this question, all participants lent their voices to give answers as to whether a born-again Christian can be demon possessed. All pastors agreed that a born-again child of God cannot be demon possessed, but they gave a few instances where that may be possible.

According to all participants, if a Christian does not take their walk with God seriously, have evil communication, or reach a point in their lives where they backslide, they can then be possessed. The premise they used was that if a person is born-again, then the Holy Spirit resides in that person and has total ownership, therefore no demon can possess that person. P2 stated emphatically that demon possession is the highest level of demonic activity in the human life.

Participants P3 and P4 also pondered on a Scripture in Luke 13, where a woman was bound for 18 years. P3 considered that the woman was a daughter of Abraham and a part of the kingdom and still bound, while P4 considered that the woman was being referred to as a Jew at the time and not a genuine born-again Christian and that may be why she was bound.

The facilitator (P1) emphasized in conclusion to this question, that a born-again Christian can be obsessed, oppressed, and depressed, but not possessed.

Question five: Do you think Pentecostal churches in Jos practice deliverance the biblical way?

Three of the participants answered this question, stating that a majority of the Pentecostal churches in Jos practice deliverance the biblical way. P5 stressed that in most Pentecostal churches in Jos, deliverance is conducted through administering the blood of Jesus, the Word of God, and the name of Jesus. P6 also gave an insight into the practices of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria, where monthly meetings with pastors are being conducted in order to teach them how to operate and behave ethically, stating that he believes that those who attend the meetings are well equipped and adhere to what is being taught. The facilitator (P1; F) agreed with the views above, but stated that the problem encountered in Jos North are Pentecostal ministers that do not associate with PFN, who tend to give challenges in spiritual deliverance to the PFN.

Question six: What deliverance practices do you accept?

This question was a buildup on question five and none of the participants had any different opinion.

Question seven: What practices do you condemn and why?

Participants P2, P4, P5, and P6 stated various practices they condemned, to be those not practiced scripturally, those that charge money before conducting a deliverance, and those that mix the Bible with evil tradition. Participant P2 called such practices “Jesus plus,” where Jesus and Beelzebub are mixed together, stating that the term for it was called syncretism. P1(F) further stressed that Jesus said freely you have received, freely give. So those ministers who go in to deliverance for gains, is highly condemned.

Question Eight: What is the position of the PFN on demon possession and deliverance?

The facilitator (P1) was the only one who answered this question, and he stated that PFN believes in spiritual deliverance that is done in accordance to Scripture which is done in line with God’s Word, the name of Jesus, and the blood of Jesus. PFN also believes in spiritual deliverance that is in line with spiritual provisions without extorting the victims and taking advantage of the victims in anyway, but to do deliverance as a means of helping the victim actualize their purposes in life.

Question Nine: Do all the PFN pastors in Jos North practice the same thing in deliverance?

Participants P1(F) and P5 lent their voices to answer this question. They both agreed that pastors do not practice the same thing when it comes to deliverance. P5 stated that this difference is based on how churches are guided by the Holy Spirit differently. P1(F) further stated that each Pentecostal ministry has an apostolic mandate received by the president and founder of the ministry and that actually leads to some little differences in the way things are done, even though all the ways are guided by Scriptures.

Question Ten: In what ways do the Pastors differ in their practices?

All participants stated that this has already been said. P3 and P4 stated that this difference was a result of the leading of the Spirit of God and because the mandates of the churches were not the same. P1(F) gave examples of Elijah and Elisha who had different ways of doing the same miracle, but all that matters is that they received instruction from the Lord.

P5 gave a scriptural backing to this by using 1 Cor. 12 to say that there are diversities of ministries and churches in the city of Jos, yet it is the same Spirit that guides us in all that we do in line with the Holy Scriptures. P1(F) concluded that ways differ, but all churches should ensure they have scriptural backing.

Any other Questions?

Participants were asked if they had any last words, and P2 stated that Jesus Christ must be at the center of all deliverance. He also warned that there are people who bring false prophesies to tear families apart in the name of deliverance, he stated that having biblical knowledge will guard against this trend. P4 also mentioned that his concern was on how to help the people who had been delivered to maintain their deliverance, as this has been a challenge among the Pentecostal circle.

