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Tyndale University College and Seminary

Developing Best Practices for Itinerant Ministry Through Interviews with
Experienced Itinerant Ministers
Using Self-Evaluation in a Cross-Cultural Context

A Thesis
submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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by

Yajaira Ana Maria Gomez

Toronto, Canada

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ABSTRACT

This thesis reports on the derivation of best practices for my itinerant cross-cultural ministry. The project was undertaken because I wanted to improve my cross-cultural itinerant ministry in the three broad areas of preparing for, administering, and sustaining an itinerant ministry. Using action research, data was collected from interviews with twelve experienced itinerant ministers and mined to derive their best practices. As the research subject, I then applied these identified practices to my itinerant ministry. The results of implementing these best practices were observed using the methods of autoethnography in comparing a pre, mid and post-project qualitative evaluation of myself, the researcher. The discernible outcomes included improvements to my itinerant cross-cultural ministry in the areas of ministry preparation, ministry administration, and ministry health.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- IAOGI:** Independent Assemblies of God International. A Pentecostal fellowship independent of other Pentecostal denominations.
- ICM:** Iglesia Cristo Misionera, Inc. A Hispanic Pentecostal Holiness denomination that operates worldwide.
- ICM M.I.:** Iglesia Cristo Misionera, Misión International, Inc. A Pentecostal Holiness Denomination with churches in North and South America, the Caribbean, Pakistan, and India.
- IHWN:** Illuminating His Word to the Nations. A religious charity founded by Yajaira Calero, registered with Canada Revenue that shares the Gospel message within and outside of Canada.
- KJV:** King James Version.
- NASB:** New American Standard Bible.
- NIV:** New International Version.

CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION

This project was designed to develop best practices for my cross-cultural itinerant ministry in the broad areas of preparing for, administering, and sustaining the ministry. I used an action research approach over an eleven-month period, interviewing itinerant ministers to derive best practices which I then applied to my ministry. Since I was myself the subject of the research project, I evaluated the change that took place within my ministry context by comparing the results of three self-interviews made before, during and after the project. In this thesis I describe the research I conducted, the theological and social science rationale behind it, and the practical steps I followed in order to achieve the objectives, analyses, and outcomes of the project. These outcomes include improvement in the preparation of my itinerant ministry, the administration of the ministry, and in the area of maintaining a healthy itinerant ministry.

In this introductory chapter, I present the background to the project. This entails my specific itinerant cross-cultural ministry setting, identifying the competencies that were developed, and the knowledge discovered. The introduction points also to the larger vision that framed the challenge. I begin with the context for this project.

Ministry Context

I serve as an itinerant minister for the Canadian charity “Illuminating His Word to the Nations” (IHWN). This is an itinerant ministry in that I travel from one place to another preaching the Gospel message with the purpose of having people come to faith in Jesus. In my role as a traveling minister, I function in different capacities. These involve serving as an evangelist, missionary, bible school planter and teacher engaged in discipling, providing pastoral care, and offering financial aid to those encountering human hardship and suffering. As the founder, president and sole itinerant minister of this charity, I represent the IHWN organization to church groups of various regions, ethnicities and languages (see Table 1).

Table 1. Ministry to regions and ethnicities including language I preach in

Region	Ethnicity	Preaching Language
Canada	Central and South American	English, Spanish
United States	African American, Caribbean, Central and South American	English, Spanish
Central America	Belizean, Guatemalan	Spanish
Central Africa	Burundian, Congolese, Kenyan	English, French

When visiting these regions, I preach in English, Spanish or French, depending on the needs of the inviting church. The group inviting me may request that I preach at worship services, open-air church meetings or campaigns/revivals. I also teach at prayer meetings, group fasts, and children’s Sunday schools. In addition, I provide guidance, counsel and exhortation to leaders abroad (i.e., Belize, Congo), prayer for the sick, and prophetic intercession. Furthermore, the

provision of pastoral care is an expectation of some the inviting cultures and so I am often asked to do house visits to people in spiritual, emotional or physical need. Finally, when funds are available, part of IHWN's mission is to provide love offerings from believers here in North America, for the purpose of aiding low-income pastors, church construction, and families in financial need.

Since 2006, I have frequently shared the Gospel message to regions in North and Central America, the Caribbean, and Africa. This has resulted in thirteen mission trips: five to the Democratic Republic of Congo (7, 5, 20, 10 and 3 weeks); four to Belize (10, 4, 3, and 1.5 weeks); two to Cuba (2 and 1.5 weeks), one to Kenya (3 weeks), and one to Guatemala (10 weeks). The length of the ministry trips is negotiated with my board, inviting ministry and husband.

The Pentecostal inviting groups usually request that I minister to some of their small groups (children, youth, women, widows and married couples), in homes (to business leaders, married couples and the sick) and at chapel services held in academic institutions and hospitals. As a preacher who seeks to maximize the limited time I have on a field (three weeks, for example), I want to do as much as possible for the poor societies who desire my help. This can mean preaching from one to five times a day, although preaching more than three times a day only happens on my trips to Africa. The number of times that I preach during an outing has the potential to affect my physical health and thus provided a reason to develop and implement the best practices for self-care in this ministry as detailed in Chapter Five.

When I responded to this itinerant call of God in 2006, I was single and without domestic ties. However, since my marriage in 2011, it has been my practice to limit my ministry outings to three weeks at any one time, with the exception of one trip to Belize in 2012 that lasted four weeks. When considering a ministry I ask myself several questions: Do I believe God is sending me to this place of ministry? Is my husband discerning the direction in which the Lord is leading my ministry outings? What does my charity board feel about God's leading? Can we explore any implications of the trip together before prayerfully deciding on next steps, including establishing a budget?

I then explore ministry invitations to specific locations, since I do not initiate a ministry journey without the partnership of local leaders, churches, and denominations. After a partnership has been confirmed and a ministry invitation received, I begin to invite churches, prayer partners and other ministry contacts to join in specific prayer and financial commitments towards meeting the budget that my board has accepted.

Three areas of itinerant cross-cultural preaching ministry were observed during this project. First, the preparation involved in getting ready to conduct itinerant ministry required that I pay attention to certain areas: spiritual disciplines, intellectual study, raising a budget, self-care, family support, and cultural sensitivity. Second, the ministry required administration in terms of team work and prayer support. Third, the project focused on the way my ministry was

sustained through regular donor communication, through balancing family life with ministry, and through mentoring.

A description of what my cross-cultural itinerant ministry practice looked like before my project can be found in the response to my first self-interview taken before the project began. Concerning the area of ministry preparation, spiritual practices included “prolonged water fasting, praying, reading the Word, waking up early to seek God; abstaining from worldly movies and conversations that are dirty as they will affect my mind and not keep me clear to think when I am praying.” Most specifically, before an itinerant outing, I would seclude myself in my home for many days while seeking God in fasting, prayer and scripture study, ignoring phone calls and social contact beyond my husband. Financially, I promoted mission trips when I preached, wrote newsletters, sent out emails, offered ministry donation envelopes, donated my honorariums to the ministry, and budgeted for itinerant outings. Emotionally, I would go through scenarios of what I would do if my family had a crisis (i.e., my mother’s health), and even what might happen while conducting itinerant ministry (i.e., opposition to my message, not having someone pick me up at the airport, and bad weather). (Self-interview, February 2014).

Concerning my family life, I would prepare by spending more time with my husband before I traveled, try to visit my parents the weekend before I traveled, and obtain the assurance that my husband would attend to my parents. Intellectually speaking, to prepare my sermons, I would exegete biblical passages

and read commentaries. Physical preparation consisted of trying “to spread my schedule out so I have at least one day to rest, or two,” eating a healthy diet, exercising a little, and buying things I needed for trips (e.g., anti-malaria medications, first aid kit, bug repellent).

Culturally, I would become informed about the country I was visiting by reading about it online (i.e., visa requirements, dangers, and customs), reading what Canada’s travel advisory said concerning a particular place I was visiting, and finding out what was appropriate to wear (so as not offend the destination culture). I would also try to learn the destination culture’s language. When preparing my messages, I did not make them culturally sensitive ahead of time. Rather, I tried to identify with the target audience I was speaking to by using “examples that come to my head about the culture i.e., chickens, their food.” (Self-interview, February 2014)

In the area of sustaining a healthy itinerant ministry, my self-interview reveals that I was not clear on how to do this. My response concerning maintaining financial health reads as follow:

I don’t know how but I make sure to never be in debt. I pay bills for the ministry before I leave. I try to not have zero in the ministry bank account. I budget, believe and trust God in prayer for provision. I pray for financial health and for the donors who give. (Self-interview, February 2014)

I tried to bring sermons that had a balance of theology and spirit-filled ministry. Also, I tried to live the preached word as much as possible.

To maintain a healthy family relationship alongside my itinerant ministry, I was intentional about spending quality time with my husband. While away, I would call him often, and “send emails about when we can talk.” When I came back from a trip, I would cook nice meals and try not to let my husband do “any housework because he did it all while I was away.” (Self-interview, February 2014)

The ministry situation described above is the context in which this project took place, and which provided the opportunity for research.

Opportunity

This research project provided opportunities for me to become a better itinerant cross-cultural minister. One prospect was improving how I could become all things to all persons in order that people might accept and follow the message of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 9:19). An example of this comes from my traveling ministry to Africa. If I preach in both Pentecostal Holiness and non-Pentecostal Holiness churches while in the Congo, I encounter different challenges. I know that both denominations have differing views that restrict their ability to accept and cooperate with each other. I thus work harder to be thoughtful in my words and behavior when interacting with each group in order to not offend either church culture. In this way, they can cooperate with me the preacher. Moreover, as an example from the Congolese context, if I know that one church considers playing soccer a worldly activity, then I will not use soccer as an illustration when I preach or teach among them. However, if another church culture welcomes and

celebrates soccer as a sport, then I make sure to use that sport in my sermon illustrations. In both cases, I adapt to each system's practices thereby winning church leaders' confidence to preach and teach among them.

As illustrated above, cross-cultural competence can be attained by giving careful attention to the expectations, practical standards, and subtle differences between ministry contexts. This enhances the practical preparation of the preacher. In this thesis, best practices gleaned from interviewing experienced itinerant ministers through action research brought about change in my itinerant cross-cultural ministry in the three areas of preparation for ministry, administration of the ministry, and maintenance of a healthy ministry. The action research was implementing best practices from interviewed itinerant ministers so I could better serve as an itinerant minister.

First, the project improved the area of preparation as an itinerant minister. This meant spiritual disciplines, practical preparation, self-care, raising a budget, preparing my family for my departure, and becoming more culturally sensitive. Second, it addressed practices of administration in terms of team work and prayer support. Third, the project focused on sustaining my ministry through regular donor communication, balancing family life with ministry, and mentoring. By testing the best practices in these areas within this ministry context for eleven months, I was able to assess to what extent they succeeded in helping me become a better itinerant minister in cross-cultural settings. This included seeing change in the areas of preparation, administration and sustaining the ministry.

Purpose

The central goal of this project was to develop best practices for my itinerant ministry in the three areas of preparation, administration and sustenance.

Definition of Key Terms

Culture: “The learned and shared patterns of beliefs, behaviors, and values of groups of interacting people” (Bennett 1998, 3).

Ethnography: The researcher’s narrative of a culture; a story-telling method of displaying the results of a study.

Autoethnography: A variation of ethnography that focuses on the self, whereby the researcher writes a narrative of his or her own culture. Since the researcher is a case-study of a culture, he or she captures that culture by observing his or her own beliefs, behavior, values, artifacts and lifestyle. Autoethnography pays attention to the culture of the inner self as well as the outer self (i.e., this thesis reports on Yajaira Gomez’s culture) (Bañez 2013; Chang et al. 2011, 22; Sparkes 2000, 21)

Holiness churches: Churches that emphasize Wesley’s teachings on “entire sanctification,” in terms of which the new believer no longer deliberately engages in sin (Gonzalez 1985, 255; Bowker 2003).

Itinerant minister: A traveling worker of the church who moves from place to place for short periods of time (Sutter 1976, 37).

Chapter Outlines

This chapter has provided a brief summary of the entire project. The context in which I do itinerant cross-cultural ministry was assessed, the opportunity for improving the ministry was explained, the central goal of the project was stated, and terms that are used in the thesis were defined.

In Chapter Two, a theological framework and rationale for the project is drawn from Scripture. An examination of Scripture reveals those principles of itinerant ministry in the Old and New Testaments that bridge communication between preacher and audience, and the work of itinerant ministers from biblical times. A section on theological themes supports the project by reviewing the framework of the Great Commission, the participation of women in evangelism, team work among the New Testament itinerant ministers, and accountability in the financial stewardship of the apostles. Then, a historical review explores examples of eminent evangelists and theologians and contemporary preachers' approaches to ministry.

Chapter Three presents information gathered from other fields of study for this project, including topics of innovation, instruments, processes, and people. Ideas about itinerant cross-cultural ministry from church history like that of John Wesley, cross-cultural studies from the POAC and Church of Nazarene denominations, other dissertations, contemporary evangelists' travelling ministries, autoethnography, and action research are developed. The section then ended on mentoring other itinerant cross-cultural ministers.

Chapter Four expands on how the purpose of the project was accomplished. It presents the project timelines and deals with the methodologies of action research and autoethnography. This is followed by a description of data collection methods such as guided interviews, self-interviews, journaling, and participatory observation. The chapter closes with the ethics followed in pursuing this research.

Chapter Five describes the expectations of the project. A primary expected outcome was that practical guidelines relevant for my itinerant cross-cultural ministry came about from interviewing experienced itinerant ministers. Through self evaluation, three areas of change were examined (preparation, administration, and sustenance) and each area improved. These research outcomes were analyzed and interpreted from the data.

Chapter Six outlines benefits I have experienced in my preaching ministry as a result of engaging in this project. It addresses several factors: the outcomes of the project, additional information for future research, and implications for my ministry. It also suggests ways in which the research may have transferable value to others in similar ministries. Lastly, the conclusion offers the reader final words about itinerant preaching ministry within cross-cultural settings.

CHAPTER TWO: THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

In this section, I develop a theological rationale—a reasoned justification from Scripture—for undertaking a project to develop best practices for my itinerant ministry working in cross-cultural contexts. In the first part of the chapter, I look at scriptural passages about itinerant ministry that informed my rationale for this project; in the second I use several major biblical/theological themes from the Old and New Testament that were relevant to this ministry. The theological model of itinerant ministry that I develop in this chapter comes from the Apostles Paul and Peter, and the Lord Jesus.

Scripture

This project was built upon the biblical values of the Gospel. In the Bible, God works through various persons to preach cross-culturally in order that the Good News of Christ might be heard and received among all nations. Therefore, itinerant cross-cultural ministers must identify with and relate to their audience in culturally appropriate ways. They are to do this so that more people can accept the message of the Cross, as Jesus and his disciples did. Let us first turn to the biblical narrative of these cross-cultural ministers.

Christ for all Nations

God's mission to restore humanity's broken relationship with Himself begins in the Old Testament. When God calls Abraham to be a great nation through his descendants, the Israelites, He chooses them to be his special people (Gen. 12:12-3; Exod. 6:7; Lev. 26:13; Jer. 30:22). However, throughout biblical history the Israelites reject God's ordinances by neglecting them (Num. 11-31; Deut. 31:27; Isa. 1:2-20; Acts 7:37-43). Even though they rebel, the Jews are to serve as the Chosen People, a name for the people of Israel whom God chose as His special instruments through whom blessing will flow to all humanity (*Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary* 1995, s.v. "chosen people"). From this nation the Light of Christ will be born, offering salvation for all cultures to receive God as their Savior: "He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit" (Gal. 3:14). Then those who are non-Jewish, known as the Gentiles, will be able to come into covenant with God and become His children (Rom. 9:24-29).

Elwell and Beitzel affirm that the prophet Isaiah's vision reveals that God welcomes any person who will come to worship Him (Isa. 56:6-8). Isaiah further describes a hope for the future in which one day all nations will come to worship God: "Instead of nation warring against nation, all will live in peace, ruled by God" (Isa. 2:2-4) (Elwell and Beitzel 1988, 1527). This means that culture is not

a barrier to accepting the Lord as God (Rom. 1:14-17). Thus the Old Testament is the foundation for inviting God to be Lord over all nations, and not just Israel.

In the New Testament, Christ comes as a baby to live among people while teaching and healing them. Eventually he offers himself sacrificially for the sin of humanity. God comes to earth through Jesus to reign in all peoples' hearts if they will accept Him. In John 1:1, the author describes the essence of God becoming human. God comes down from the throne to better relate to humanity. Christ, who was with God the Father from the beginning of time "took up residence among us" (John 1:1, 14; Rev. 1:8; 21:6; 22:13). Jesus thus became incarnate.

