

Trinitarian Ecclesiology and the Missional Community: The Place of Christ in the African Divine Church of Kenya

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the place of Christ in the lived theology of the African Divine Church (ADC) of Kenya (Vihiga County). It seeks to address this question through exploring notions of Trinitarian ecclesiology and missional community, both in the lived experiences of ADC members, and in the Ecumenical Creeds of the Church. As a member of the Organisation of African Instituted Churches (OAIC), ADC affirms the teachings of the apostolic church on the Trinity.

This research, therefore, articulates the theological principles that may be helpful for ADC in its reappraisal of the place of Christ in its ecclesiology and missiology. The study 1) describes the background of the African Divine Church of Kenya as an African Instituted Church with special reference to their understanding of the role of Jesus Christ in Trinitarian mission, 2) discusses the development of Trinitarian ecclesiology and missional community during the early church, medieval, Reformation, and modern periods in history with special reference to the place of Jesus Christ, and 3) formulates guidelines for a paradigm shift towards an understanding of Jesus Christ's role in Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community for the formulation of a doctrine of Trinitarian mission in the African Divine Church of Kenya.

The study follows a basic two-fold design, which includes a qualitative empirical study using questionnaires, interviews, and observation to ascertain the opinions and attitudes of church members regarding the place of Christ in their oral theology. This is followed by a review of literature, which examines theological works in the four periods of the church, including African Christian Theology, using the ecumenical creeds as the framework. The review of the literature was conducted on the basis of five suppositions that arose from the empirical study. They included the need to: 1) establish a missional hermeneutic for ADC, 2) rework a coherent Trinitarian theology of mission, 3) establish an understanding of Trinitarian community, 4) establish an understanding of the ecclesial community and 5) rework Christology that is free from an ancestral concept of Christology.

The theological principles derived from the examination of these suppositions include 1) the development of a missional hermeneutic that is rooted in the ecumenical creeds, 2) a reworking of Trinitarian theology rooted in the ecumenical creedal concepts of the Godhead, 3) the establishment of a relationship between Trinitarian and missional community that agrees with the oneness of the Godhead as preserved in the ecumenical creeds, and 4) the development of a Christology that maintains Christ's hypostatic nature as expressed in the ecumenical creeds.

This work does not suggest a complete discontinuity in ADC theology. However, the suggested theological principles offer a balanced methodology and framework helpful towards reworking, not only the place of Christ, but also other doctrinal themes for ADC. This approach maintains a balance between the propositional theology preserved in the ecumenical creeds, and the practical and lived theology of ADC as an African Instituted Church.

KEY WORDS

Trinitarian ecclesiology, Trinitarian mission, Christianity, African Divine Church of Kenya, Pentecostal-Charismatic theology, Spirituality, Trinitarian community, Ancestral Christology, African Christian Theology, African Instituted Churches.

ABBREVIATIONS

ADC	African Divine Church
AICs	African Independent Churches
AIU	African International University
AOC	African Orthodox Church
BC	Belgic Confession
CCA	Church of Christ in Africa
CCEA	Cross Church of East Africa
CMM	Christian Mission Ministry
DC	District Commissioner
GAG	Group Assemblies of God
ICOZ	Independent Churches of Zimbabwe
MHGCEA	Musanda Holy Ghost Church of East Africa
MICC	Ministry of Interior and Coordination Commission
NT	New Testament
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
NWU	North-West University
OT	Old Testament
OAIC	Organization of African Instituted Churches
PAOC	Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada
PCC	Pentecostal Charismatic Church
PUEA	Presbyterian University of East Africa
RCC	Roman Catholic Church
RHGCEA	Ruwe Holy Ghost Church of East Africa

SHC	Second Helvetic Confession
ZAFC	Zvinkmborero Apostolic Faith Church
ZCC	Zionist Christian Church
ZCSA	Zionist Churches in South Africa

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CHAPTER 1:

TRINITARIAN ECCLESIOLOGY AND THE MISSIONAL COMMUNITY: THE PLACE OF CHRIST IN THE AFRICAN DIVINE CHURCH OF KENYA

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the study and shows how it unfolds towards achieving the aim and objectives. It provides a detailed background, problem statement and the research questions that informed the flow of the research. It also outlines the methods used to achieve the research objectives.