APPENDIX I

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDY PARTICIPANTS OF
SURVEY OPINIONS ON SPIRITUAL DELIVERANCE

Table A4. Demographic characteristics of study participants

Demographic characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Age in years</i>		
<25	28	10.2
25–34	69	25.1
35–44	83	30.2
45–54	51	18.5
55–64	25	9.1
>64	19	6.9
<i>Highest educational qualification</i>		
High school graduation	41	14.9
Trade/Technical/Vocational training	16	5.8
Some academic credit	11	4.0
Diploma or Associate degree	53	19.3
Bachelor's degree	56	20.4
Post graduate diploma or BA honors	42	15.3
Master's degree	30	10.9
Professional degree	12	4.4
Doctorate degree	14	5.1
<i>Primary ministry position</i>		
Pastor	43	15.6
Elder	22	8.0
Deacon	36	13.1
Lay leader	28	10.2
Evangelist	40	14.5
Teacher	30	10.9
Member	76	27.6

APPENDIX J

RESULT OF SURVEY OPINIONS ON SPRITUAL DELIVERANCE IN
PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES IN JOS, NIGERIA SHOWING
ITEMS, RESPONSES, AND MEAN SCORE

Table A5. Result of survey opinions on spiritual deliverance in Pentecostal churches in Jos, Nigeria

Items	Responses					Mean score
	SA (1)	A (2)	N (3)	D (4)	SD (5)	
A Pentecostal Christian is one who speaks in tongues.	59(21.5)	173(62.9)	10(3.6)	20(7.3)	13(4.9)	2.11
Pentecostal churches differ from non-Pentecostals in some of their theologies and practices.	73(26.5)	194(70.5)	5(1.8)	1(0.4)	2(0.7)	1.78
Spiritual deliverance means to set a captive free from domination of Satan or his demons.	223(81.1)	45(16.4)	2(0.7)	3(1.1)	2(0.7)	1.24
In my opinion, only those that are possessed by demons need spiritual deliverance.	22(8.0)	22(8.0)	7(2.5)	194(70.5)	30(10.9)	3.68
Preaching and teaching about spiritual deliverance occurs regularly in my church.	181(65.8)	52(18.9)	19(6.9)	21(7.6)	2(0.7)	1.59
In my opinion, anyone who is saved can minister spiritual deliverance.	27(9.8)	198(72.0)	9(3.3)	36(13.1)	5(1.8)	2.25
Interviewing and praying for the demon possessed person is the process of conducting spiritual deliverance.	173(62.9)	73(26.5)	11(4.0)	13(4.7)	5(1.8)	1.56
In my opinion, once saved, there is no need for further spiritual deliverance.	10(3.6)	35(12.7)	6(2.2)	74(26.9)	150(54.5)	4.16
The Bible does not say if a Christian needs spiritual deliverance.	15(5.5)	154(56.0)	22(8.0)	53(19.3)	31(11.3)	2.75

Table A5 Continued

Items	Responses					Mean score
	SA (1)	A (2)	N (3)	D (4)	SD (5)	
The practice of "Breaking of Curses" is a form of spiritual deliverance.	201(73.1)	67(24.4)	4(1.5)	3(1.1)	0(0.0)	1.31
I personally experienced deliverance from demons after becoming a Christian.	18(6.5)	48(17.5)	23(8.4)	34(12.4)	152(55.3)	3.92
In my opinion, it is possible to know that a person is possessed of a demon by their behavior.	50(18.2)	55(20.0)	11(4.0)	16(5.8)	143(52.0)	3.53
In my opinion, spiritual deliverance comes from African Traditional Religion.	2(0.7)	6(2.2)	14(5.1)	197(71.6)	56(20.4)	4.09
Pentecostal practice in spiritual deliverance is the same as what the African Traditional Priest do.	2(0.7)	8(2.9)	9(3.3)	184(66.9)	72(26.2)	4.15
In my opinion, every person who is yet to be delivered from demons belongs to Satan.	23(8.4)	25(9.1)	13(4.7)	186(67.6)	28(10.2)	3.62
In my opinion, immoral lifestyle is evidence that one is in need of spiritual deliverance.	42(15.3)	209(76.0)	11(4.0)	8(2.9)	5(1.8)	2.00
Mental illness is evidence that one is in need of spiritual deliverance.	26(9.5)	198(72.0)	22(8.0)	12(7.6)	8(2.9)	2.23

SA=Strongly agree

A=Agree

N=Neutral

D=Disagree

SD=Strongly disagree

APPENDIX K

LIST OF DENOMINATIONS FOR CHURCH LEADERS INTERVIEW

1. Church on the Rock, Namua Branch Jos
2. Deeper Life Bible Church, Tudun Wada Jos
3. Dunamis International Christian Centre, Jos
4. Foursquare Gospel Church, Jos
5. Living Faith Church (Winners Chapel), Jos
6. Marvelous Chapel, Tudun Wada Jos
7. Mountains of Fire and Miracle Church, Jos
8. Oasis of Love Church, Jos
9. Redeemed Christian Church of God, Jos
10. Redeemed Peoples Mission, Tudun Wada Jos
11. Right-Way Ministries, Jos
12. Saints Alive International Christian Centre, Jos
13. Victory Power Assembly, Jos
14. Achievers Christian Centre, Jos
15. Assemblies of God, Nassarawa Branch Jos

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