Philippians 2:5-8 describes this concept of incarnation well. When Jesus leaves heaven to come to live among the people, he is able to be the incarnate representation of God among humankind. Since Jesus is able to live among people, he exemplifies for the Christian worker how he or she is to witness: as disciples who imitate a selfless attitude to help others (Hendriksen and Kistemaker 1953-2001, 103). Even when he preaches in places like Judea, Samaria, and Galilee, facing pain, sufferings, hardship, and cruelty, and yet does not sin, he shows people that "he that has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9). From these passages, a biblical theme emerges: itinerant ministers leave the safe place called home to live among different communities for varied periods of time, to love these communities so they too might see God the Father. This theme guided this research project by motivating me, the itinerant minister, to continue serving cross-culturally.

Jesus as Itinerant Minister

Writing about Jesus as an itinerant minister provides a model for this project in developing best practices for my own traveling ministry. After Jesus' water baptism, John 2:13-12:11 describe his extensive traveling preaching ministry. According to Bryant, Jesus moved around a lot in order to conduct his ministry. With the authorities chasing him and the people trying to stone him, Jesus started his preaching ministry in Galilee and finished in Jerusalem before ascending to the Father (Bryant 2011, 65). Keller notes that Jesus preached to a variety of audiences (Keller 1998, 20). As a traveling minister, he taught the multitudes that followed him (Matt. 5-7), single persons like Nicodemus (John 3:1-21), enemies and disciples. Jesus also presented the Gospel in a variety of settings. He sometimes taught in the Synagogue (Matt. 4:23, Luke 13:10), in the temple (Luke 19:47; 21:37), on a boat (Mark. 4:1), or in houses like that of Martha and Mary (Luke 10:38-42). During his itinerant ministry, Jesus also found time to build and mentor leaders. In John 17:18-23, Jesus makes a declaration in his prayer to the Father about his calling to preach His Word and make disciples. Jesus then prays for his disciples as he sends them out to carry on the preaching ministry that he began (Richey, Campbell, and Lawrence 2005, 64).

This theme of Jesus traveling to teach the Word of God in different places and to different audiences is developed in this research project. From Jesus' itinerant ministry, I learned that while his ministry entailed traveling frequently to share the Gospel, Jesus also made time to disciple others. Accordingly, this

research project validates and affirms the necessity of traveling in itinerant ministry, but also of investing in others to encourage and provide opportunities for them to serve.

The Apostle Peter in Itinerant Cross-Cultural Ministry

Another theme within the framework of this project is that of cross-cultural sensitivity without compromising the Gospel. This project entailed moments where I had to be culturally sensitive in certain environments when doing itinerant ministry. In Acts 8:4-13, it is recorded that the Apostles crossed outside their own exclusively Jewish culture to reach the Samaritans, and successfully bridged the substantial differences between the two cultures. More specifically, their law prevented Jews from associating with Samaritans, as stated by the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:9). For the Jews, the Samaritans were a mixed tribe from a different geographic and religious background, and were therefore considered unclean according to the Jewish Law (Mukansengimana-Nyirimana and Draper 2012, 300-301). The actions of the Apostles resulted in a dramatic historical change of direction, with the church from then on receiving people of all cultures. In this regard, the Apostle Peter serves as an example of how itinerant preachers can best embody cultural sensitivity.

Peter was born a Jew, but as a follower of Christ, he acknowledged in Acts 15:6-11 that grace and faith cannot be separated. Since God chose Peter to preach to the Gentiles, Peter embodied God's initiative to save the Gentiles (Bock 2007, 499). Thus, ministry to both Jewish and Gentile cultures did not hinder Peter's

ability to present his conviction of Scriptural truth. For example, rather than have the Gentiles circumcised in Jewish tradition, or have the Jews take on Gentile customs which would disrespect their own tradition, the Jerusalem Council asked the Gentiles to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from sexual immorality, from eating the meat of strangled animals, and from blood (Acts 15:20). This list does not come from the Law; rather it illustrates the importance in Judaism of “having a spirit of sensitivity about that which may cause offense” (Bock 2007, 507). Acts 15:7-12 demonstrates that Peter’s speech helped influence the decision of the Jerusalem Council and that he preached the Word of Truth effectively without compromising it cross-culturally. The issue was about respecting the practices of others without imposing one’s own views (Larkin 1995, 225). Akange’s research suggests that both cultural parties were content with the decision, thus establishing a basis on which scripture and culture can coexist (Akange 2012, 26). Such possibilities for a partnership of scripture and culture were given to me throughout the project.

The Apostle Paul in Itinerant Cross-Cultural Ministry

When considering the writings of the Apostle Paul, the reader can see that cross-cultural identification is difficult, yet attainable. For example, Paul’s example challenges the preacher to become all things to all people, so that by all possible means they might lead some to salvation (1 Cor. 9:19-23). Cousins captures the essence of Paul’s ability to conduct cross-cultural ministry, explaining that it “was his unshakeable sense that his identity was now not

primarily in his culture of origin, but rather rooted in his relationship with Christ” (Cousins 2014, 33).

Knowing what the Gospel message really entailed led Paul to preach to two different cultures at the same time without giving up his belief in the Word of Christ. For instance, he ministered to the Gentile Christians who were under the law of Christ, and the Jewish Christians who still lived under Moses’ law (Hendrikson, William and Kistemaker 1953-2001, 304). It seems Paul undertook the role of leading groups who differed in doctrine and culture.

The implications of this were that Paul had to lead both cultural groups without compromising the Gospel. For Christian preachers today, such as myself, this remains difficult: knowing how to be everything to everyone. Yet Paul illustrates his desire for unity among believers by striving to attain “communion with God” (Mshanga 2011, 147). Paul’s story relates well to this project and thesis, in that I preach to various Pentecostal cultures: the holiness and non-holiness; the African and non-African; the English speaking and the non-English speaking. Paul’s bridge and my bridge are the same: sharing who Christ is with communities. This theme of preaching to different cultural groups was an important area of research in this project. When I ministered to various churches in Africa, some churches that believed females should wear head scarves asked me if I could also wear a head scarf when preaching. I then had to choose whether or not to do so. This was a case like Paul’s, where I had to decide if this was an issue that compromised the Gospel message of Christ. This project therefore

addressed the difficulty that I encountered in maintaining unity among these particular groups that I ministered to.

Akange and Parsenio's research show that scripture and culture function well together, as the Apostle Paul effectively demonstrates in his biblical writings. Akange notes that culture influenced the way authors wrote scripture (Akange 2012, 27). As a Jew and former Pharisee who was schooled in the Hebrew language, Paul wrote to the young churches in Greek, the language that was current in his day, rather than in his native Hebrew. Thus Paul's communication style consisted of knowing and being sensitive to his audience's culture and using it as a base to communicate from (Gendy 2001, 265).

According to Parsenios, letters such as those to the Romans and Thessalonians align with Paul's didactic character, in that his style adapts to suit his audiences. "Even though Paul sounds in Romans like a Jewish Rabbi, here in 1 Thessalonians he sounds like a Greek moral philosopher" (Parsenios 2010, 315). Just as these philosophers were moral guides in Paul's era, so too was Paul. Parsenios says that the writing style of 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8 parallels a passage in Dio Chrysostom's philosophy. Parsenios further illustrates this comparison in Chart 1, where it can be seen that the base of the words is the same as the meaning.

Table 2. Greek terms in the Apostle Paul's 1 Thessalonians compared to Philosopher Dio Chrysostom's writing style (Parsenios 2010, 315)

1 Thessalonians	Dio Chrysostom	Translation
<i>eparrêsiasametha</i>	<i>parrêsiazomenon</i>	boldness/ frankness
<i>akatharsias</i>	<i>katharôs</i>	purity of speech and motives
<i>Dolo</i>	<i>adolôs</i>	guile/guileless
<i>kolakeias</i>	<i>kolakôn</i>	flattery/ flatterers
<i>Doxa</i>	<i>Doxês</i>	praise/reputation

Moreover, Parsenios finds this same adaptation of style when Paul writes to the Jews, as in the book of Romans where Paul's writing style is that of a Jewish writer. When Paul writes Romans 10:5-8, he makes use of Hebrew exegesis by bringing in Isaiah 40:3 (Parsenios 2010, 313). He speaks like a Jew to his Jewish audience. This evidences the cultural sensitivity of the Apostle in maintaining harmony within the Christian community (Parsenios 2010, 322). Ultimately, this example of being able to adapt to various cultures is what preaching requires in order for people to come to know Jesus through the ministry of the preacher.

In various cases, the project allowed me to use the culture and/or language as a basis for communication, to find common ground to present the message of Christ to these nations. When traveling to Cuba, I had to remember that the context was a communist society, and so during my project I had to be aware of not using any terminology about freedom that might appear as if I was speaking against their government. Then, when ministering in Congo, I recognized that it was an impoverished culture compared to the affluence of where I live in Canada, so, for my project, when teaching, I avoided examples of things they could not

afford (e.g., big screen televisions). The ability to adapt to cultures while preaching itinerantly is a theme that is considered during the investigation of my project.

Communicational Bridges

Bridging the gap between oneself and others is important in communication and my itinerant cross-cultural ministry requires a great deal of this. Paul talked with the community he preached to during his cross-cultural itinerant work. First, Paul mentioned to the Athenians that he acknowledged their religious views: “For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, ‘To an unknown God.’ Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you” (Acts 17:23 NASB). Second, Paul demonstrated a familiarity with the Athenians’ poets and spoke to them from a perspective of cultural and human understanding, “As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring’” (Acts 17:28 NIV). Paul noticed the yearning of the pagan Athenians to find God as they searched in their idol for “the unknown God” (Bock 2007, 564). This understanding of who the Athenians were culturally, initiated a response to dialogue about faith (Bock 2007, 564). Their desire to hear or speak only of new things (v.21) and their interest in spiritual matters caused them to ask Paul to explain this “new doctrine” (v.19). The Athenians seemed to view old knowledge as “stale” and thus craved something new (Acts 17: 21) (Jamieson et al., 1997). By acknowledging their

religious and cultural beliefs, rather than condemning the audience, Paul was able to find common ground to talk with them about Christ.

Paul's mental awareness in interpreting his surroundings helped him succeed as an itinerant preacher. He knew his audiences well enough to present the Gospel by successfully building what Gendy calls "communicational bridges" (Gendy 2011, 252). These bridges of knowing the audience's culture and beliefs enabled Paul to present the Gospel effectively: "Understanding their main orientation and instruction, he exploits the common heritage, history and interest in the Torah, the prophecies and promises, and the Jewish salvation history" (Gendy 2011, 252). In another instance, found in Acts 13:13-41, Luke records that Paul spoke to two groups of people—the believing Gentiles and the Jews from birth. Paul knew of their common commitment to the Jewish way of life and to the teachings of the Prophets which allowed him to preach to them from a common ground.

A similar communication bridge is found in Acts 14:4-18. Here the bridge was built when the people attempted to worship Paul and his companion Barnabas for healing a paralytic. To stop this idolatry, Paul again established a common ground for presenting the Gospel (14:15). He calmed the audience of philosophers down, explaining that as a human he too faced death (Gendy 2011, 255), and directed them back to the Creator (Hahn 1965, 135). By meeting the culture at the point of its beliefs about life, Paul used his culturally-sensitive skills to win people for Jesus. Rather than condemning the people for their belief in a pagan

god, Paul preached the truth in an urgent passionate manner. Paul fully grasped his own identity in Christ, knew his limitations, and was sensitive to an outside culture. But he also knew how to bridge his identity with that culture.

In this project, I sought to establish a similar bridging application to the communities where I engaged in cross-cultural itinerant ministry. Throughout the project, I was challenged when ministering to other cultures in areas that required I build bridges in communicating the Gospel. However, based on the findings in this chapter, the project encouraged me to research the culture and beliefs of the target audiences in order develop a best practice for itinerant ministry.

Summary of Scripture

Missionary work among the disciples of Christ included taking the Good News to the Gentiles. Acts 10 describes Peter's encounter with the Gentiles. The threefold vision given to Peter anticipates the huge step it was going to be for him as a Jew to enter the home of a Gentile. This example of cross-cultural ministry gives hope to itinerant ministers required to go places in fulfillment of the Great Commission that may not seem feasible from a human perspective. What is more, in deciding where to do ministry, I have to discern that God is leading me. He is able to lead in various ways. For me, discerning where to go comes from common sense, spiritual intuition, guidance of scripture and of the Holy Spirit, the wisdom of others, circumstances, and dreams.

Moreover, Paul was specifically called to bear the Gospel before Gentiles, Kings and the children of Israel (Acts 9:15). He began ministering towards the Jews, and when they refused his ministry he turned towards the Gentiles (Acts 13:46). Tracing some of Paul's ministry among Gentiles reinforces the purpose of this project. The use of communicational bridges, and bringing the Gospel to the Samaritans and Gentiles, were part of Jesus and the Apostles' strategy for sharing the Gospel. These biblical examples of itinerant ministry to various cultures lead, in the following section, to a discussion about the theological basis of this project.

Theological Themes of Itinerant Ministry

Three biblical and theological themes support and guide this project. First, related to itinerant ministry is the idea that women are equally called to participate in the Great Commission along with men. Second, to be effective in doing so, practical preparation is required along with team work. Third, accountability is an area in itinerant ministry that is to be considered when financial resources are raised. These areas are looked at in the following section.

Women as Witnesses of Christ

Women in the Bible were effective witnesses of the Gospel. Luke informs his readers that during part of Jesus' traveling ministry, women accompanied him and contributed financially to the mission (Luke 8:1-3). These women included Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Susanna and many others. John 4:29 shows that after

Jesus told the woman at the well about “all that I ever did,” she witnessed in the town about this, and many in the town believed in Jesus because of her testimony.

New Zealand theologian, Susan Smith, concludes that seven of Paul’s New Testament letters show women as active missionaries (Smith 2010, 157). One example is found in the letter to Philemon, which was addressed to Philemon, Apphia and Achippus. When referring to Apphia, a female, Paul used the Greek word [*adelphē*] for “sister” which is simply the female form of the same word [*adelphos*] that he used to refer to his fellow male missionaries (Smith 2010, 152). Similarly, another instance of females in the preaching ministry comes from the letter to the Philippians. In the first four verses of chapter 4, Paul tells the recipients to “help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my coworkers.” In this case, the word for “coworkers” is the Greek word [*synergos*] meaning people who evangelized alongside Paul (Smith 2010, 153). The work of female Christian workers is thus evident in some of the Apostle Paul’s writings.

The legitimacy of females in ministry can be supported by the universality of the call to missions. Galatians 3:28 states anyone in Christ is a child of God without restriction of culture and gender. That also means that Jesus calls and empowers people to ministry. In that upper room, the Bible narrates that men and women were among the recipients of the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:18). Thus, when Jesus said that the people waiting for the Holy Spirit’s empowerment would go to the ends of the earth preaching, he did not exclude the women (Acts

1:8). The gifting that God alone confers through the Holy Spirit calls women who speak on behalf of God “daughters” (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:17). In the book of Acts, we see Philip’s four unmarried daughters were prophetesses (Acts 21:9). Then we see Phoebe “a [female] deacon of the church in Cenchreae” (Rom. 16:1 NASB). Although this passage uses the word *διακονία*, some translations may appear to minimize their role by using the expression “servant of the church,” which is what a deacon is called to be (1 Tim. 3:8-13). In the above passages, I find support for the fact that both males and females are included in the gifting and calling by God for ministry. Specifically, as a female itinerant minister, God made no exception to calling me to do his cross-cultural work.

Practical Preparation for Itinerant Ministry

An itinerant cross-cultural minister should prepare in a practical way for the ministry. Brumely defends the notion that “missions is about doing and about being” (Brumely 2000, 86). Part of a missionary’s calling is to plan (Acts 15:36) and manage (Rom. 12:8) (Brumley 2000, 90-91). As an example, Nehemiah designed a well-thought out plan to restore the Jerusalem walls after God laid it on his heart to do so (Neh. 2:4-5). The prophet used intellect in his planning to effectively restore the walls of Jerusalem. In itinerant ministry, the purpose of planning is likewise to have an effective ministry.

An example of one who practiced planning for itinerant cross-cultural ministry is Paul. The Apostle strategically planted several churches in places such as Asia, Cyprus and Crete. An argument can be made that Paul witnessed in the

cities, then allowed the message to spread outwards from there to other areas: Corinth and Ephesus, for example. A principle business centre with a population of 700 000, Corinth was an important location for trade in the Apostolic era (Elwell and Beitzel 1988, 514). Similarly, Ephesus, a Roman province of Asia, was also strategically placed for church planting, because it was also considered a prominent city (Elwell and Beitzel 1988, 709). DeSilva notes that this city was famous in ancient times for its extravagant Temple of Artemis where people worshipped Artemis, also known as Diana (DeSilva 2004, 714). Like Corinth, Ephesus produced much commerce, mostly because of the temple of Diana. Since there was a lot of revenue coming in from promoting this deity it was a good place to start preaching (Elwell and Beitzel 1988, 709). Therefore Corinth and Ephesus were places that Paul used to strategically plan his ministry of spreading the Gospel.