1.2 BACKGROUND

I am a pastor from the Christian Mission Ministry (CMM), a Pentecostal-Charismatic Church (PCC), which holds to the Reformed view of Trinitarian theology, ecclesiology, and mission. CMM is an African Instituted Church (AIC), and an affiliate member of the Organisation of African Instituted Churches (OAIC), Kenya Chapter, of which the African Divine Church (ADC) is an affiliate member.

Through a long period of interaction with the ADC's leadership, in church worship, and OAIC conferences, I have observed that they emphasize the working of the Holy Spirit more than the person of Christ. This triggered my desire to do an investigation. Besides that, I am interested in finding out the cause of the wide growth, the Pentecostal-charismatic zeal, and the contribution of ADC to African Christianity. As there is no written ADC theology, the study necessitates empirical work. The primary endeavour of this study is to evaluate Trinitarian ecclesiology and missional community by assessing the oral experiential theology of ADC against the historical development of the Reformed tradition of Trinitarian ecclesiology as expressed in the ecumenical creeds. The background of ADC Trinitarian ecclesiology and missional community is understood against the study of four areas. In this study, the term missional community refers to a community of saints, the body of Christ, or the church called to do the mission of God in the unregenerate community. These include the general works on Trinitarian theology, ecclesiology, missiology, and relevant works done in the ADC and the AICs at large. As relatively little research has been conducted into ADC theology and the place of the Trinity in ADC ecclesiology and missiology, the theological base for the evaluation of its

oral experiential theology is situated in a historical evaluation of the theology of the ecumenical creeds. This spans the apostolic period (to AD 100), through the Early Church (100-476), the medieval period (476-1453), the Reformation and its aftermath (1500-1750) to the modern period (1700 to the present day). The focus is placed on ecumenical creeds because they are rooted in the biblical narrative, thus, they are important in shaping the foundational theology and doctrine of the church, especially in developing the doctrines of Trinity and Christology. Calvin in his *Institutes* Book IV, chapter 9, section 8-9 acknowledges the importance and the role of the ecumenical councils for the church, arguing that “those ancient councils of Nicaea, Constantinople, the first of Ephesus, Chalcedon, and the like ... we willingly embrace and reverence as sacred” (Calvin, 1845:623-624).

In the apostolic period, estimated from AD 1 to 100, the doctrinal debate regarding the deity of Christ is not well developed. However, this period provides a doctrinal background for future debates on the hypostatic concept, which lays the framework for the ecumenical creeds. The Presbyterian minister and church historian W.D. Killen (2012:21-39) argues for both the humanity and divinity of Christ through the supernatural birth and mission, elements which are consistent with the Apostles' Creed. Additionally, Freeman (2009:42-44), an English historian of ancient Greek and Rome, uses the kenotic concept which both unfolds and informs the understanding of the *Kyrios* as Lord, an idea that brings into association both God and Jesus Christ as the deity. In the apostolic period, the mission of Christ is evident. Pannenberg (1972:17) speaks of missional community, which is derived from Jesus' message of God's love to the fallen world. This love, he argues, is shown in the sending of Jesus Christ. On the other hand, Killen (2012:43, 46-48) argues that Jesus enlisted the first eighty-two preachers (the twelve and the seventy disciples). The twelve were later designated as apostles, forming a missional community. While the twelve were sent to mission among the Jews, the seventy were sent to enter into any city, connoting nations. In line with this, Bayes (2010:23) argues that the invitation that we have to enter into a personal relationship with God is “a gracious outflow of the inner Trinitarian love”. This missional community is the body of Christ, an eschatological community of the Spirit, the new creation that exists in the world distinguished as the universal and local community of the believers. The Holy Spirit creates a linkage between those who are baptized into the

body (Hultgren, 2002:127), thus new a humanity is formed through Christ (Lee, 2006:105). All this displays the economy of the Godhead.