This principle of preparing practically for itinerant ministry is one best practice that came out of the research. Planning helped frame the approach I took to cross-cultural itinerant ministry over the course of the project. Rather than only preparing through prayer and bible reading, I used intellectual skills in reading and studying commentaries in order to prepare sermons, and I also consulted a range of other resources in order to plan for the practicalities of travel.

Team Work in Itinerant Ministry

In the Bible, there are examples of cross-cultural itinerant ministers working with teams to fulfill their ministries. Best practices relating to team-work

were also applied to my ministry during this project. Moses was mentored by Jethro in dealing with the burden of leadership (Exod.18:13-23). This meant that Moses was able to share some of his responsibilities instead of carrying them all alone. He did this by teaching and delegating to other men the task of resolving disputes among the Israelites (Exod. 18:24-27). After developing leaders who were capable, God-fearing, and knowledgeable of Scriptures (Exod. 18:21), Moses' days did not have to be spent solely on resolving the people's issues. However, concerning this delegation, Moses still had to oversee the new leaders' work and even be the judge for problems that they could not resolve (Exod. 18:22). A similar experience of delegating and overseeing a team framed my project while working with the IHWN administrative charity board and volunteers.

The Apostles also demonstrated the use of team work in the early church. They prayed together in order to fulfill their preaching ministry. In one instance, the Apostles prayed and selected seven men who were full of the Holy Spirit to work with the ministry to widows (Acts 6:1-7). Another time, they prayed together in Mary the Mother of John's house for Peter to be released from prison (Acts 12:12-17). The Apostles further traveled in teams as commanded by Jesus in order to conduct itinerant ministry (Luke 10:1). Paul and Barnabas worked together with the church plant in Antioch (Acts 11:19-30). Leaders were also sent in teams to resolve issues in churches like Antioch on behalf of the Council (Acts 15).

These examples of appointed leaders working with teams demonstrate that within the church, there are to be “sufficient human resources...with adequate authority to care for its own.” (Bock 2007, 256) Also, as Carson Pue writes, organizations should shift from top down leadership to a bottom up style. This involves having teams meet to build a leader up, rather than have the leader meet to see how he or she can make a team work (Pue 2005, 150-158).

In a similar way, working with my IHWN volunteers as a team, rather than treating them as a separate entity, became a framework for this thesis. For example, I assigned responsibilities related to my project to others in my ministry, whereas previously, like Moses, I was accustomed to carrying most of the tasks of leadership on my own. These tasks included fundraising, communicating with ministry supporters, following up with donors, and chairing meetings. However, during the project, applying this principle of delegating changed the direction of the ministry towards team work. Knowing how to “prioritize activities and not be responsible to do everything reflects good leadership and stewardship” (Bock 2007, 259).

Accountability as Part of Team Work in Itinerant Ministry

The ministry of cross-cultural itinerant ministers is part of the work of the church, and thus needs accountability for the financial resources raised. One definition of accountability “is the condition whereby the motives and actions of one person are subject to review, examination and judgement by another person or by an authority structure.” (Araujo 1994, 120) The Bible talks about

accountability. It emphasizes that Christians are accountable first to God, before humans. In Romans 14:12 it is written, “So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.”

In being accountable to God for our actions, the scriptures further reveal the need to hold the members of the body of Christ accountable to each other. James 5:16 refers to this: “Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.” Jeschke suggests accountability is synonymous with “church discipline” (Jeschke et al., 2005, 34). He further states that this is a form of protection, since accountability “builds and strengthens the bonds of love.” Accountability plays a role in the development of an itinerant preaching ministry. In this project, I explored various ways of ensuring that as a traveling evangelist, I had a team of trusted persons who would review and examine what I did. This included reporting to a charity board about administration, budget and prayer needs. In this matter the book of Hebrews states, “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching” (Heb.10:24-25).

Moreover stewardship is a theme that arose in this project. Paul raised a financial collection among some churches to promote unity of the faith (Reesor 2009, 54) by asking Galatian and Corinthian Gentile churches to help the Jewish community in Jerusalem (Omanson 2011, 308; Stenschke 2012, 98). He believed

that the body of Christ was called to share their resources, be God's good stewards (Tit. 1:7) through this generosity and be responsible with what God gives his people (1 Cor. 4:1; Eph. 3:2), (Stenschke 2012, 98-99).

Therefore, the Apostle Paul told his Corinthian audience in a letter, that as a minister of the Word, he and his team were "taking precaution so that no one will discredit us in our administration of this generous gift; for we have regard for what is honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men" (2 Cor. 8:21-22). Thus he delegated a group of persons to collect the funds given to the ministry (2 Cor. 8:19; 1 Cor. 16:3) and to establish his integrity for what was collected. Consideration of best practices concerning the administration of the financial resources that came into the itinerant ministry forms a part of the thesis. The responsibility itinerant ministers have to communicate to donors where their donations are being used is discussed in Chapter Five.

Summary of Chapter Two

Chapter Two considered various Scriptures in order to explain the rationale behind this project. Connecting to other cultures through the use of communicational bridges and relating to other evangelists from both biblical and modern times went into forming the theological rationale for the project. Reviewing the Great Commission, women preachers in Jesus' day, team work, and accountability in the financial stewardship of the Apostles were also part of the backbone of the theological issues considered. In the following chapter I

review relevant literature (and other sources) that fed into both the methodology and implementation of this project.

CHAPTER THREE: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter tracks my review of relevant Christian history, the science of preaching (homiletics), Pentecostalism, itinerant ministry in other dissertations, itinerant ministry resources, contemporary evangelists, women preachers, and mentoring. This section looks at writings about autoethnography in order to examine my own presuppositions and assumptions. These areas worked together to form a literature review that was the lived praxis of my project, and are outlined below.

Christian History

In this section I explore examples of ways that the Biblical principles introduced in the previous chapter have been practiced by eminent evangelists throughout the history of Christianity. In particular, I consider the writings of the early church, the history of the Pentecostal movement, and approaches to itinerant ministry from other denominations.

Texts from early Christianity (1-300) include *The Didache*, a work that includes wisdom from itinerant preachers such as Paul of Tarsus, Ignatius, the Bishop of Antioch (c. AD 35-107), and Polycarp (c. AD 69-155). *The Didache* or

Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, is a compilation of early church fathers' writings and is

the oldest surviving Christian church order, probably written in Egypt or Syria in the 2nd century. In sixteen short chapters it deals with morals and ethics, church practice, and the eschatological hope ... and presents a general program for instruction and initiation into the primitive church" (*Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, s. v. "Didache").

Specifically, the *Didache* shows the Apostles and Prophets traveling to spread the Word of God and how they eventually bring in elders and bishops to complement itinerant ministry (Cross 2005, 478-9).

Between the 16th century and the present, a number of other itinerant preachers became prominent. One of these, John Wesley (1703-1791), a revivalist and founder of Methodism, presented the Gospel in such a way that he created a new system for itinerant ministry. Wesley began field preaching in 1739. First, he used lay people when preaching to the unsaved (Gonzalez 1985, 214). Second, Wesley led the Methodist movement by taking preaching outside of the church walls (Gonzalez 1985, 215). He traveled within America holding open-air/field revival meetings.

Despite an initial fervor to serve the oppressed, in the 19th century the Methodist tradition lost its desire to care for the poor and became part of the middle-class social structure (Gonzalez 1985). This led to new groups forming within the Methodist movement, such as the churches of the Holiness Movement. These were churches that "wished to return both to the earlier concern for the masses, and to Wesley's teachings on sanctification" (Gonzalez 1985, 255). One

of these traditions became known as the Pentecostal movement. It is largely within this tradition that this project was conducted.

This brief history shaped the specific choices I made in project development, because the project involved traveling and ministering outside the walls of the church, such as open air revivals in the Congo, and I also involved lay people in my ministry to teach and preach in Belize or to accompany me during itinerant outings. It is from this point in history that we move forward to consider particular literature that has impacted this project.

The Preacher who Identifies with the Audience

This section extracts ideas from the study of homiletics that are most closely aligned with my background and purpose in order to identify best preaching practices for itinerant ministry. Thomas G. Long identifies four aspects to preaching: the audience, the preacher, the sermon, and the presence of Christ (Long 2005, 15-16). Each of these components needs the other in order for “preaching” to happen. The people listening need the messenger to have Christ’s authority and grace, and the messenger needs listener(s) in order to speak on behalf of God, and for the result to be called preaching or a sermon.

Long also describes who the preacher really is. He refutes the idea that the preacher is only a person in power, a person who has it all together, and therefore a person who is not like the pew members. Rather, Long affirms that a preacher is a representative of the church community, sent out by the church, and thus when preaching, he or she comes to the pulpit with the perspective of the people. Since

the preacher comes out from the pews, he or she can identify with some of the listeners sitting there. This announcer of Good News then has the advantage of speaking from a common experience of struggles, hopes and victories (Long 2005, 1-10).

Lesslie Newbigin explains that for the audience to understand the Gospel message, it must be communicated in the language that the target audience speaks. The preacher should make every effort to speak in words that have meaning for the audience (Newbigin 1989, 141). Examples might include referring to God the Father as “God the Coach” when ministering to athletes (Raabe 1996, 80), or explaining the Trinity as three forms of water (liquid, solid, gas) when talking to high school students. In this manner, it is easier for the person receiving the Gospel to accept the invitation if it is couched in words that they can understand (Newbigin 1989, 141).

The language a preacher uses to communicate the Word of God should also take into account the location of the culture, for as well as being timeless, the Bible was also written at specific times, in specific geographic locations, and with relevance to specific cultures. Milton Bennett defines culture as “the learned and shared patterns of beliefs, behaviors, and values of groups of interacting people” (Bennett 1998, 3). If preaching improves in proportion to how well the preacher knows the culture of the audience being addressed, then forming a strategy for preaching within a culture different from my own involves living, learning and working among the people of a nation.

All these ideas relate to my project. Concerning best practices for itinerant ministry, I the researcher had opportunities to recognize my role as a Gospel minister who came out from the audience to minister to them. Thus, I worked at being able to communicate my preaching in any culture.

Pentecostal Culture

Another background area of study for my project was Pentecostal culture, since this is the group that I frequently minister to as part of my itinerant ministry. Vinson Synan's book, *The Century of the Holy Spirit*, explains how the number of participants in Pentecostal Holiness churches increased from fifteen thousand in 1900 to over six million in 2000 (Synan 2006, 464). As the numbers of Pentecostal believers increase, this project's research becomes increasingly relevant.

Walter J. Hollenweger is an historian offering insight into Pentecostalism (Bundy 2002, 729). Richie suggests that several of Hollenweger's works "have made him a major authority on the movement's history, spirituality and theology" (Richie 2007, 343). Hollenweger preached the Gospel, but did not insist on the Pentecostal standards of length of hair and use of jewelry by women. He became unpopular with his own circle because of stepping outside the denominational norms. He says, "My professors, however, liked my critical interventions and encouraged me to criticize their teaching. This freedom was totally new to me. The new converts in my church liked my new approach to the Bible, but the older members did not" (Hollenweger 2005, 86).

The connection that this Pentecostal culture has with my project is that when a preacher can identify with the religious community he or she is sharing the Gospel with, that preacher is fulfilling the Great Commission. The preacher does this in terms of going and demonstrating Christ's love in the lives of others (Olsen 1996, 85-88). Duane Olsen suggests that missions must have at their centre the theology of the Cross. Although Hollenweger did not preach about hair length and use of jewelry to the Pentecostal churches, he proved that an evangelist could still have a fruitful ministry. By accepting the "liberal" ideas, as they were called by the older Pentecostal generation of theologians, Hollenweger went on to be a pioneer researcher in Pentecostalism and a professor of mission (Hollenweger 2005, 86). In a similar way, many times during this project I had to be diligent in ministering Christ's biblical truth to the Pentecostal groups, without getting involved in debates about customs and artifacts. Thus, Hollenweger's theological approach to presenting the gospel to his audience was applicable to my approach as an itinerant preacher during this project.

Itinerant Ministry in Published Dissertations

In addition to itinerant ministries such as those of Wesley and Hollenweger, I also reviewed studies of missions in published dissertations. One thesis about itinerant ministry is that of Reginald Wayne Calhoun (2014). In his thesis, Calhoun suggests itinerant ministers use a checklist in order to be successful itinerant ministers. I took from this list those points that also aligned with the best practices suggested by the experienced interviewed itinerant

ministers and that were thus relevant to my research. First, Calhoun says that the itinerant minister is to be clear about what he or she has been asked to do when invited to preach. This means being diligent in asking questions of those who have invited him to conduct the preaching assignment. Most specifically, Calhoun advises the preacher to establish good communication with the coordinating church leader. This is because that person will have the most information on who the audience is comprised of. A preacher who is aware of the composition of the audience will tend to have better communication with them. Next, Calhoun's checklist encourages the preacher to prepare the sermon in advance and concludes with the preacher recognizing that each itinerant outing is an opportunity for an audience to respond acceptingly to the Gospel message of Jesus Christ (Calhoun 2014, 66-67).

Charles Zacharias Gardner's research about managing an itinerant minister's family, calling and spouse's career helped to shape my research as an itinerant minister married to a career man. Gardner conveys the idea that being ordained into an itinerant ministry involves a family commitment "as ministry places significant expectations on the entire family" (Gardner 2011, 36). His research reveals that "all of these families are committed to the mission and ministry of the church," but that does not mean that that marital conflict will be evaded. Thus Gardner stresses that spouses communicate about their spouse's itinerant ministry. Lastly, the topic of financial strain that itinerant ministry has on a family is addressed. Gardner argues that valuing a spouse who is not in itinerant

ministry can impact upon a ministry. He says that a spouse who brings in an income while the itinerant minister performs ministry, “frees” the itinerant preacher from financial stress that could “negatively impact ministry” (Gardner 2011, 39). The work done by Gardner and Calhoun helped in interpreting best practices for this project.

Itinerant Preaching Resources

The resources that organizations use for cross-cultural ministries also contributed to this project. I read the PAOC’s Global Worker Questionnaire given to potential missionaries who want to be part of that denomination. The “Are You Ready?” Missions Self-Assessment poses questions divided into areas the organization identifies as “key for cross-cultural success include spiritual, relational, personal, professional, cross-cultural and organizational compatibility” (PAOC, 1). For example, the first part of the questionnaire asks the potential missionary to reflect on his or her emotional, spiritual, and practical health. Questions include the depth of the candidate’s walk with God, whether the missionary is a good witness of the faith, and whether the missionary can articulate his or her beliefs properly while at the same time respecting other Christian traditions. This is important for the PAOC, as the organization believes that there is a correlation between a missionary’s success in cross-cultural ministry and emotional and spiritual depth. This questionnaire gave me insight into the qualities a cross-cultural worker such as myself should possess. It helped

to establish some areas in my itinerant ministry that needed improvement and shaped how I designed my questionnaire.

Looking at literature from other Pentecostal denominations furthered my knowledge of the nature of cross-cultural itinerant preaching ministry. IAOGI's Evangelist Anita Pearce's book *Itinerant Ministry* was one of these works. This manual informed me about preparing for itinerant ministry, something that was relevant to my research when interpreting the data from interviews with experienced itinerant ministers. Her writing stresses preparation to the point that nine out of the eleven chapters have some form of the word "prepare" in either title or subtitle. Pearce writes about preparing in prayer, preparing sermons ahead of time, checking with the inviting pastors about what is expected, preparing a budget, and preparing the financial supporters concerning the needs of the ministry.

Pearce states that "[t]he effectiveness of public ministry is a reflection of relationship with Christ in the private life" (Pearce, 11). This theme of prayer as part of the preparation for cross-cultural itinerant preaching ministry was part of this research. Having another evangelist identifying with Jesus' words to his disciples was helpful in arriving at some outcomes in Chapter Five: "But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly" (Matt. 6:6 NKJV).

In a theological discussion with John Piper, Rick Warren said that just because preaching is simple, it does not mean that the transmitted message is shallow (Warren, 2011). Steven Furtick has also defined what deep preaching is. He told a congregation that often when a church desires to go deeper, “what you mean by deeper, is give me abstract theoretical truth that is so lofty and disconnected that I don’t have to do anything about it.” If that was the sort of depth people were looking for, they should leave that particular church, he said, because it had just baptized 1000 people (Chandler and Furtick, 2014). This theme of deep preaching was relevant to my project since when preaching to various church groups, I was unaware what “deep preaching” really entailed.