The early church period that ranges from AD 100 to 476 was dominated by various doctrinal debates regarding the Trinity, especially concerning Christology and Pneumatology. For example, Justin Martyr (1885:446-449) presents both the Nicene and the Nicene-Constantinopolitan definitions of Christ. He argues that Jesus Christ is the incarnated Word, conceived supernaturally and born normally as a human being. He also argues that the analogical expression of “light from light” reveals the divinity of Christ, pointing towards the Nicene concept underpinning the Son’s emanation from the Father. Tertullian’s argument in *Apology* chapter XIII on *Summary of the Creeds or the Rule of Faith* further anticipates the elements of the Nicene formula, for example, the sameness in nature, coeternity, and equality of the Son and the Father (Tertullian, 1884:513). Furthermore, in the *Trinity*, Book VII, chapter 6, section 11-12, Tertullian argues for the coeternity and unity of the Trinitarian persons (McKenna, 1963:236; 1999:239).

Origen, in his work *On Prayer* chapter III, argues for a relationship between the Father and the Son through the theme of the election. The understanding is that election requires a mediator whose deity is the same as that of the Father, which the glory of Jesus Christ reveals. Origen in chapter VI calls Jesus Christ the office of the Word of God, the Son of God, the high priest, and the pleader with the Father on behalf of the people (Origen, 1885:10, 18). Origen’s three hypostases with the Father as the first person, and “God in the fullest sense”, the Son as his “*dunamis*”, the concept of God’s power, and the Spirit as “a dependent” who is at work in the elect, form a community of the three who are eternal and incorporeal (Edwards, 2018: par. 2). These developments are what laid the basis for the formulation of the Nicene definition. The expression “dependability of the Spirit on the Father and the Son” as used by Origen points to the concept of the Spirit’s procession from the Father and the Son, denoting their equality.

In his work on the ecumenical councils, Kelly (1991:19) states that the fundamental question of the early church was: “If God the Father is a deity and God the Son incarnate in Jesus Christ is also a deity, have Christians not compromised monotheism by believing in two gods?” He maintains that the answer to this question is essential in articulating the debate leading towards the Nicene Council’s affirmation on the

hypostatic nature of Christ. To this end, Liston (2016:78-80) argues that a combined Spirit Christology and Logos Christology is needed to safeguard the balanced Christology proposed by the Nicene Council in the Nicene Creed and the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. In addition, Pawl (2016:12-16) argues that the dual natures of Christ are hypostatically united, that the virgin birth confirms his incarnation, and that the homogeneity in the nature of the three persons, confirming the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, traces the place of Christ in the Trinity. The fact that Christ's immutability and impassibility with the Father are not weakened by the incarnation safeguards the Nicene formula of Christ.

In the medieval period, which this study estimates as from AD 476 to AD 1453 AD,¹ the debate on the Trinity and the Nicene Creed was followed through. Augustine's question in the *City of God*, "Who is God?" is relevant in arriving at Jesus Christ as the fulfilment of the Abrahamic promise for the son. In his view, Jesus Christ the Son of God, conceived uniquely through the Holy Spirit (Augustine, 1871:333), is the fulfilment of the Nicene proposals of who Jesus Christ is—not made, but generated and emanated from the Father. Bosch (1991:215-217), discusses the Donatist and the Pelagian teachings during this period which deny the divinity of Christ. However, he maintains that Augustine developed the theology of original sin and predestination to safeguard the Nicene concept of the hypostatic nature of Christ, through his economic functionalities in reconciling humanity back to God.

In the later medieval period, Anselm (1903b:193) argued for the person of Christ as "very God and very man, one person in two natures", and therefore maintained the Nicene definitions of the hypostatic union of Jesus Christ. Anselm (2016:467) in his complete philosophical and theological treatises discusses the relationality of the Spirit. He argues that since the Son and the Spirit come from the Father, then what the two are is derived from the Father, but while the Son emanates from the Father as his Father, thus called the Father's Son, the Spirit, on the other hand, exists from the Father. Three things about the Nicene Creed are evident: the distinction, the coeternity, and the coessentiality of the persons.

¹ Young (2020:13) in *The Myths of Medieval Paganism* argues that AD 476 was the fall of the Western Roman Empire, a time at which Christianization of the continent was not much advanced, because it was characterized by predominant paganism. This period is limited to this because it shows the intensive development of the orthodox faith as established previously by the early church fathers.

In the Reformation period (AD 1473 to AD 1700) Calvin in *Institutes*, Book 1 chapter XIII, section 14-24 asserts the divinity of the Spirit, the hypostatic union of Christ, and the sameness in the deity of the Godhead (Calvin, 1845:62-68), which reflects the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed that ratified the deity of both Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. In Book 4, chapter IX, section 8-13, Calvin acknowledges the definitions of the Council of Nicaea, Constantinople, the first of Ephesus, and Chalcedon, as “councils of bishops” that restored the Trinity, especially the humanity and the deity of Jesus Christ (Calvin, 1845:623-625). Also instrumental are the two Reformed confessions, namely the Belgic of 1561 (Bratcher, 2020) and the second Helvetic of 1566 (Bratcher, 2018), which embraces the Nicene definitions of the hypostatic union of Jesus Christ, and the consubstantiation with the Father which the confessions emphasize.

There is a significant developmental trend towards a de-emphasis and less recognition of the ecumenical councils and creeds in the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries of Christianity. In the seventeenth century, influenced by the Moravian movement under Zinzendorf, the emphasis is on preaching and soul-winning (Mason, 2001:6-7), the priesthood of all believers, the theology of the heart, the motherhood of the Spirit, and the adoration of the wounds of Jesus Christ (Atwood, 2004:43-45). It does not deal with doctrinal development but with its lived experiences. During the eighteenth century, characterized by the influence of the Wesleyan movement, the use of the ecumenical creeds is negligible. The study of Smith (2012:12-14) about the experiential occurrence in Whitefield’s revival gives a confirmation of experience over the affirmations of the ecumenical creeds. Dieter (1996:23) argues that the prominent theology is the theology of the altar, emphasizing entire sanctification, faith and confession. The emphasis is on faith, conversion, and justification (Turnbull, 2012:14-17).

The emphasis in this research is on the rise of the Pentecostal movement in the twentieth century, because of the influence of the revival movements that tended to place less emphasis on the ecumenical creeds. The nineteenth century was marked by various revivals. Lambert (1999:19-22) argues that the experiential “new birth” characterized the Azusa Street revival. On the other hand, Wacker (2001:1-7) lists the characteristic theological aspects as salvation, baptism by the Spirit, divine healing, and the immanent return of Jesus Christ, while Wilkinson (2009:3) adds sanctification and speaking in tongues. Coalter (1986:5-24) claims that the experiential theology of the

First Great Awakening and the centrality of the internal state of an individual as opposed to external piety characterize the experiential theology of this period. Smith's (2012:12-14) study of experiential phenomena in Whitefield's revival confirms the emphasis on experientialism over and against the definitions of the ecumenical councils. Kay (2011:1-3) argues that Pentecostalism, which is a continuation of revival movements from the earliest days of the church, started in the twentieth century. This is rooted in nineteenth-century Methodism, holiness revivals, pietism, and international mission with the emphasis on divine healing.

African Christian Theology (ACT) provides the background for evaluating the place of Christ in the Trinitarian theology of the ADC. The ACT has been largely influenced by the Pentecostal tradition and the African cosmology, thus it places less emphasis on the ecumenical creeds. Kombo (2007:333-335) argues for the need to Christianize the African concept of God, and because of the undeveloped African Christology, he proposes caution towards ancestorology. The term ancestorology is used in this work to refer to the study of observable tendencies and practices of honouring the living dead in the African context. Maina (2009:84-104) expresses a missing Christology while Adams (2010:190-207) uses the Ghanaian Asante cosmology in attempting to develop Christology, which confirms a less developed concept of Christ than the Nicene and Constantinople Councils established. This disapproves Nyamiti's (1991:3-9) counter-argument for a developed Christology. His ancestral Christology endangers significantly the biblical and Nicene Logos Christology.