I also gleaned helpful information about itinerant preaching from the Church of the Nazarene. I chose this denomination since its mission website offers a clear and concise look at what the church requires of its missionaries. This tradition maintains that while a cross-cultural preacher must have a mature relationship with God, that person must also prepare for the ministry. One piece of information that I wish to highlight, however, is that according to the Church of the Nazarene, a missionary “should demonstrate the ability to maintain healthy relationships that effectively resolve both personal and professional conflict” (Nazarene World Mission 2014, “How can I prepare?”). This principle of maintaining peace between an itinerant minister and his or her family was a theme that came up in my research since I am married.

Neal Pirolo's book *Serving as Senders* details the care necessary for missionaries as they prepare to go and are on the field. He states that a preacher, whether a missionary or cross-cultural worker, will do what it takes to get to the destination where they are called to preach (Pirolo 2012, 4). However, he also discusses the need for financial senders and prayerful supporters to make this possible. He provides references to Romans 10:13, saying that Paul knew that there was a team involved in spreading the Gospel beyond the preacher. Although he says financial support in charities can be an issue (Pirolo 2012, 73), Pirolo emphasizes the need to have senders for itinerant cross-cultural ministries. This principle of raising a budget and communicating with donors was also a best practice that emerged from the interviews with experienced itinerant ministers, and thus applied throughout the project.

Contemporary Evangelists

Reading the biographies of other contemporary preachers enabled me to review their successes, challenges and failures from the perspective of an itinerant minister. Evangelists Billy Graham and Reinhard Bonnke, for example, are world-renowned preachers with successful accomplishments in their evangelistic ministries.

The biography of Billy Graham, a famous Baptist minister, reveals several principles worth noting for this project. These include the importance of sermon preparation, prayer teams, accountability in finances and personal life standards, and communication with supporters. In his autobiography, Graham describes an

important aspect of planning for his evangelistic ministry, which was to seek the experience and wisdom of veterans. For example, when Graham was invited by the major protestant denomination in India to hold a series of meetings, he had breakfast with a former missionary in northern India. Jack Dain told Graham to hold the meetings strategically in six Indian cities, which he drew as a map on a paper napkin. Graham then planned follow-up meetings over a period of at least six months (Graham 1997, 264). Likewise, Graham's use of location strategy in ministry shaped my project.

In reference to team work, Graham says, "Occasionally, I invited others to preach for me" (Graham 1997, 155). He did this to lighten his workload so that he could have time to pray for his preaching ministry. In addition, he invited people to pray with him about his personal and ministry needs which led to prayer meetings (Graham 1997, 155). When Graham was sick with the flu, he delegated his preaching to other evangelists so that this ministry could still fulfill its obligations. His fellow ministry companions also bore much fruit by seeing salvation in the meetings. This strategy was also applied to the project as a best practice for a cross-cultural itinerant minister working as part of a team.

Not only did Graham take other preachers or his wife to counsel people after meetings, but he had a newspaper reporter go with him at times. When Graham traveled to preach in India, he had this reporter accompany his team to report on an ongoing basis about the ministry in India (Graham 1997, 264).

Furthermore, this trip required culturally-sensitive preparation. Graham was encouraged by one of his ministry colleagues that a strategy needed to be put in place to bring the Gospel to a people who “‘know nothing of the Bible or of God.’” After taking this to prayer, Graham preached as the Apostle Paul did in Acts 17. Paul approached the audience from Mars Hill by building a bridge to his pagan audience. He used their own philosophers’ writings to introduce God. It was at that moment that the people began to listen to the Gospel message. Likewise, rather than tell the people of India about a God who is like an American or British person, Graham shared that the God he was preaching was a God who was born in Asia, had skin darker than his, and loved every person on earth, including them. It was then that the listeners of India “realized that Christianity was not exclusively for Europeans or the white race but that Christ came for all” (Graham 1997, 265). Being sensitive to a culture became a best practice for this ministry.

Reinhard Bonnke, a famous Pentecostal minister who dedicates his gifts for evangelism and healing particularly to Africa is an example worth mentioning in this thesis. His autobiography tells that his evangelistic crusades in the past decade have reached millions of people for salvation and discipling. Of particular interest to this project, Bonnke tells how the Spirit of God led him to places through dreams and prophecy. He testifies about a childhood vision where God called him to preach to Africa. He then took practical steps to cooperate with the fulfillment of this vision, including going to seminary and doing internships in

places like Zambia (Bonnke 2009, 190). Bonnke's evangelistic calling thus demonstrates itinerant ministry as Spirit-led, but complemented by practical preparation. Bonnke's spiritual preparation for itinerant ministry was used in my project for this was also one of the best practices that emerged from the interviewees.

Women Preachers

The research behind this project benefited also from the biographies of female evangelists. These were women who tried to find a balance between evangelism and their domestic lives at times in history when females in ministry were not widely accepted. A number of preachers called to ministry were members of the African Methodist Episcopal church. One of these was Amanda Berry. In the vision that God gave her in 1855, she saw herself preaching, but “[h]er responsibilities to her family would seem to have had a prior claim over any call to go forth and preach” (Grammer 2003, 27). Finally, after being widowed two times, Berry dedicated her life to itinerant ministry, which Grammar says was common for female preachers who were widowed (2003, 28). When Berry found herself without marital obligations, she was able to fully surrender her time to traveling as an evangelist (Smith 2003, 96).

Another example of a female evangelist who tried to balance her ministry with her home life was Aimee McPherson, active in the early 1900s. Her struggles with three marriages and two divorces served as the background for her evangelistic fervor. Setta notes that after Aimee's first husband died, she was left

with a daughter and remarried. While ill and apparently dying, she believed God asked her if she would now go and preach the Gospel, and when McPherson said yes, she was instantly healed. From that moment, she did what cannot be substantiated by Scripture: she broke up her marriage and took her two children along while preaching across North America (Setta 1983, 132). As Sutton describes Aimee's Spirit-filled life and ministry, he narrates her story as one of being born into Methodism, preaching Pentecostalism, and finishing as the founder of an ecumenical denomination (Sutton 2003). Her story was pertinent to this project as I sought to establish a strong personal and balanced home life for myself, rather than dividing a family over the work of God.

As I consider my own life, in the first three years of coming to know Jesus, I was a conservative Pentecostal who believed baptism in the Holy Spirit was evidenced only by speaking in tongues. However, after beginning seminary in 2006, I quickly learned from Spirit-filled seminarians who were not Pentecostal, that speaking in tongues was not always the initial or only sign for the empowerment of ministry. Therefore, for this ministry project-thesis, just as Aimee's experience prompted her to adapt Pentecostalism with Protestant traits (Sutton 2003, 177), I became more flexible in adapting to the inviting churches' form of worship when preaching – a best practice.

Mentoring Itinerant Ministers

Mentoring is an efficient way of multiplying the number of loyal, dependable and trained workers involved in this form of ministry where laborers are few (Matt. 9:28). To do itinerant ministry well, the preacher must go back to Jesus' Great Commission (Matt. 28:16-19). Jesus commanded his followers to go and make disciples by baptizing and teaching them. As a result of the project, I began mentoring leaders, because our leadership classes in the Doctor of Ministry program encouraged this. Dr. Steve Brown, from Arrow Leadership, had the class create plans to mentor others, which instilled in me an awareness of the importance of discipling others just as Jesus disciplined. Since I have been mentored myself over a period of twelve years, this has implications for my mentoring of others. For instance, as Bosch notes, church members tend to be obstacles to evangelism when their preaching about the Bible does not align with their actions (Bosch 1980, 229). My hope was that this project would help me not be an obstacle to the faith of others, but rather a catalyst for people to come to know Christ through this itinerant cross-cultural preaching ministry, and mentor other itinerant ministers as a best practice.

Summary of Chapter Three

The above overview has provided a sketch of the various influences that I drew on to prepare for this project. These included a variety of literature about itinerant preaching in Christian history, including the church fathers' itinerant ministries and that of historical revivalist John Wesley. Relevant insights

concerning itinerant ministry obtained from the POAC and Church of the Nazarene missionary qualifications and the IAOGI Itinerant Minister's manual were then presented. An interview with Pastor Steven Furtick, discussion of various dissertations, and a brief look at the ministries of evangelists like Billy Graham, Reinhard Bonnke, and Aimee McPherson, completed the review. The section then ended with comment on the value of mentoring other itinerant cross-cultural ministers. Action research and autoethnography formed the basis for the methodology of this project, and this is the subject of the following chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR:

METHODOLOGY AND PROJECT OUTLINE

This purpose of this project was to develop and test best practices for improving my itinerant cross-cultural preaching ministry. The following chapter explains how and why particular methods and tools were used. I detail the methodological process employed and also discuss where and how the project took place and the phases that were introduced for leading change in my ministry. Procedures, number of participants, methods of selection, and choice of research instruments are provided. Action Research and autoethnography are defined and deficiencies in the methods are mentioned. Lastly, the ethical steps taken to ensure the project's participants were protected are also discussed.

Methodology and Methods

The methodology and methods for this project were as follows (Table 4):

- I observed how I operated cross-cultural ministry as recorded in my journal and by doing a self-interview (see Appendix B).
- I interviewed twelve itinerant cross-cultural ministers looking for best practices on how they conduct ministry and then analyzed the data from my journal and interviews.

- After each interview, I implemented some of those best practices in my ministry.
- Then, a questionnaire to IHWN ministry volunteers provided feedback about any change they had noticed in the ministry within the year.
- Again, I observed myself to determine how the best practices affected my ministry (recorded in my journal) by a second personal interview (Appendix B Guided Interview for Itinerant Ministry).
- Lastly, I applied best practices and had a third self-interview.

Table 3. Project timeline

Event	Methodology	Date
Self-Interview		February 21, 2014
Interviews		February 21 to April 20, 2014
Practices Applied	Action Research Cycle 1	March 1 to September 21, 2014
Questionnaire		September 12 to 17, 2014
Self-Interview		September 21, 2014
Practices Applied	Action Research Cycle 2	October 1, 2014 to January 26, 2015
Self-Interview		January 26, 2015

Field of Project

The project was implemented within and outside Canada. Included were churches of various denominations: Holiness movement, Assemblies of God, Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, and Independent Pentecostal churches. There was participation from people in Canada, the United States, Cuba, and Democratic Republic of Congo. While many of the traveling preachers I interviewed lived in one of these five countries, the project also took place in a variety of settings. Corresponding to my ministry itinerary between February 2014 and November 2014, the project was conducted in Canada, the United States, Cuba and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The people who participated in my research were itinerant preachers and myself. They were of different charismatic denominations, but most were Pentecostal.

Methodology Used in Project

The methodology or basic approach that I followed in this project included action research and autoethnographic research. Coghlan and Brannick define one of the characteristics of action research as an innovative understanding that results from the researcher and client working together to solve a problem (Coghlan and Brannick 2010, 35). It requires the researcher to plan, act, evaluate, reflect and learn from the process (Coghlan and Brannick 2010, 17). It is an intensive engagement as an itinerant minister with the people in my ministry context. Stringer calls these persons stakeholders, who take action-based steps with the facilitating researcher to work out problems. This is done by planning, acting,

observing and reflecting (Stringer 2007, 6-8). Part of this action research's conclusions involved dialogue with my ministry team, thesis advisor, church leaders I work with, and my husband. We reviewed my current practices as an itinerant minister, identified which aspects we wanted to investigate, modified what I was doing in light of what we found, and continued working in this new way. If the new way was not working, we tried another option. After modifying, we monitored what I did, reviewed and evaluated the modified action, and the cycle continued (Bramer and Chapman 2012). Thus the approach of action research in this project involved change.

This project was about bringing change to my ministry by implementing best practices from interviewed experienced itinerant ministers so that I could better serve as an itinerant minister. I demonstrated that change happened over a period of time in small increments as I reflected on and evaluated what I was doing. In this investigation, action research as a reflective process required that I was honest about my values as the person leading the investigation and writing the observations (Graham 2013, 156). Ongoing reflection took place by recording my thoughts and changes to ministry in a ministry journal. Therefore, in writing this report, I not only showed the actions of my research, but also the learning involved (see Chapter Five). Sharing this gained knowledge so that change in organizations can happen, remains part of the continuous learning cycle for the researcher (Koshy 2005, 9). The steps of action research shaped my research paper, as did autoethnography.

Autoethnography also played a role in approaching this project. In order to obtain further helpful insight into my itinerant ministry, I engaged in autoethnography for it offers “highly personalized accounts that draw upon the experience of the author/researcher for the purposes of extending sociological understanding” (Sparkes 2000, 21). This method of qualitative research links the relationship between a person’s self and his or her experience through story (Bañez 2013, 1; Chang et al. 2011, 22) to understand that culture. Scholars have turned to this type of research to evoke a different response from readers: an emotional, personal interaction with a specific culture that brings about empathy (Ellis and Boschner 2000, 429).

As an itinerant minister, I used autoethnography to enhance my qualitative research. Several researchers vouch this is a valid methodology for qualitative research (Bochner and Ellis 2002; Humphreys 2005; Ricci 2003; Vickers 2007). Ricci says, “It is an attempt to relive the experience with the reader as each provides his or her own interpretation, understanding, and lens” (Ricci 2003, 594). The reader will get a different viewpoint as he or she comes into my world of itinerant ministry. Another benefit of doing this type of writing lies in the fact that “readers bring in their own interpretive resources to make sense of them” (Goodall 2008, 143). General readers of this thesis might experience this. Lastly, autoethnography helps the researcher deepen his or her understanding of their context over time (Ellis 2009, 12-13). In this autoethnography, I am the instrument that bridges myself to a culture (Pelias 2003, 372).

The process of auto-ethnography involves autobiographical and ethnographical methods. When writing a biography, certain pinnacle moments in a person's life are recalled and analyzed, while ethnography analyzes a culture's relationship to its members, space and place, and artifacts (Ellis, Adams, and Bochner 2011, 275-276). In my case, I developed a clearer image of what my itinerant ministry looked like before, during and after my eleven-month project. This was done by capturing my own culture to understand how I operate in it. Since autoethnography pays attention to the inner and outer culture of a person, during the project I looked at my behavior, practices as an itinerant minister, at my Pentecostal beliefs, artifacts (i.e., what I wear), and my lifestyle (i.e., character, spiritual disciplines, family life, and preparation for itinerant ministry). Using autoethnography helped me understand how my culture operated (Bell 2010, 16-17).

Furthermore, autoethnography linked my life story as an itinerant minister to other cultures (Aguilar 2004, 19). This qualitative method allowed me to be personal by bringing a report about myself to the research (Bañez 2014, 226). By engaging in autoethnography, I was able to record my own observations as an itinerant minister in a ministry journal. I thus used my personal experience of my own culture as an itinerant preacher as data for analysis in Chapter Five.

Methods to Obtain Information

Five research methods were used to obtain information from the field (Table 4). The processes of collecting the research data will be explained in this

section. Data collecting involved a personal journal, participatory observation, three researcher's self-interviews, twelve participant interviews, and emails. The reason used column describes what I did. Adding a data analysis column summarized how I collected, analyzed and interpreted these five pieces of data. The research data was collected from February 2014 to January 2015. The interviews of twelve experienced itinerant ministers began on February 21 and concluded on April 20, 2014. Three other self-interviews were conducted at the beginning, middle and end of the project.

Table 4. Use of data collection methods, reasons and analysis

Method	Data collected	Reason used	Data analysis	Date used
Personal Journal	Documentary evidence: personal narratives about ministry context, testimonies from witnesses to ministry context, documented change in ministry, and tracked changes in research progress.	To develop reflective skills that allowed me to reduce biases; also, to reflect on the changes that were happening to me as I implemented the best practices I learned from the 12 itinerant ministers.	Analyzed stories: read the journal several times, looked for themes, patterns or categories; constantly compared what was collected earlier in the study with data collected later.	February 21, 2014, to January 26, 2015
Self-Interviews	Narrative of my itinerant ministry culture.	An autoethnographic task used to evaluate the researcher's culture of itinerant ministry.	Reviewing the collected data, categorizing and coding, identifying themes, organizing a category system.	February 21, 2014, September 21, 2014, and January 26, 2015

Method	Data collected	Reason used	Data analysis	Date used
Participant interviews	Best practices in life and itinerant cross-cultural ministry	To probe responses needed for research project	Categorized and sorted qualitative data by typing all the responses in an Excel chart and then identified recurring items. Coding helped categorize the data.	February 21, 2014 to April 20, 2014
Participatory Observation	Narrative of my own culture	To analyze and understand my own reactions and experiences to encounters with the other culture; to observe changes over time; to share in the lives and activities of others; to learn language and interpret their meanings; to remember actions and speech; to work together with people in their setting.	Listened, observed, questioned, and tried to understand the life of individuals; formed thoughts that were reflected upon; looked for themes.	February 21, 2014 to January 26, 2015
Questionnaire	Observed change in ministry from IHWN volunteers.	To collect information on any change occurring in ministry.	Analyzed, interpreted, categorized and compared to self-interviews.	September 2014

Personal Journal

One data collection method was the use of a personal journal. This personal journal provided me with helpful tracking of progress in my research. In it, as Bell suggested, I recorded names, references that someone had told me about, notes of telephone calls, and any ideas I had from the start of my research to the end (Bell 2005, 181). Every entry had a date and sometimes a time.