The Organization of African Instituted Churches (OAIC), an umbrella of AICs, acknowledges the economy of the Trinity, with the Holy Spirit explained more than the other persons in the basic faith statement in the constitution of the OAIC (Art. 8.1). On the eligibility for membership, only the Apostles' Creed is acknowledged (Art. 8.3), while the Nicene and the Athanasian Creeds are not referred to. The studies done on African Instituted Churches reveal tendencies towards ancestral factors, which further confirms the lost concern for the definitions of the ecumenical creeds. Makhubu (1988:59-62) argues that there is a reference to the ancestors in the AICs' worship. Igba's (2013:102-121) research on *Ancestor Christology and Jesus identity* points to a missing Christology, and he proposes the need to develop a biblical Christology that is supported by the Nicene definitions as opposed to ancestor Christology. Sundkler

(1980:98) and Oduro *et al.* (2008:113-114) both argue for the centrality of the Holy Spirit in dreams and visions. Thomas' (1997:40-45) study presents a case where Christ's role is limited to that of a healer and a liberator, with reference to ancestral mediation and veneration. In this mixed approach, the ancestors usurp the mediatorial work of Christ, undermining the Nicene Christology.

Two studies done in Kenya and Vihiga County show a less developed Christology among AICs. For example, Oosthuizen's (1968:315) study on the *Roho* (Spirit) movement exposes the centrality of the Holy Spirit's economic functions compared to that of Jesus Christ in AICs. Padwick's study on *Spirit, desire and the world: Roho churches of the Western Kenya in the era of globalisation* reveals an emphasis on the Holy Spirit with Spirit manifestations (Padwick, 2003:66-134). These studies confirm two things. First, there is a less developed Christology, and secondly, the Nicene Christology appears to be lost in the emphasis on the economic functions of the Holy Spirit.

Thus, the Christology of the ecumenical creeds is central in articulating the doctrine of the Trinity, especially the deity and the humanity of Jesus Christ. This research will argue that the influence of the ecumenical creeds on Christology varies throughout the five periods. In the apostolic period, the apostles' teaching is the basis for the formulation of the hypostatic union. The early church period formulates the statement of faith in the form of ecumenical creeds that safeguard the *homoousion* of the Godhead and the humanity of Christ against the Arian controversy and other related heresies. The Reformation period has a significant embrace of the Nicene and the Constantinopolitan definitions of Christ. However, a significant de-emphasis on the ecumenical creeds characterizes the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries, especially with the Pentecostal and revival movements, in which experiential conversion, Spirit baptism, and manifestations are central. This has influenced both the African Christian Theology and the AICs, including ADC. This leads to the problem that the study will address.

1.2.1 Problem Statement

The problem that this study address is the de-emphasis on the person of Christ in ADC theology. This study observes that the Trinity is integral yet there is a misconception in

the functionalities of the persons of the Trinity. Thus, the central research problem is to understand the reason for the de-emphasized place of the person of Christ in the Trinity in ADC oral and practical ecclesiology and missiology. Ezigbo (2010:25-46) identifies the major presuppositions of African Christology as gap and fulfillment, destructionist, reconstructionist, and solution presuppositions. The gap and fulfillment presupposition identifies a gap in indigenous religions regarding God and revelation that only Christ and a proper view of Christology can fill. It maintains that Christ does not destroy African core values and beliefs because they point to the marks of the existence of God. The proponents of this view further argue that it enables African people to make sense of the purpose of God, and salvation history, thus, appreciating the purpose, and the limits of African culture and traditions as given by God (Ezigbo, 2010: 26-27). The deconstructionist presupposition presupposes that Christ is to “destroy” the core values, beliefs, and African practices of indigenous religions for them to benefit effectually from his work. In this view, Christ does not fulfill the indigenous religious values and practices of the ancestors, because his work stands in contradiction to that of the ancestors (Ezigbo, 2010: 35-37). Ezigbo’s (2010:42-43) view on reconstructionist presupposition, supposes that Jesus deconstructs and then reconstructs the indigenous religions and it “seeks to provide a bridge” to the first two presuppositions. Ezigbo (2010:42-43) quotes Ukpong’s reconstruction language of “challenging, sifting, transforming and rebuilding” to emphasis the centrality of Christ in the reconstruction process. This points to an urgent need to develop a biblical Christology that will give a framework for a Christ-centered reconstruction process. The solution presupposition looks at the work of Christ at the cross as an effectual remedy to predicaments initiated by sin, which have permeated the cultural and religious traditions of Africa (Ezigbo, 2010:46-48). What is common in all these presuppositions is that none perceives Christ from the two Christological natures, namely the divine and human. This continued reliance on African spiritual worldviews denigrates the right place of Christ in the Trinity. The question of maintaining the person of Christ without assuming his equality with traditional ancestors remains a gap for which this research attempts to find a solution.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS, AIM, AND OBJECTIVES

Thus, the primary research question is: What theological principles can be articulated about Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community that can assist the African Divine Church of Kenya regarding the place of Christ in Trinitarian mission?

Related questions:

- a. What is the background of the African Divine Church of Kenya as an African Instituted Church with special regard to their understanding of the role of Christ in Trinitarian mission?
- b. What can be learned from a study of the development of Trinitarian ecclesiology and missional community during the early church, medieval, Reformation, and modern periods in history, with special reference to the role of Jesus Christ as the second person of the Trinity?
- c. What guidelines can be formulated for a paradigm shift towards an understanding of Jesus Christ's role in Trinitarian mission in the African Divine Church of Kenya?

1.3.1 Aim and Objectives

Aim

The main aim of this study is to articulate theological principles concerning Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community, in order to assist the African Divine Church of Kenya regarding the place of Christ in the Trinitarian mission.

The specific objectives of the study are to:

- a. Describe the background of the African Divine Church of Kenya as an African Instituted Church with special reference to their understanding of the role of Jesus Christ in Trinitarian mission.
- b. Discuss the development of Trinitarian ecclesiology and missional community during the early church, medieval, Reformation, and modern periods in history with special reference to the place of Jesus Christ as the second person of the Trinity.

- c. Formulate guidelines for a paradigm shift towards an understanding of Jesus Christ's role in Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community for the formulation of a doctrine of Trinitarian mission in the African Divine Church of Kenya.

1.4 CENTRAL THEORETICAL ARGUMENT

The central theoretical argument of this study is that if the theological principles of the ecumenical creeds are properly articulated, ADC will be able to develop a theology of Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community that can assist them in their understanding of the place Christ as the second person of the Trinity.

1.5 METHODOLOGY

This study follows a basic two-fold design, through empirical study followed by a review of the literature. Both empirical study and literature review are presented descriptively. Descriptive research is based on a systematic, objective, and complete description of reality. Pruzan (2016:57) considers description as a scientific research concept, concerned with reflection on an investigation. The methods that were used for the study will now be described for each chapter separately.

Chapter Two describes the background of the African Divine Church of Kenya as an African Instituted Church with special reference to their understanding of the role of Christ in Trinitarian mission. The objective could only be met through an empirical study because no information about the role of Christ in the Trinitarian mission of the ADC was documented up to this stage. The empirical work was qualitative and was based on a narrative research design. Narrative inquiry allows the collection of stories from individuals (known as the co-researchers) about their expressed experiences as lived and told stories. The study used Rosenthal's (1993:63) approach of interacting with the co-researchers for narrative inquiry, and the methodologies of Sharam (1998:6) and Sherman & Webb (1988:7) for understanding and constructing meaning from the interaction and the lived-out experiences from the world of the participants. An inductive strategy was followed, as the aim of the work was to gain empirical data that could support the intended theory or doctrine formation. The following is a short description of the empirical work. However, a detailed description is provided in Chapter Two.

Research setting: The selection of a research site is essential because “it influences the usefulness of the information produced from the findings” (Kombo & Tromp, 2006:75). The research setting for the empirical study is the five regions of the African Divine Church of Kenya in Vihiga County.

Participants: Because this is a qualitative study, a small group of participants is sufficient. Participants were recruited from the leadership office and ordinary church members. The participants were chosen on the basis of what information they could bring to the study in enriching the understanding of the emergent theory (Nicholls, 2009:590). According to the ADC general secretary (interviewed by phone on 4th January 2020), the membership of the African Divine Church in Vihiga County is approximately 25,000, a population from which a sample was drawn (Kombo and Tromp, 2006:76). The study used a non-probability design through purposive sampling (Kombo & Tromp, 2006:81, 82).

Data collection: Data was collected in three parts: semi-structured interviews, observation, and questionnaires. The triangulation method was followed to ensure the credibility of the transcriptions.