My objective in using this was to make a record that then became part of my historically documented research for the writing of parts my thesis. For this to function as reliable data, I noted my actions, thoughts, feelings, and observations on a regular basis. In this way I could observe my ministry. Developing reflective skills through journaling became a key factor in collecting data for this project. Reflection helped in analyzing data that would be used in the research and to avoid any judgments based on my emotional reactions (Coghlan and Brannick 2010, 27-29).

While traveling as an itinerant preacher within and outside Canada, in accumulating material for preaching preparation, I read autobiographies of prominent evangelists, including those of Billy Graham and Reinhard Bonnke. I chose these two individuals in light of their very good reputation as itinerant ministers among evangelicals. Choices about which practices to implement from their books into my journal were made in terms of what was feasible and new to my ministry. For instance, having faith was a predominant theme for Bonnke, while practicing cultural sensitivity was important for Graham.

I recorded in my ministry journal some best practices gleaned from my reading and from conversations with other missionary evangelists. As part of the process, I recorded in my journal what happened before, during and after my itinerant outings. This record-keeping included preparation for the preaching ministry, the emotions that I went through at various times during the ministry, and personal observations about myself and the people that I ministered to.

I also carried out wide-ranging independent research to help me improve my itinerant ministry. I read articles on the internet on how to be an effective guest preacher. These resources included tips from the Web site of Pastor H. B. Charles Jr. (Charles, Jr. 2012) and from the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship (Vanderwell 2012). I also taught a class on Homiletics in Belize which required me to study Samuel Vila's *Homiletics Manual* (Vila 1972). Conversation with missionaries in Congo was also part of this process.

Lastly, feedback and conversations about my preaching ministry with church members were noted in my journal. I acquired information about preaching preparation and delivery from other organizations and/or ministries after my self-interview. For example, I read itinerant ministers' books, including those of evangelist Anita Pearce. Next, I selected reading material about missionary requirements from a number of denominations including the Independent Pentecostal Assemblies of God International (IAOGI) Canada and the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC). I further studied the leadership and mentoring techniques of persons like Arrow Leadership Ministries' president,

Carson Pue (*Mentoring Leaders*), and leadership experts Aubrey Malphurs and Will Mancini (*Building Leaders*). I chose these sources because as part of my Doctor of Ministry curriculum they offered valuable insight into the formation and mentoring of ministers, which is part of my outcomes detailed in Chapter Five.

Participatory Observation

While collecting data for this research, I used participatory observation. This required that I, the researcher, conduct itinerant ministry among the cultural groups that I was observing (Bell 2005, 186). While ministering to these groups, I recorded what I saw or heard from their behavior. Participant observation helped me understand the reasons for certain behaviors from the point of view of that culture (Denscombe 1998, 69). This constitutes autoethnography because I was observing myself, which even meant sometimes in reaction to others. Being objective about the observations was necessary in order to recognize if any changes occurred in my itinerant ministry to other cultures.

Another data set came from giving nine IHWN ministry volunteers (three Directors, three Liaisons, and three Prayer Team Members) the following questionnaire: “Over the past year, have you noticed a change in this ministry (everything that has to do with it)? If so, in what area (i.e., preaching, delivery, newsletters, fundraising, donations, accountability, etc.) and give an example (s).” These specific people who work with the ministry were chosen as they are people of good reputation among their church congregations, people of integrity, and

persons who closely observe what is happening in my cross-cultural itinerant ministry. The number of persons who responded during the time frame of September 12 to 17, 2014 was five. I noted their responses in my journal. This record-keeping provided data for measuring change.

To analyze this data to find out what changed in my ministry, I took several steps. First, I read the respondents' answers several times. Then I looked at their data to see if there were any differences or similarities. I then reviewed the data again to note any changes that I did not find in my personal observations. This method helped to cross-reference my previous observations, also confirming that my observations were not biased.

Guided Interviews Development

Guided interviews of myself and other itinerant ministers formed another tool for research (see Appendix B: Guided Interview for Itinerant Ministry). These questions were compiled from a variety of resources. For example, I spoke to seminary professors including Daniel L. Wong at Tyndale Seminary who teaches homiletics cross-culturally and Robert Cousins, Director of the Tyndale Intercultural Ministries Centre. These two individuals offered helpful information about understanding an audience and forming interview questions. Using the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC) self-interview questions for potential missionaries who want to affiliate with the PAOC, served to better inform me about what questions I should ask cross-cultural preachers. Lastly, questions about the reasons and methods for starting itinerant ministry, likes and dislikes,

where to go, how long to go for, how to prepare, and how to sustain ministry health formed part of the interview. These questions related closely to my research objectives.

Self-interviews

I conducted a self-interview about the life and practices of a minister in cross-cultural itinerant ministry. The same questions from Appendix B that were used for other itinerant ministers were used in the self-interview. The intention of the self-interview was to evaluate the researcher's life and practices as an itinerant cross-cultural minister. This was a process of interviewing, analyzing and applying the practices of experienced itinerant ministers. I then made a mid-project evaluation in September 2014. Here I gave myself another self-interview to see if I had improved in my life and practices as an itinerant minister. Again in January 2015, I did a third evaluation with a post-project self-interview. The reason for this final interview was to see a full eleven-month evaluation of change in this itinerant cross-cultural ministry.

Participant Interviews

My objective in conducting participant interviews was to find best practices for itinerant ministry from the wisdom experienced itinerant ministers had gleaned over the course of their ministries. The advantage of doing an interview over a questionnaire was that I was able to "follow up ideas, probe responses and investigate motives and feelings" (Bell 2005, 157). The guided

interview also gave a framework in which the respondent was able to talk about the topic without interruptions, allowing me to probe appropriately if the respondent was unclear in answering (Bell 2005, 161).

I asked six women and thirteen men from the Baptist, Missionary Alliance, Church of the Nazarene, and Pentecostal communities to participate in this study. Twelve out of nineteen people responded to the invitation to participate. Of the twelve interviewees, eleven identified themselves as Pentecostal, while the twelfth considered himself a Wesleyan-Methodist.

Because of traveling distance and related costs, and because some of the interviewees were traveling abroad when interviewed, I made the decision to standardize the format and offer a telephone interview of thirty-one questions to all participants. I recorded my own answers to these same interview questions before interviewing the other participants (see Appendix B). Each interview lasted about one hour.

After administering one in-person interview and eleven over the phone, I analyzed the data. I carefully read the transcribed data recorded on a spreadsheet several times. I coded data from the thirteen interviews (including my own) into categories according to themes (Saldaña 2009, 12) (see Table 5). The best practices from the thirteen interviews selected as applicable to myself were based on certain criteria. These criteria came about after making this a matter of prayer, and diligently searching for the practices that in my opinion would benefit my ministry. Thus I made a subjective decision to keep certain practices. I chose

twelve based on the following reasons. Some best practices were applied if they were recurring in the itinerant ministers' answers. Others were put into practice if I had not previously trialed them. Lastly, I made a decision based on whether or not practices seemed relevant to my ministry.

Table 5. Summary of themes expressed in interviews

Question	Summary of themes expressed in interviews
Why do you do this ministry?	Calling
How did you get started in itinerant ministry?	Invitations Mentoring Theological education Inquiries
What do you like about itinerant ministry?	Social aspects, culture, people Preaching, teaching, traveling Vocational fulfillment
What do you dislike about itinerant ministry?	Inconvenience Family and ministry provision Family strain Cultural misconceptions Limited achievement
How do you know where to go for itinerary ministry?	Discernment Invitations Spiritual direction Family guidance
How do you decide how long to do a ministry trip?	Common sense Wisdom Circumstances
How do you prepare for itinerant ministry?	Spiritually Practically Financially Emotionally Family support Culturally

How do you maintain a healthy itinerant ministry?	Family relationship prioritization Financial security Good health
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After choosing which practices to use throughout the project, I then put them into three categories (Table 6). Since there were a great many recommendations, I simplified the twelve practices into three sub-categories identified by similar areas: ministry preparation, ministry administration and ministry sustenance. I grouped these into the larger categories that were directly related to my research questions. When I simplified this data, I interpreted which practices fitted into the sub-categories as a phase of the analysis. Each of these twelve criteria in the three categories then required a definition.

The three aspects for analysis in this project were preparation, administration and sustenance of my itinerant ministry. Ministry preparation involves the steps I take before engaging in itinerant ministry. This includes spiritual disciplines, intellectual study, financial support, self-care, family support, and cultural sensitivity. Ministry administration refers to practices around the organizational part of the ministry: e.g., team work and prayer support approaches. Ministry sustenance means approaches used in maintaining a healthy ministry. For the purpose of this project, donor communication, establishing financial stability, balancing family life with ministry, and mentoring are all involved in ministry sustenance.

These categories of ministry came from the data collected from the three self-interviews, the twelve itinerant minister interviews, participatory observation,

and personal journaling. Self-interviews were then compared, divided into subsets of categories of change (ministry preparation, ministry administration and ministry sustenance) and placed across a series of three time intervals (before, during, and after the project) on an increasing scale of one to four. This numbered scale was used because it represented the strength of my opinion in how successful I was in these three categories (1 representing “poor” and 4 representing “perfection”). For subjectively measured increased levels of change, Table 6 summarizes where I perceived I changed in my ministry over the course of the project.

Table 6. Subjective change observed before, during and after project in cross-cultural itinerant ministry areas

Ministry Area	Category	Before Project Interview	During Project Interview	After Project Interview
Preparation	Spiritual Disciplines	2.5	3.0	3.5
	Intellectual Study	2.5	3.0	3.5
	Financial Support	2.0	3.0	3.0
	Self-care	1.0	2.5	3.0
	Family Support	2.0	3.0	3.5
	Cultural Sensitivity	1.0	2.0	3.0
Administration	Team Work	1.0	2.5	3.0
	Prayer Support	1.0	2.0	3.0
	Delegating	0.5	2.0	3.0
	Leadership Principles	0.5	1.5	2.0
Sustenance	Financial Stability	1.0	1.5	2.0
	Donor Communication	0.5	2.0	3.0
	Family Life	2.0	3.0	3.0
	Mentoring	0.5	1.5	2.0

After coding the qualitative data, I extracted best practices in my ministry over an eleven-month period. This period was chosen as it was the amount of time

needed to budget and travel within four countries, giving time for journaling and evaluation. As a note, delegating was removed as an individual category because its data fitted better under team work. Leadership principles were removed because this category did not emerge from the collected experienced ministers' interview data. Lastly, financial stability was also taken out of the study as its data was more relevant to the donor communication category. In sum, the methods that I used resulted in finding best practices for my itinerant cross-cultural ministry.

Ethics in Research

Since various individuals and organizations were involved in this project, steps were taken to protect human rights and dignity in my research. These steps followed the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (TCPS 2010). I sought the permission of the twelve itinerant ministers to record their responses and have attached the consent form which summarizes how I described the project to prospective volunteers (Appendix A: Consent Form). One of these persons signed and handed me the sheet in person. Four of them signed and emailed back scanned copies of these forms. Seven participants did not send back the signed form, but acknowledged verbally that they had read and understood the consent form before starting the telephone interview. This verbal consent was used for this project because signing legal papers is not part of the culture for some Christians.

The risks involved in participating in this study were minimal. The volunteers were informed that they could withdraw at any time. No monetary

incentives were offered to participants. Every effort was made and stated to the volunteers that their privacy and confidentiality would be protected and their names or other means of identification would not be used. Participants were reminded that it may be possible for others to identify them from what they had chosen to share in self-disclosure, and that it was important to consider carefully what they wished to reveal. This was stated so that the volunteers would keep this in mind when deciding what they wished to disclose. Furthermore, the information/data the volunteers provided was kept on a computer where only I had access and it was protected with a password. Upon the completion of the study, the data was destroyed. Lastly, a few participants wished to receive a copy of the project's results which I undertook to supply when the thesis was published.

This final discussion about ethical research also provides an explanation as to how my project design assured that I was also treated ethically. As the ministry leader and researcher, I took actions to protect myself. My own privacy was protected by the following ways.

If there were issues about self-disclosure that had the potential to negatively affect my ministry, I was protected by being aware of censorship and self-exposure, keeping in mind that my ideas, feelings and self-exposure should not become too personal. When writing my reactions while observing a culture, I was careful about not writing judgmentally or critically. Instead I had to be clear about noting down what was seen without introducing any assumptions that might

discredit my data. I wrote words like “I thought” or “I felt” when seeking to express my emotions about what I saw in a culture. Further, I balanced the need to be open and honest about my experience with the need to develop my identity as a public minister. This was accomplished by being honest with myself and vulnerable before others throughout this study. As a note, these observations were in a journal that only I read. If I was vulnerable in my observations of myself, during the self-interviews and journal writing, then I was better able to readily disclose what bound my emotions to the cultural issues at hand. For example, I kept all my journal entries in their raw form without altering the data. Lastly, to ensure objectivity when conducting the itinerant minister interviews, I transcribed all responses from interviews so that I could remain neutral and unbiased in interpreting their answers.

Summary

This chapter has provided details of the project’s methodology and purpose. The purpose of this project was to pick best practices from interviews with experienced itinerant ministers that could then be applied to my itinerant ministry in cross-cultural settings. Consideration was given to the project’s scope and phases for leading change in my ministry. This thesis project was primarily shaped by action research and autoethnography. Methods like the use of journaling assisted me in recalling accurately my own observations and feelings on specific days and about specific events. Participatory observation helped me

become aware of the reasons that cultures behave in certain ways. Guided interview questions put to myself and other itinerant ministers helped me gather best practices for my ministry and contributed significantly to my research and writing. A review of the ethical issues relating to the project was also provided. In the following chapter, I present and analyze my research findings.

CHAPTER FIVE:

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The primary desired outcome of this project was to develop best practices for itinerant ministry through interviews with experienced ministers and by assessing their implementation using self-evaluation in cross-cultural contexts. In this chapter I will provide a pre-project narrative of my cross-cultural itinerant ministry practice. Next, I will discuss the findings of qualitative data collected for the project: itinerant minister interviews, self-interviews, participatory observation, and personal journaling. From this data, through coding and categorizing, several themes emerged that will be also be discussed. Autoethnographic writing was the methodology employed throughout the analysis.

Pre-project Narrative of Ministry

A description of what my cross-cultural itinerant ministry practice looked like before my project is found in Chapter One. I will now provide a discussion of the data from my interviews with itinerant ministers.

Itinerant Ministers' Interviews

Choosing best practices for itinerant ministry through interviews with twelve experienced ministers requires a discussion. I explained in Chapter Four how the data from these interviews led to choosing practices for my ministry context. After sorting the raw data of the answers given to me by the experienced itinerant ministers into relevant and frequent themes, I then shortened that list to eleven best practices.

Self-Interviews

As a result of conducting this action research, change has occurred in my itinerant ministry. Three areas in particular improved noticeably over the eleven months spent implementing the project: preparation, administration, and sustenance. I arrived at these categories by coding the data from the interviewed itinerant ministers (see Chapter Four). Identifying these three areas of improvement was possible when the project data, as recorded in my ministry journal and self-interviews, reflected change over time. First, the project improved my preparation as an itinerant preacher in the areas of spiritual disciplines, intellectual study, raising a budget, self-care, family support, and cultural sensitivity. Second, it addressed practices of administration in terms of team work and prayer support. Third, the project focused on sustaining my ministry through regular donor communication, balancing family life with ministry, and mentoring. I also know that there was actual change because of the

verbal and written testimonies given to me from witnesses of this ministry that were recorded in my journal.

Table 6 (Chapter Four) summarizes for the reader my perceived development in my life and practice of itinerant ministry. As discussed in Chapter Four, these categories of ministry areas came from the data collected from the three self-interviews and twelve itinerant minister interviews. The categories of change in Table 6 illustrate quantitative work done as a subjective analysis of perceptions of change. I started to apply these practices into my ministry from February to September 2014. I then responded a second time to the interview questions in a self-interview. Here, the data demonstrated that there were changes in my ministry (noted in the following section) because of these good practices. Finally, from October 2014 to February 2015, I applied the best practices again and conducted one final self-interview on January 26, 2015. These changes will be further analyzed in the next section.