Data analysis: The data were analysed according to certain categories and themes that are in accordance with the central theoretical argument of the study. The analysis was also based on a continuum where feelings and facts were taken into consideration. Davidson’s (2009:41) method of conversation analysis (CA) informed the process of transcribing the conversations into transcripts, which involved moving back and forth in the recordings to enhance validity. Through a continuum approach, both naturalized and denaturalized transcription was followed. While in naturalized transcription the participants’ language represented the real world, in denaturalized transcription the reality was constructed from the meaning and perception conveyed in the speech (Oliver *et al.*, 2005:1273-1277). Naturalized transcription deals with the transcription of the participants’ utterances in detail, and the description of the conversations that helps to examine the patterns (Oliver *et al.*, 2005:1275) from which themes are drawn. Denaturalized transcription is more a “depiction of speech” and does not deal with the accents, rather it is concerned with meanings and perception created during a conversation (Oliver *et al.*, 2005: 1277). To finalize the process, the data were categorized and organized to convey the respondents’ intended meaning (Renner,

2003:2). The researcher adopted Creswell & Creswell's (2014:197-200) six steps for analysing the data, which included the transcription of the interviews and observed field notes, secondly getting the impression of what the participants were trying to say, and thirdly the coding process which involved organizing the data by bracketing chunks into categories. In the fourth step, the coding process generated categories or themes for the analysis. This was followed in the fifth step by a narrative approach to convey the findings of the analysis. The last step involved the researcher's responses to the findings and the lessons learned, and included the researcher's interpretations, which are dealt with in Chapter Two.

The findings are discussed and certain suppositions are made that are necessary for the guidelines in Chapter Four.

Chapter Three deals with the literature review, which discusses the development of Trinitarian ecclesiology and missional community during the apostolic period, the early church, the medieval period, the Reformation, and the modern period in history. Sources were found through conducting searches of the databases in NWU's theological library, Africa International University (AIU) theological library as well as the library of the Presbyterian University of East Africa (PUEA). The works consulted to formulate the background of the biblical and theological framework and missional community included Calvin's (1845) *Institutes* Book IV, Bratcher's (2018) *Second Helvetic Confession* of 1566, Bratcher's (2020) *Belgic Confession* of 1561, and Pawl's (2016) work on conciliar Christology. This library research aimed at covering the relevant literature on Trinitarian ecclesiology and missional community to provide a theological position to evaluate the ADC ecclesiology.

Chapter Four constructs some guidelines for a paradigm shift towards an understanding of Jesus Christ's role in Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community, in order to formulate a doctrine of Trinitarian mission in the African Divine Church of Kenya. For this, the researcher was led by the findings of the empirical study (Chapter Two) and the literature studies (Chapter Three) to make certain conclusions and recommendations to the African Divine Church of Kenya. This last task fulfils the overall main aim of this study, which is to articulate theological principles about Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community, to assist the African Divine Church of Kenya to reconstruct its position regarding the place of Christ in Trinitarian mission.

Chapter Five is the conclusion of the study, where the researcher states the answer to the central theoretical question, summarizes, and makes a reflection on the entire research. The chapter draws conclusions and recommendations from the research, in the light of the biblical witness. It also considers the strength of ADC's pneumatology and the theology of experience in terms of its contributions to African Christianity. The research looks at the strengths and weaknesses of the ADC's general oral theology and suggests recommendations.

1.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

This study involved working with human participants who were all members of ADC in Vihiga County. The information was obtained through semi-structured interviews. The study followed the NWU's ethical guidelines regarding confidentiality, respect for the participants, and the information given, including the recruitment and consent process. The co-researchers' information remained confidential (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003:191). The privacy of co-researchers was ensured through an anonymity approach, which entailed anonymizing data by using the alphabet to represent the participant's name, an approach that enhanced confidentiality.

1.6.1 Risk estimation level

Since the study was a doctrinal investigation, the risk level was minimal because the interviews with the ADC leaders and the laity did not concern personal and private issues, but general information towards the development of the Trinitarian, ecclesial and missional concepts of ADC theology.

1.6.2 Risks and precautions

No physical, social, legal, economic, dignitary and community risks were foreseen that necessitated certain precautions.

1.6.3 Role of the participants during the interviews

It was expected from the participants to give descriptive and detailed responses to the questions asked during the interviews. Their responses were kept private and confidential. This information was gathered through semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire, as well as personal observations during ADC Sunday services. The

researcher never asked any sensitive questions that would violate the privacy of participants.