Change in Preparation of Ministry

Measuring change in the way that I prepare for a preaching invitation over the eleven months of the project shows that all eleven areas improved. These areas (spiritual, intellectual, physical, financial, familial, and cultural) all showed an improvement.

Spiritual Disciplines

Spiritual disciplines are practices that have to do with my spiritual growth. In relation to ministry preparation, the data shows that my spiritual practices

changed. The self-rating of 2.5 to 3.5 on all self-interviews reflected an increase in value. This can be seen as an indicator that the spiritual disciplines of prayer, fasting, and biblical study began to transform in all three cases. I nevertheless also analyzed my qualitative data to substantiate this change. The change occurred because the methodology of my spiritual practices changed. For example, between my first and second self-interview, limiting prayer and fasting days to weekdays instead of weekends benefited my relationship with my husband. This was helpful in maintaining a balanced home life especially since itinerant minister interviewees said it was important to spend extra time with the family before leaving on itinerant ministry. Between the second and self-interview, I did not do anything new; instead I intensified my efforts.

Similar to Reinhard Bonnke's ministry, there were times that I picked a place to preach according to the leading of the Spirit of God. This was the case for the mission trip to Cuba in 2014. After hearing the voice of God speak to me several times about Cuba over the past several years, I finally gave in to His leading in the winter of 2014. Then, in March, after several attempts at trying to contact the pastor that I had lost touch with after my first visit there in 2007, I was able to get hold of him through a Cuban pastor who lived in his neighborhood. Within a month the trip to Cuba was planned and executed victoriously because of the Spirit's leading. This section confirms that a best practice for my cross-cultural itinerant ministry is to spend a lot of time with God in order to clearly hear His voice and be led by Him.

Intellectual Study

Both Billy Graham (Graham 1997) and Calhoun (Calhoun 2014) talked about planning and preparing sermons prior to arriving at the preaching location (Chapter Three). Applying this principle consistently to my itinerant preaching ministry led to change over the course of this project. One person said, “Your preaching has really changed. Wow! You are preaching different now. It’s better...The style is different” (Ministry Journal, March 2014). This comment came about one month after I had begun to implement better practices from the interviews with itinerant preachers. Another comment came from my husband, who hears about 90 percent of my sermons preached locally, and who expressed the observation that my sermons were “more structured,” better organized, and easier to follow (Ministry Journal, September 2014). On a different occasion, a young person asked if he could have my preaching notes, commenting, “You had an introduction, body and conclusion. I could see that. I really liked how you ended it” (Ministry Journal, October 4-5, 2014). He further stated that the structure in my preaching had changed (he last heard me preach in March 2014) and was now easier for him to follow. He went on to say, “I notice that most preachers in this church culture start with one topic and then go off to not go back to what they started with. But you don’t see that in the English speaking churches.”

This feedback can be explained by the fact that I was now spending more time working on the organization and flow of thoughts in a sermon compared to

the beginning of the project. Before the project, I did not do this well. I moved from a disorganized point-form sermon to a developed script. Also, I started working hard on developing a good introduction and conclusion for my sermons, whereas before I would usually rely on last minute inspiration from the Holy Spirit to bring something to my mind as I preached.

Financial Support

Raising a budget is part of this itinerant ministry. Nine of the twelve interviewed itinerant ministers said that they raise funds for their ministries in order to pay their travel expenses. All of them created some type of awareness among churches and supporters about what they were doing in terms of projects (i.e., events, newsletters, phone calls, emails). From these responses, I decided that working towards financial support was a best practice that would benefit my cross-cultural itinerant ministry.

In terms of applying this practice, when I started the project, the first self-interview showed that I was proactive about raising a budget. It says, “I promote trips when I preach,” donate my honorariums to the ministry, and use newsletters, emails and the use of envelopes (Self-interview, Feb 21, 2014). The mid-project self-interview shows that no change occurred as my answers stated, I “fundraise by visiting churches, [send out] newsletters, emails, [and accept] donations.” The final self-interview at the end of the project showed that I had improved from the first to the last interview because I added, “visiting supporting churches one to two times a year, ... [and put up a] website” (Self-interview, January 26, 2015).

The change that happened in my cross-cultural itinerant ministry between the first and final self-interviews came from intensifying the experienced itinerant ministers' practice of creating awareness of their ministry needs. For instance, instead of calling any church to support my ministry, I called those that were already supporting and asked if they wanted me to visit them once or twice a year. That way I established a regular list of annual churches upon which I could count in establishing a regular annual budget. Launching a website online was used as a method to create further awareness about the ministry's needs. It had a page for donations which offered various secure online payment options, and also gave information about a monthly donor program. These changes to my ministry exemplify the advantage of applying best practices when raising financial support.

Self-care

Part of my spiritual wellbeing involves taking care of the physical aspect of my life. Self-care refers to the attention given to my physical body. Before the project began, I had "started to exercise," was intentional about "nourish[ing] my body" and took one or two days to rest from actual ministry work (Self-interview, February 21, 2014). However, I was not consistent with self-care. Furthermore, after interviewing the experienced itinerant ministers, eight of the twelve said that exercise was important for preparing itinerant ministry, and four of the twelve mentioned that rest was needed. Therefore, taking care of myself became a best practice that I applied to my itinerant ministry during the course of the project.

An area of change in taking care of my physical well-being came from establishing a consistent physical exercise program as part of my ministry preparation. One problem caused by inconsistent discipline in this matter had been that physical exhaustion was an issue at times. Fortunately, a direct outcome from my project came from the interview responses about the importance of physical health. One interviewee recommended his practice of playing basketball regularly so that he was not so tired when ministering. The research I carried out, for example, reading *Be Excellent at Anything* by Tony Schwartz during May 2014, also motivated me to be more intentional about interval training. This kind of exercise is focused on the intensity of the workout rather than the duration (Schwartz 2010, 84). During the eleven months of the project, I thus changed from exercising infrequently during the weeks I preached (one to two times; 30 to 40 minutes), to exercising consistently each week, including the weeks in which I was preaching (four to five times a week; 20-30 minutes).

Today I enjoy increased physical stamina in my ministry because of this change in my exercise program. For example, it has improved my breathing control during preaching. I began to feel less exhausted when praying for people at the altar call. I used to experience shortness of breath after interceding aloud for just a few people. Further, with diligent exercise that included strength training during the week, I saw that I was more productive after a busy weekend ministry schedule. Before the project, after I woke up from preaching on the weekend, I felt extreme physical exhaustion. I was lethargic and unproductive with tasks that

had to do with my intellect, like studying for school or evaluating a charity budget chart. However, after implementing this change to regular and intensive exercise, I found that there were increased energy levels on Mondays following the revivals.

Moreover, good sleeping habits versus poor sleeping habits improved the ministry. One of the interviewees said that he and his team would travel during the night in order to be rested upon arrival at their preaching destination. Another itinerant minister's interview also revealed that he too valued getting a good night's sleep while away on ministry. In *Be Excellent at Anything*, Tony Schwartz gave me principles to adapt into my lifestyle in order to achieve greater productivity (Schwartz 2010, 57-65). This meant that I ensured that I was in bed at a time that allowed me to go to sleep when I was tired. When I stayed up past my tired stage, I could not sleep. Also, from my readings in *Emotional Intelligence 2.0*, I learned that sleep hygiene is a part of self-management: "The critical factor for an alert, focused, and balanced mind is the quality of your sleep, and for quality sleep you need good sleep hygiene" (Bradberry and Greaves 2009, 122). I incorporated this wisdom into my life.

This wisdom has included developing the practice of not taking work into the bedroom: "Save your bed for sleep and your body will respond" (Bradberry and Greaves 2009, 123). I made this change because I observed that if I was on the computer right before bed, I would have a restless sleep. Even taking naps as needed during the daytime, as recommended by Schwartz, further reinforced the

need for me to make sure I was coherent for the ministry (Schwartz 2010, 72-75). When I got up before six in the morning, I would rest for an hour if I was unable to think clearly during a reading or computer session. Cultivating appropriate self care was thus integrated into my regular ministry preparation routine. These changes were a direct outcome from my project and research.

Billy Graham (1997, 155) talks further about self-care. In chapter Three, I looked at Graham's need for other preachers to fill in for his ministry assignments when he was too sick from ministry exhaustion. I applied the self-care principle from these works to my itinerant cross-cultural ministry. For example, rather than preach in three churches on a weekend in Buffalo, New York, I organized one service in a large church (September 2014). This way they could accommodate the other two smaller churches as well. In another case, when I went to Congo in 2014, the pastors there worked with me to create a preaching agenda that would not be so demanding. We organized fewer services, but invited the surrounding village churches to come to the place of the meeting. The week after, we rotated the location of the service by going to another village. These changes circumvented the exhaustion that could have prevented me from fulfilling ministry assignments.

Connecting the larger project of cross-cultural itinerant ministry to this category of self-care is now needed. After interviewing myself a second time, the data showed that to care for my body during itinerant ministry, I would "eat carbs the night before I travel for long plane trips so I have energy" (Self-interview,

September 11, 2014). This habit was applied after one of the interviewees said in her responses that she ate carbohydrates before flying to get energy for long trips. Lastly, the data shows that from the second to third self-interview there was no change to my self-care category. This could be because I had already continued to apply the best practice of self care. The third interview showed that I was now exercising consistently and nourishing me properly (Self-interview, January 26, 2015). As a result of the data obtained from the experienced itinerant ministers, a best practice of caring for the body resulted in improvement to my itinerant cross-cultural ministry.

Family Support

A modification of practices occurred in order to accommodate family responsibilities. I arrived at this point from analysis of data gleaned from the interviewed itinerant ministers. Three of the twelve ministers said that their families knew their agendas before traveling; three said that they spent time with their families before leaving for a period of time; one said that he made sure he was present for all the important milestones in his children's lives; three prioritized sufficient financial provision for their families while away; and five said that their family's emotional support was needed to do ministry. From these responses, I applied the same family-related themes to my ministry.

Initially I rated myself a 2, but ended the project with 3.5 out of 4. Before this educational endeavor, I would plan my personal life around my ministry agenda. If I was preaching more than once on the weekend, I would neglect

family activities. It was during this project that change started to occur in this area of ministry.

As Gardner put it, having a spouse in itinerant ministry burdens the whole family (Gardner 2011, 36). In response to planning an itinerant agenda, I began in January 2015 to involve my husband in the planning process, showing him a breakdown of potential travel plans for the year. Before the project, I did not discuss my ideas about the upcoming year. However, now that I am clearer about what God is calling me to do, I can start planning an annual calendar rather than a quarterly one.

More importantly, since my husband works in a full-time career to provide financially for our family, I cannot expect him to travel with me all the time for ministry. Valuing his call to the workplace frees me from the stress of having to provide for a family while dedicating a full-time calling to itinerant ministry. Thus, the spiritual discipline of water fasting was modified in accordance with lessons received during this project. Instead of fasting during the weekends when my husband was home, I changed that to weekdays. Instead of monthly overnight fasting, I also changed that to longer day fasting that had concluded by dinner time. This intentional change improved personal time with my husband and other family members. Furthermore, it prepared me for future plans to raise children in a balanced family and ministry lifestyle. As evidence of this change, in September 2014, participatory observation from an IHWN volunteer noted that the “ministry scheduling is more spread out to accommodate school and home.” I now plan my

agenda to include contact with extended family once every seven to ten days, regardless of whether I am preaching or traveling.

Cultural Sensitivity

In the matter of preaching preparation, I am now more culturally aware of how to present the gospel. During the interviews with experienced itinerant ministers, eight of the twelve responded that they practiced being sensitive to the cultures they minister in. One interviewee uses the national language or vocabulary of the people, another only wears skirts in Africa, another said he respects the culture by not doing things that offend, and one other said that he reads the newspaper about what is going on in the culture so that he can “express genuine interest in what they are experiencing” (Interviews, 2014).

As a result of the project, instead of experiencing anxiety about going to minister in a new environment, I now regularly investigate any new inviting community before arriving. Similar to Billy Graham’s preparation in speaking to the people of India and the Apostle Paul’s approach to the Athenians, I try to be culturally sensitive in presenting myself as a carrier of the Gospel. Calhoun’s dissertation about being clear on what an inviting church expects of my preaching assignment also shaped this part of my project (Calhoun 2014, 66).

About two weeks before arriving in a new ministry context, I began asking the inviting churches if they had a specific topic they would like me to address. Further, I became more intentional about searching the internet for information that would give me an indication of the inviting church’s dress code, style and

duration of preaching, and statement of faith. Online search engines helped me find this information on church websites. When no website was available, I looked online for posted pictures or You Tube videos of the preaching pastor or church events.

This online research helped bring about change when preparing to preach in an inviting church. If I saw online that the pastor preached for about forty-five minutes consistently, I would not prepare anything longer than that. Furthermore, when I stayed overnight at church members' homes during the itinerant ministry, I would ask home owners about acceptable apparel, length of preaching, and how they normally conducted altar calls. Basically these were questions about how things were done in their church and what was frowned upon or approved. I did this in New York, Cuba, Toronto and the Congo. Before this project, I hardly ever asked about altar call practices.

Reading about Pearce's experiences (Chapter Three) and Calhoun's checklist for itinerant ministers (Calhoun 2014, 67) encouraged me to become a better-prepared traveling preacher. When implementing this project, I prepared my sermons for mission trips earlier than in previous years of ministry. For instance, when I went to the Congo in October 2014 for the first of five trips, about four weeks before I traveled I started to prepare messages in French (the language that I use to preach in the Congo). I did this by studying the Bible in French and worked on my grammar and vocabulary when writing sermons.

Lastly, I was intentional about practicing my French during my private prayer time.

While in the Congo in October 2014, where one of the national languages is French, several church leaders and members commented on how much my French-speaking ability had improved since the last time I was there. This allowed the interpreter to better convey the meaning of what I was saying to the Congolese. Before any of the five previous trips to the Congo, I was not intentional about doing this. However, after talking with the twelve interviewees and after various readings on itinerant ministry, I wanted to improve the quality of my preaching ministry in the Congo by being more culturally sensitive. As noted in Chapter Three, I applied Lesslie Newbigin's idea of a preacher speaking in terms that the audience can understand (Newbigin 1989, 141). Thus I practiced my French to better transmit the gospel message in the Congo.

One other note of change to this ministry's cultural preparation is in the area of my preaching focus. During a three-day revival in Toronto in 2014, I preached about the importance of getting to know the Word of God. During the altar call, there was evidence of people responding to the message in a Pentecostal Holiness Church service. There were about 20 people kneeling, crying or standing at the altar. At the end of the service, one woman came up to me and said, "Your preaching has gotten so much better. You have really developed." Then another male said, "I felt like I was reintroduced to Jesus all over again." These affirmations led me to believe that, similar to Walter Hollenweger, I had a fruitful

ministry because my message had at its centre the theology of the Cross (Olsen 1996, 85-88). I was able to identify with the religious community, thereby fulfilling the Great Commission.

In another case, demonstrating cultural sensitivity during a trip to the Congo, I had to minister to one of the churches in its neighboring country, Burundi, where that sister church insisted on a head scarf for women when I preached. This was in contrast to the sister church in the Congo that did not enforce this rule on its female preachers. I had to think through the meaning of the head scarf and whether it was fundamental to the culture of the itinerant minister. I concluded that the head scarf is contextually dependent. Thus, I had no issue with wearing the head covering since it did not have to do with the message of the Cross. Identifying with the Apostle Paul who was a Pastor to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 1:2) while evangelist to the Jewish community in Pisidian Antioch (Acts 11:25-26), I too ministered to both cultures without compromising the Gospel.

Lastly, my itinerant ministry was affected by Dr. Rick Warren's statement (Chapter Three) about simple preaching. While I was on a preaching trip to Cuba in April 2014, I delivered simple preaching in a village where people were uneducated, but that did not mean the message was simplistic (Warren, 2011). I delivered a simple message on Good Friday about the Cross, and several listeners gave their hearts to Christ. In addition, many children and adults responded to the altar call with expressions of wailing, crying, raising hands, and speaking in tongues (Ministry Journal, April 2014). Thus, "deep preaching is not deep until it

gets to the heart and character of the person...If you get to the heart and nature of God ... [deep preaching] is like transforming” (Warren, interview by John Piper, “Desiring God”, May 1, 2011). As an itinerant minister, the Apostle Paul calls us not to complicate the Gospel. Therefore, in Cuba, I did not use theological terms when presenting the Gospel.

The message from Rick Warren that the Gospel message should be presented simply helped me to cope with the internal struggle that I faced as a result of social pressure. I believed I was under pressure to preach “deep knowledge” in the Caucasian churches that are used to that, rather than the simple, yet powerful message of the Cross that I preach in ethnic churches. From my experience, Caucasian churches in Ontario consist of educated members and seminarian pastors, versus the non-educated people in the ethnic churches with their non-seminarian pastors. Therefore, as I develop “meaty” messages in my repertoire (Heb. 5:12-14) for the Hispanic churches, I have been given an assurance from the abovementioned forum that my preaching in non-educated churches can successfully meet the standards of a Caucasian church. This relates to my project objective of finding best practices for my itinerant ministry, as the above examples demonstrate that cultural sensitivity in a cross-cultural itinerant ministry is a practice that should be cultivated in my ministry.

Change in Administration of Ministry

Several changes took place at the administrative level during the project. The administration includes areas of ministry outside of preaching and discipling that involve a team of persons who help me lead this charity work. In particular, the areas of shared responsibility, prayer support, and leadership principles improved over the eleven months. Just as the Apostles had the ability to discern they could not be responsible for all church activities (Acts 6:1-6), I too developed this awareness during the course of the project.

Team Work

This project brought about change in the manner in which I administer our organization. Since four of the twelve interviewed itinerant ministers said that they worked with their ministry boards to make decisions, I applied this practice to my ministry over eleven months.

I switched from working as a “group” to working as a “team.” In our D.Min course, we read Carson Pue’s publication about a shift in bottom-up leadership (Pue 2005, 150-158). One of Pue’s points was that organizations should not have a leader telling the board how to run things, but rather the board should meet and discuss how the leader might lead better. Making this change in our ministry necessitated a number of steps.

To begin, I designed a two-year resiliency plan for the direction of the ministry. Concrete and measurable steps were noted, and over the two years each goal had to meet S.M.A.R.T standards: specific, measureable, actionable,

relevant, and time-linked. Once this plan was evaluated by Dr. Paul Magnus (June 6, 2014), who specializes in professional coaching of organizations, I presented it to my board. During that meeting we also talked about moving the leadership team in a bottom-up instead of a top-down direction. The volunteers were enthusiastic. It was difficult for me to try and move in this way, because of lack of experience, but we persevered.

The first change came about during our first members' meeting. We began by having a conversation instead of following my agenda, and we talked about the bottom-up organizational shift planned for this ministry. We considered the necessity of working as a team rather than a group, recognizing that our ministry was actively involved in doing God's work. The group was enthusiastic and committed. In this meeting, our group of three moved towards becoming a team of three.

At the second meeting, we began our journey as a team imitating Jethro's principle to Moses. First, I invited the two volunteers to share their ideas about what the mission and vision of the organization might be. Usually, I would begin with my ideas. This time, however, I ensured that the team was honored by encouraging them to begin with what God was perhaps already stirring in their hearts. Next, we helped one of the volunteers who was struggling with one of her responsibilities. We concluded by revisiting and rewriting the mission statement for the ministry: "To share the Gospel Message of Hope and Love." This step was different for me, since for the past eight years I had been encouraged to reveal

what I believed God was telling me about the vision because it was “my” ministry. However, by enabling two passionate volunteers to help this charity move forward, I was allowing God to use them to tell me his plans. Believing that this was God’s work through his people, instead of God’s work through me alone, granted me permission to let this ministry become a team effort rather than simply the delegation of my ideas. This shifting from “group” to “team” organization consequently improved our collaborative efforts.

During this project, I took some leadership principles from 1 Thessalonians, and, after writing a report for Dr. Brown, President of Arrow Leadership and Professor for the Doctor of Ministry Program at Tyndale University College and Seminary (April 2, 2014), I began to implement change in an area I saw as a failure in my personal leadership. One of the leadership principles that 1 Thessalonians revealed to me was that a leader is to love with empathy. After writing that paper, I recognized that I had failed to love as the Father does, and be empathetic to the charity directors who serve under my leadership. For example, rarely did I reach out to them out of courtesy; instead, it was usually because I needed a ministry task accomplished that I did so. However, Jesus reigning as Lord in my life “is not just a spiritual notion encouraging us to get people into heaven. It is a current reality. It is not quite attained, but it is a taste of what might be” (Nelson 2008, 113). The friends who helped register my ministry as a charity were considered only as workers (objects) and not as friends (beings). They were there to meet my needs of furthering this

evangelistic ministry. The principles in 1 Thessalonians taught that I should consistently seek to be a loving servant by being a loving leader as Jesus was, which included being empathetic.

Expressing empathy during this study unfolded well. Some practical examples included hosting team members for meals, spending time with them over coffee/dinner, and sending them birthday notes with a gift. We even talked about getting together over Christmas and the summer, but that is yet to happen. Further, when they accompanied me on a ministry trip, or a speaking engagement in a church, I introduced them as ministry team members and thanked God publically for their services and sacrifices.

Change began to take place in this area of my ministry in April 2014 when I began to write emails and make phone calls to various friends, volunteers, and ministry supporters. Among these forms of communication, I steered away from talking about the ministry or myself, and asked instead how they were doing and caught up with their lives. I noticed that this created an intimate connection between us, with my heart longing to care for them as a shepherd cares for his sheep. In one example a volunteer opened up about being silent within the ministry because of personal struggles. Knowing that she was going through something emotionally, I became less demanding about deadlines and more sensitive to her personal needs. Since then, this volunteer has trusted me with praying for her special needs.

Another change that took place was that I began moving towards submitting this ministry to the prayerful guidance of my team. When four interviewees said that their ministry boards helped them decide where they would do itinerant ministry, and noting Billy Graham's ministry had prayer teams, I applied this principle of team work to my itinerant ministry. The Apostles' and Jesus' example of praying in small groups to find out what God's will was for them, further helped change come into this area of ministry. For example, submitting to the wisdom and guidance of the board resulted in an increased number of mission trips annually. Before I would usually just tell the board, "this is what we have to work with, so this is all we can do." However, when asking the treasurer for input on how much ministry our finances could support, she increased my faith by saying, "Whatever God is leading you to do, we can do. Don't worry, God will provide."

Moreover, a result of the team approach was that team members began to express ownership of the ministry and began to travel with me on itinerant outings. Like Wesley who traveled with lay persons on his circuit outings, and the Apostles who had other disciples accompany them when they preached, I too began to value a team ministry approach throughout this project. Destinations included Toronto, Buffalo, and St Catharine's. Members volunteered to pay their own travel costs; we prayed and encouraged each other during these outings; and they entered the lives of people on the field by praying for them. When these team members returned home, they shared from a new perspective, having been

involved in one of our ministry contexts. They also lightened my load as a preacher by presenting mission slideshows and the monthly donor program in various churches.

We also have an increased number of IHWN church representatives called liaisons. These people are the voice for IHWN when I cannot go and report to each supporting church after every mission trip. Having ministry liaisons lessens my workload of phoning pastors or church leaders, and I can refocus my energy on other ministry tasks. As a result of the changes that I made, I was able to increase the number of liaisons from four to eight, including two at municipal level in Montreal and New York City. Moreover, the biblical principle of delegating (Chapter Two) was implied in this move.

Moreover, to enhance the communication and work of cross-cultural itinerant ministry, computers became part of our administrative toolkit. One of our volunteers sought out a charity that donated ten computers for the ministry. I was able to distribute five to volunteer stations in Oakville, Buffalo, St Catharine's, Hamilton, and Mississauga. This changed the way we communicated and held online meetings when commuting was difficult, allowing me to meet with my board and volunteers more frequently.

An initiative in taking teacher volunteers to help the Bible Institute in Belize represented another change in the ministry. For seven years I traveled alone to deliver all the teaching and preaching necessary. I was like Moses, who in Exodus 18 encountered the hardship of leading the Israelites all by himself. For

example, while on mission in Belize, I would preach nightly from Tuesday to Sunday, and at the same time teach for seven hours on Saturdays and Sundays. This caused much physical and mental exhaustion. However, after my peer group at school encouraged me to revolutionize the ministry, just as Jethro encouraged Moses (Exod. 18:17-26), I began recruiting volunteer teachers to travel to Belize to teach at the Bible School, allowing me to dedicate more time to my gifted area of preaching (Acts 6:1-6). This change meant I now had three courses taught for me at the Bible School in Belize, creating a less stressful environment, in that I was able to continue preaching while the teachers taught. This innovation also allowed me to better plan the 2014 Congo mission. The change thus provided me with resources to do more ministry elsewhere. Trusting others to share in the ministry resulted in me being able to focus on my own calling and gifting. In the end, several positive changes in my leadership occurred because of this action research. Our team approach is another outcome of the project.

Prayer Support

The practice of establishing regular prayer support for this ministry came from research done for this project. Three participant interviewees said that prayer for itinerant ministry was important and one person said having people pray for the preacher was necessary for a good preaching ministry. Other research examples include Billy Graham's ministry prayer teams, Jesus praying for his disciples as he sent them out (John 17), and the Apostles praying together for

leadership discernment in the Book of Acts. The ministry's approach to prayer changed accordingly during the course of this project.

I became more open to sharing challenges and difficulties, and to requesting help with overcoming in spiritual warfare. For example, in facing spiritual attacks before my Congo mission trip, I revealed to intercessors what I was going through, instead of dealing alone with the challenge in prayer. This demonstrated clear change, because before the project, I was accustomed to sending out a general email to supporters before a ministry outing and having them pray for broad requests (i.e., protection, provision, and wisdom). During this project, I began opening up about what I was going through, and having these intercessors pray for me in person or over the phone. I immediately felt a spiritual alliance and a protective wall of prayer around me. Having these intercessors, who are leaders of their prayer teams in their local churches, created in me a sense of solidarity and personal support. I am thus now more ready to send out texts and emails to these intercessors who lead whole-hearted prayer meetings at their local churches. More significantly, these intercessors consistently contact me to see how their prayers are being answered. I am thus now reporting more often to the prayer teams about answered prayer, compared to before when I rarely did this. Knowing that these prayer partners meet weekly in their respective churches to pray for me alleviates my burden to pray alone.

Effective prayer for this ministry's volunteers has also improved much as in the way Jesus prayed for his disciples. The increased empathy has led me to

start praying for the leaders as persons who are human like me, and who need help from God. They send prayer requests which I pray about. I implemented a further change by following up on those prayer requests, whereas before I would not ask. As God came to earth through Jesus to demonstrate a selfless attitude in his service to others (Phil. 2:5-8), this itinerant ministry is a means to serve others as Jesus did (Hendriksen and Kistemaker 1953-2001, 103).

Change in Sustaining Itinerant Ministry

Throughout the project, I strove to make my preaching ministry a healthy one. I thus evaluated four areas during this investigation, i.e. financial stability, donor communication, family life, and mentoring.

Donor Communication

Contact with the financial supporters of the ministry improved over the course of the project. Research provided from interviews and readings formed the backbone of these outcomes. From the interviews I conducted, seven itinerant ministers claimed that cultivating a relationship with donors was important for the functioning of their ministries. Also, Reesor, Omanon and Stensch point to Paul's preaching ministry which entailed fundraising for the poor Jerusalem community, thereby providing the opportunity for him to exemplify good stewardship, accountability and integrity. In arriving at similar findings in this project, the area of financial accountability improved.

First, the frequency, presentation, and audience of the ministry newsletters changed. The frequency increased from one newsletter a year to one before and one after every mission trip. The presentation also changed. I tried to balance colorful pictures and detailed writing in smaller font over a maximum of two pages, instead of having four pages with more pictures than writing. The writing itself also now included preaching topics, something I had not done before. One pastor liked that, saying, “I want to know more about what the topics were that you preached. Why are the people reacting like that in the pictures.” (Ministry Journal, January 2014). The targeted audience of the newsletters changed. Before, newsletters targeted the community of past donors. Now the newsletter was sent to persons or churches regardless of their past financial contributions. As a result, people became more aware of what this ministry was accomplishing, what our prayer needs were, and were better informed about our financial condition and opportunities for financial support.

Second, the charity started a letter campaign during the project (July 2014), after brainstorming by the team. The fundraising coordinator wrote the letter and I co-signed it. Unfortunately our experiment did not succeed as we had zero responses. Then, one month later, I wrote a personal newsletter to complement the fundraising coordinator’s letter. In this electronic communication, I described what was going to happen on the Congo mission and provided an estimated budget of the ministry. I did this because, as noted in Chapter Two, the research showed that the Apostle Paul was accountable in his

collection of offerings (2 Cor. 8:20-21) as he and his companions tried to show that what they were doing was righteous while administering the love offerings (Reesor 2012, 55).

One day in August 2014, after sending out the newsletter via email, several encouraging responses, including financial contributions, were received. A second area of change in the overall ministry occurred with fundraising. Before the project, I, the missionary, was at the forefront in raising financial support. Then a ministry change occurred with the appointment of a trial fundraising coordinator. This person's appointment moved the ministry forward with our first letter campaign aimed at creating awareness of the financial needs for the 2014 Congo Mission trip. Just as Paul invited the churches of Corinth to provide for the poor in Jerusalem (Omanson 2011, 308; Stenschke 2012, 98) and had a team collect the funds, I also used a fundraising coordinator in this ministry to coordinate giving opportunities and collections. This initiative encouraged me to improve the communication of the ministry.

Excellent communication with charity supporters involves several tasks. Letter writing, newsletters, and website maintenance are part of this communication network. Examples of change in this ministry over the course of the project included personal letter/e-mail campaigns for the mission trips we do as a charity. What was beneficial about this personal letter was that several positive comments and donations came in the day after it was sent out, including new financial supporters. The change seemed to result from the manner in which I

presented the upcoming ministry in the Congo. People felt it was descriptive, narrative, sincere, and concise. One person commented saying, “Reading it was thrilling. You could picture the ministry setting.” (Ministry Journal, September 2014) Thus, changing how I presented the needs and opportunities helped make communication more effective. Another good example of direct feedback is this quote: “What I liked about your news letter is that it is simple to the point and easy to read and get[s] all the facts. Keeping it so it can be read easily off a laptop screen without needing to keep scrolling back and forth is what most people fail to do” (April 28, 2014, email).

The November 2014 report brought about even more positive feedback. The leader of one of the ministry prayer teams commented, “You did a great job putting together your newsletter, pictures, financial report and thanking everyone!” (November 3, 2014). This feedback came about because before I would only thank sending churches, but had now included in this report thanks to anyone who supported the ministry morally, prayerfully or financially. Additionally, this last mission report conveyed enthusiasm about the work: “Thank you for sharing your passion and for continually obeying the Lord’s leading in your life. A lot of us can learn from you” (November 3, 2014, email). Excellent communication in each of these areas therefore matters in a missionary ministry. Properly engaging with the supportive community is an important aspect of ministry, as is working as part of the charity.

I had realized that the missionary doing the work, the one who went to the churches to create awareness of these projects in the first instance, needed to be heard by the sponsoring community. Making a personal connection with the readers in my context is something that cannot be delegated. Although others who have accompanied me on mission trips may also make eye-witness reports, it remains important that as a team leader I continue to make personal contact. The letter needed to be personal, so that the people who trusted my descriptions from the mission field knew they were still receiving word directly from me. In addition to the team's communication, I thus had to maintain regular communication—an open line—to potential and dedicated supporters. As Paul illustrates in the New Testament, integrity and accountability are a part of itinerant ministry.

Previously, fundraising methods for this ministry were kept at a minimum. As Paul reached the impoverished community of Jerusalem through the churches giving financially, I too would go to preach at churches where most donations were collected in person. However, on December 10, 2014, the IHWN ministry began taking steps towards an online presence. Using the social media network of Facebook, I posted the Belize, Cuba, Kenya and Congo ministry newsletters. Within two days, the online Facebook statistics showed that IHWN reached 179 viewers. On December 31, 2014, I posted a collage of Kenya pictures and Facebook showed that this “served” or reached 776 people on that day. This strategy gave the ministry the ability to reach present, past and future donors. We

posted all of the financial reports of mission trips to demonstrate accountability, good stewardship of donations given, and integrity on my part.

The online presence has now created an inviting, secure, and convenient way for people to support the ministry financially. PayPal was introduced into our newsletters and budget mission reports. The ministry then saw an increase in donations via the internet. One evidence of this is that we had three new donors give to the Congo mission through PayPal. Two of the three individuals were new donors to the charity. Although there were small user fees for this service, these donations (\$1100) accounted for 10 percent of the charity's 2014 total revenue (\$10, 941). As one pastor said, “[O]nline donating demonstrates sensitivity to contemporary way[s] of donating” (Personal Journal 2014).

As a result of the changes, donor communication improved. These changes can be explained from the collected data. For example, Anita Pearce writes about preparing and raising a budget for itinerant ministry. She also comments on the need to be debt-free in ministry (Pearce 25). Neal Pirolo also advises itinerant ministers to have financial senders who supply the needs of the ministry through donations (Pirolo 2012, 70-93). Both authors and some interviewees stressed the need for correspondence with supporters. The Bible also calls workers to preach (Matt. 9:37) but they cannot go without senders (Rom. 10:13-15) in which proper communication with donors becomes part of the itinerant minister's life (Pearce 22). In fulfilling the Great Commission, it helps if itinerant cross-cultural ministers are accountable to their senders and are good

stewards of those donations. Thus, discovery of the benefits of the best practice of communicating with donors was an important finding of this project.

Family Life

Balancing ministry with a family life can be difficult for me, as an itinerant minister. Therefore, keeping harmony among the immediate family for a traveling minister is a best practice that came out of this project. To achieve this, four of the thirteen experienced itinerant ministers interviewed said that they involve their families in their ministries. Another minister said that since he prioritizes his family's health over ministry, he cancels his ministry engagements to help care for his handicapped son when he is gravely sick. One minister said that the week he leaves for ministry and the week he is back, he is home every night to balance his time away from family life.

The subjective data (Table 6) shows that I perceived an improvement in the area of balancing my family life with ministry. This means that I now perceive that I am better able to balance my personal life with my ministry obligations. For example, during the project, my husband accompanied me on a ministry trip to New York. Before this project, he would join me at the end of a trip so we could have some vacation days together. However, this time we decided to have him with me the full week of ministry. While we traveled on the bus together to New York, we spend time relaxing together and watching movies on our computer. I was more relaxed as he was able to watch my belongings while I napped or left my seat.

Furthermore, since I had prepared most of my messages in advance, we were able to sightsee in the daytime, and go to church meetings in the evenings. This provided companionship for me during my ministry outing. Before the project, I was uninterested in sightseeing during the daytime because I preferred to sleep in and rest my body for the evening ministry. However, to maximize my husband's well-deserved vacation time, and to prepare myself for a possible future of children traveling with me during ministry, this trip helped convince me that I could balance taking care of a family in the day time while doing ministry at night.

I noticed that throughout the eleven months of traveling and leaving my husband in Oakville, I improved in controlling my emotions when I came home from a ministry trip. For example, if I returned to find the home tidy in most areas, I would get angry at my husband for not cleaning all areas. However, after interviewing one minister, his response revealed that an itinerant minister should be watchful for what the enemy can use to bring division in a marriage. I became more conscious of avoiding those pitfalls. Another minister said, "You can't come home and blame your wife that the house is messy. [She is] keeping house... taking care of the kids, [and] paying the bills." The Church of the Nazarene's requirement that their missionaries "should demonstrate the ability to maintain healthy relationships that effectively resolve both personal and professional conflict" (Church of the Nazarene, "How can I prepare?"), affirmed this practice. Thus, when I came back from Congo in late October, I changed my high

expectations of having a “perfectly” clean home, to being more appreciative of my husband who sacrificed working a full-time job while at the same time attending the home so I could go do God’s work. As these examples demonstrate, change occurred in sustaining healthy family dynamics in my cross-cultural itinerant ministry. This is thus a best practice that works.

Mentoring

Mentoring can assist a mentee to learn from the successes and failure of others, thereby benefitting from their experience. The mentoring relationship can also serve as a reminder to the mentor “to walk circumspectly” (Eph. 5:15), knowing that others are following their footsteps. Six of the thirteen interviewees said that to become involved in their itinerant ministries, each had someone mentor them in their calling. Two persons said they had training in Bible College with internships in missions, church planting and preaching.

I now take with me, for the purposes of itinerant ministry, specific people who have expressed a calling to itinerant ministry. I used to be willing to have only experienced evangelists accompany me on ministry outings. Today I give persons who express their willingness to serve in a preaching ministry the exposure to the practical side of an itinerant ministry (preaching and teaching). Specifically, I have provided two women with the opportunity to travel with me during my local preaching engagements. Even though they are not developed preachers, this practice demonstrates to future itinerant ministers what a preaching ministry entails.

During these outings, there is exposure to the tasks of itinerant ministry. For example, I asked the mentees to observe the church culture where I would minister, to video record, take pictures, and/or give a word of encouragement before I preached. Just as I experienced when I accompanied other evangelists, here aspiring preachers were given the opportunity to develop their public speaking skills. Because of this change I envision a much broader ministry developing in which I may one day lead mission teams of volunteers. In this way, I could have various volunteers in children's, youth, marriage and pastoral ministries, while I focus on the preaching ministry to the general church. This could take place in Belize and Congo as that is where most of my ministry is located.

My ministry vision and my desire to empower others now includes mentoring as an intentional focus. While seeking to develop the broader mentoring ministry described above, my own personal focus on mentoring is energized by a desire to work with itinerant preachers. With this responsibility come great successes and challenges. In past efforts at mentoring, one of the challenges I faced was with a mentee who was not reliable in keeping the dates scheduled for our meetings. Perhaps a Covenant of Responsibilities would have helped here, with specific commitments spelled out for both sides. This mechanism could have prevented me pouring much effort into a vessel who may not finish what he or she began. While mentoring can be seen as a means of broadening the base of what God is doing through this ministry, it does take much

time and effort—scarce commodities for which, as stewards in God’s kingdom, we are accountable. However, after discussing this matter, the mentee changed her behavior by keeping the meeting dates in her agenda.

This mentoring model of intentionally pouring into other itinerant cross-cultural ministers is an outcome of this project. The data analysis shows that mentoring is a practice used to develop an itinerant minister. Therefore, it is a best practice that was implemented, that brought about change, and that benefitted my ministry.

Chapter Summary

Chapter Five has provided a description of the project’s results. After recording the results of a self-interview, I interviewed twelve experienced itinerant ministers. I then categorized the answers in best-practice themes, and applied those best practices to my ministry. I was pleased to see a number of areas of change, i.e., ministry preparation, ministry administration and ministry sustenance. Within these categories, there was a focus on preparation for itinerant ministry in the spiritual, intellectual, financial, physical, family, and cultural spheres. Following this, an analysis of the administrative side of the ministry demonstrated improvements to team work and prayer support. Lastly, practices of keeping the itinerant ministry healthy were implemented, including better donor communication, family life and mentoring. This data analysis aided me in finding best practices to improve my cross-cultural itinerant ministry on an ongoing basis.

CHAPTER SIX:
OUTCOMES AND CONCLUSIONS

This thesis reported on the gleaning of best practices for my itinerant ministry from experienced itinerant ministers, using self-evaluation in a cross-cultural context. Six action-research steps were followed in this project: I observed how I operated in cross-cultural ministry; interviewed twelve itinerant cross-cultural ministers with open-ended questions about how they conduct ministry; put into practice some of their ministry methods in my own ministry; analyzed how these practices affected my ministry by reviewing my journaling; self-interviewed myself a second time to note if change had occurred in the first seven months of the project; and analyzed change in my ministry with a final third self-interview at the end of the eleven months. The interventions addressed my need to become a better itinerant minister in a cross-cultural preaching context in such a way that the results would be measurable, and the practices themselves could be applied by others working in similar ministries.

Outcomes

This project primarily yielded practical guidelines relevant to my ministry. Three areas in particular improved noticeably over the eleven months spent implementing the project: preparation, administration, and sustenance. Identifying these three areas of improvement was possible when the project data, as recorded in my ministry journal and self-interviews, reflected change over time.

First, the project improved my preparation as an itinerant preacher in the areas of spiritual disciplines, intellectual study, self-care, family support, and becoming more culturally sensitive. Second, it addressed practices of administration in terms of team work and prayer support. Third, the project focused on sustaining my ministry through regular donor communication, balancing family life with ministry, and mentoring.

In the area of ministry preparation, there was change in every category: spiritual, intellectual, physical, and cultural. These areas of improvement surprised me, because in my opinion I did not think I had to improve them. Until this project, I did not pay close attention to the need to change certain areas of preparing for itinerant ministry. However, when I saw the change in this area, I realized that I needed to improve my self-awareness.

In the area of ministry administration, changes to the practices of the subcategories of teamwork and prayer support all came about. Noting that I had a lot to write about in these areas though, exemplified that this area was the weakest

in my ministry, yet without its proper development, the ministry cannot function effectively.

In ministry sustenance, the smallest change seemed to be reflected in family life, compared with donor communication that saw the greatest change. Knowing before I started the project that this was one of the weak areas in my ministry, seeing it develop positively gives me hope that this work can continue to receive and maintain support.

Learnings

Throughout the investigation, I became a better itinerant ministry in cross-cultural settings. I discovered the need for teamwork, prayer support, the development of a communication strategy, the practice of overall self-care, and the building of accountability relationships. These learnings are examined in more depth in the following sub-sections: leading an organization, trusting the team, modeling style of leadership, updating goals, and recognizing the need for mentoring.

First, as an itinerant minister who works with a team, I trust that each of my members will have wisdom to contribute. As the Scriptures reveal, the minister should consider the “priesthood of all believers” (1 Pet. 2:9). By using a team approach, together we can discern the will of God and the vision for the organization, delegate and share tasks, and wait on God's revelation while seeking confirmation.

Second, mentoring is a way of “giving back” some of that which has been entrusted to me. It extends the borders of my own reach by training others and empowering them to fulfill their own callings and giftings. I can thus develop leaders by encouraging them to fulfill the dream God has planted in them. This mentoring includes helping others reach emotional deliverance and freedom from their past by creating self-awareness. The words of Christ reflect this when he urges his disciples to request additional labourers for a harvest already white and ready for reaping (Matt. 9:38). However, for mentoring to reach its full potential, a carefully thought-out template is needed. I could in the future conduct further action-research by interviewing others to learn about their own best practices for mentoring. Then I could test out those lessons in a pilot project. It may even be a good idea to eventually delegate the faithful direction of the entire mentoring program to someone else.

Insights for Future Research

A few approaches to this project could have been executed differently. This project’s research methods could have been improved. For example, I could have started the interviewing process much earlier so as to increase the number of interviews. Inviting observers from the beginning of this project to take note of changes in the ministry might also have been helpful. As a further note, highlighting the particular benefits of autoethnography could be helpful. It provides a different perspective on qualitative research by giving the reader a new lens through which to see the research. The narrative of self and culture in order

to better understand the cultural context helps the researcher go deeper into the reflective process of how their context is actually working.

Implications for My Ministry

There are many implications stemming from this project. First, this project's findings could form a vital component in training other traveling preachers when I teach in this ministry. A handbook could be published in the three languages that I minister in: English, Spanish and French. This handbook could be distributed to various pastors, evangelists and church leaders as I minister abroad. Workshops about itinerant ministry might also be incorporated into my ministry outings. Second, the findings presented in the handbook could be used as a means of bringing in personal financial support. Third, I hope to train those who represent my ministry and those who accompany me abroad on the basis of the findings here.

Conclusion

In conclusion, there is a need for better preparation, organizational administration, and sustenance for a cross-cultural itinerant preaching ministry. Similar to Christ, I must go into a culture, live in it, and hope that what I preach and do brings people towards Him. These findings have been, and are likely to continue to be, increasingly useful as I develop in this ministry. I am also confident that this project on itinerant ministry within cross-cultural settings will remain valid and useful for itinerant ministers in the future.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Letter of Information

A Study about Itinerant¹ Ministry in Pentecostal Settings

Investigador: Yajaira C. Gomez

Supervisor: Dr. Gordon T. Finlay

Purpose of the Study (What am I trying to discover)?

I am doing this research for a thesis project as part of the Doctor or Ministry program at Tyndale University College & Seminary.

You are invited to take part in this study on itinerant ministry in Pentecostal settings. I am hoping to learn if these interviews and questionnaires will help me improve as an itinerant preacher when ministering to various Pentecostal cultures.

Procedures involved in the Research (What will happen during the study)?

You will be asked to complete one interview. I am going to ask you about preaching and its preparation, and church cultures. I will inquire about the effectiveness and weaknesses of itinerant ministries, and desired area of change in an itinerant ministry. I will also ask you for some demographic/background information like your age and education.

Potential Harms, Risks or Discomforts: (Are there any risks to doing this study?)

The risks involved in participating in this study are minimal. You do not need to answer questions that you do not want to answer or that make you feel uncomfortable. You can withdraw (stop taking part) at any time. I describe below the steps I am taking to protect your privacy.

¹ *Itinerant* = “working for a short time in various places,” as noted in *The Collins English Dictionary*, (<http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/itinerant>). Accessed on September 27th, 2013.

Potential Benefits (Are there any benefits to doing this study?)

You will not receive any compensation for taking part in this research. It is hoped that this study will contribute to a better understanding of God's plan for itinerant preachers.

Confidentiality (Who will know what I said or did in the study?)

Every effort will be made to protect (guarantee) your confidentiality and privacy. I will not use your name or any information that would allow you to be identified. However, we are often identifiable through the stories we tell. As well, others may be able to identify you on the basis of references you make. Please keep this in mind in deciding what to tell me. Also, the information/data you provide will be kept in a place where only I will have access to it. Information kept on a computer will be protected by a password. Once the study has been completed, the whole data will be destroyed.

Legally Required Disclosure

If required by law, I may be required to reveal information, such as physical abuse and intended harm.

Participation and Withdrawal (What if I change my mind about being in the study)?

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It is your choice to be part of the study or not. If you decide to be part of the study, you can stop (withdraw), from the interviews and surveys, for whatever reason, even after signing the consent form up until approximately December, 2014 when I expect to be submitting my dissertation. If you decide to withdraw, there will be no consequences to you. In the case of withdrawal, any data you have provided will be destroyed unless you indicate otherwise in writing. If you do not want to answer some of the questions you do not have to, but you can still be in the study. Your decision whether or not to be part of the study will not affect your ability to read the results of the study.

Information about the Study Results (How do I find out what was learned in this study)?

If you would like to receive the summary, please let me know on the consent form how you would like me to send it to you.

Questions about the Study

If you have questions or need more information about the study itself, please contact:

Appendix B: Guided Interview for Itinerant Ministry

Thank you for allowing me to interview you for my study “Itinerant preaching in Pentecostal settings”. Please answer the following questions and if at any time you feel uncomfortable with the questions, you may choose to not answer. Remember, this interview is anonymous. I will be taking field notes so I can remember what you say. At the end of the session, you will have the opportunity to review that I have accurately recorded your responses.

Get to know you	<p>What do you do in your ministry? Why do you do this type of ministry? How did you get involved in itinerant ministry? What do you like most about your itinerant ministry? ... least?</p> <p>Prompt Questions: <i>How often do you travel for your ministry?</i> <i>How do you decide the length of a trip?</i> <i>How do you decide where to go? Who helps you decide?</i></p>
Itinerant Ministry	<p>Specific question: Can you describe your experiences in itinerant ministry? How do you prepare _____ for itinerant ministry?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritually • Financially • Emotionally • Family life • Mentally • Physically • Culturally <p>Prompt Questions: <i>Guided tour question: Can you explain details about _____ that you have mentioned?</i> <i>Task question: Can you tell me how you do a particular feature of your work?</i> <i>Extension questions: What else about _____?</i></p>

<p>Culturally Relevant</p>	<p>How do you prepare your messages so that you are sensitive to the culture you are ministering to?</p>
	<p>What does this mean to you in the context of itinerant ministry? <i>To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. 21 To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. 22 To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. 23 I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings. (1 Corinthians 9:20-23)</i></p> <p>Prompt Questions: How is understanding the audience helpful for preaching? How can one preach appropriately with the audience in mind? Can you as a preacher be overly sensitive to the congregation? How? What can a preacher do to understand a culture's perspective on an issue versus my culture's perspective on an issue? Did you learn another language to better represent the gospel when preaching? Why or why not? Did you research the cultures in which you preach to better present the gospel when preaching?</p>
<p>Healthy Itinerant Ministry</p>	<p>How do you achieve a healthy itinerant ministry?</p> <p>Prompt Questions (i.e., before, during, after; temptations, loneliness, failures; models) What steps will allow me to achieve a healthy itinerant ministry? How do you maintain financial health for your organization? How do you keep a healthy relationship with donors? How do you maintain a healthy family relationship with your itinerant ministry? How do you ensure a peaceful departure and return within your home?</p>
<p>Feedback & Evaluation²</p>	<p>In your opinion, what helps you achieve a good preaching ministry?</p> <p>Prompt Questions: What specific area of your itinerant ministry do you think people appreciate most? How do you evaluate a positive experience of your itinerant trips? Why do you think people invite you to minister to the places you go? What makes your [preaching ministry] different from other [similar ministries]? What advice can you give to younger ministers from your experience in itinerant ministry?</p>

² Adapted from Sarah Michael, "The Promise of Appreciative Inquiry as an Interview Tool for Field Research." *Development in Practice*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (April): 225. 2005.

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