1.6.4 Practical experience of the participants

The selected leaders and the laity who participated in the interviews spent between 30 to 50 minutes depending on the amount of information that each person had. The interviews took place at three places as agreed upon by the participants: at the churches, homes, or the head office of ADC in Boyani.

1.6.5 Criteria for participants' selection and recruitment

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The participants were selected and included in the study on the basis of the participants' ability to give reliable information that suited the need of the study as well as the validity and diversity of information and results. The study benefited from the varied ages of the participants. Thus, with the help of the head of the African Divine Church, leaders and the laity were selected to participate.

Benefits of the study

There were direct and indirect benefits of the study to participants. With direct benefits, participants gained credibility in the church for taking part in the documentation of a doctrine about the role of Jesus as the second person of the Trinity. The study benefited the ADC indirectly, especially in its doctrinal development, and to a larger extent, theological institutions benefited in the articulation of the paradigm shifts in the ADC as well as the AIC's Trinitarian ecclesiology and missiology. The study contributed to the development of African Christian theology and a balance of the ecumenical councils with Pentecostal theology. Thus, the study has opened up an investigation into ADC theology, forming the research ground on which to base future studies.

Goodwill permission/Consent

The study commenced after obtaining goodwill consent from the leadership of ADC because the study directly related to church matters.

Participants' recruitment

The recruitment of participants started after obtaining the various documentation from the relevant legal authorities. These are explained in Chapter Two and shown in the addenda (A-F).

1.6.6 Announcement/distribution of study results to participants and government authorities

This was done through the distribution of the document after the completion of the analysis of the findings. Selected participants and the Ministry of Education were informed by phone and email and they accessed the published study. The researcher shared with the head of the African Divine Church and the participants within three months after the completion of the study. The researcher shared the study with the Ministry of Education both at the national and county government level because it is required of any research student to present a copy of their completed study for archival purposes; at the same time, it is a way of ascertaining the statistical records of the Ph.D. graduates and maintaining the quality of the higher education through quality assurance.

1.6.7 Management, storage, and destruction of data

The transcribed data was stored on the researcher's personal computer for three years. The computer's password was protected and only the researcher accessed the information. After three years, the file will be deleted from the computer.

1.7 CONCLUSION

The five periods of the church are important to this study because they enrich this study with information regarding the development of Christology, the main aim of which is to maintain the correct position of Christ in ADC. In the study, the apostolic period lays the foundation for the doctrine of the Trinity. Christology is developed through both Spirit Christology and Logos Christology. The early church period is a continuation from the apostolic period, and in this period, Christology grew through various ecumenical councils. The Councils' definitions and affirmations through the creeds help to maintain the place of Jesus Christ in the Trinity against theological controversies. In the medieval

period, Christology conforms to the patristic declarations regarding Christ in relation to the hypostatic nature. The Reformed tradition benefits this study in the extent to which it puts into perspective the place of Christ in the Trinity by embracing the affirmations of the ecumenical councils as stipulated in the ecumenical creeds.

Concerning the modern period, the study looks at the influence of Pentecostalism from the seventeenth to the twentieth century. In this period the emphasis is on experience, emotionalism, and the manifestations of the Holy Spirit. There is little reliance on the ecumenical councils' formulae on Christology. The concern of this period is not for theological doctrine *per se*, but rather for practical and experiential encounters. This tradition has influenced all the African Instituted Churches, including ADC's experiential and narrative theology with its emphasis on the economies of the Holy Spirit and the arguments of dispensationalism.

CHAPTER 2:

BACKGROUND TO THE AFRICAN DIVINE CHURCH OF KENYA AS AN AFRICAN INSTITUTED CHURCH AND ITS CONCEPTS OF TRINITARIAN MISSION



2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the background of the African Divine Church of Kenya as an African Instituted Church with special reference to their understanding of the role of Christ in Trinitarian mission. Nandi & Kima (2015:139) state that the ADC was founded during the colonial period and can be described as a Pentecostal and charismatic church. These churches are a rapidly growing form of African Christianity. The ADC emphasizes the gift of the Holy Spirit in church services and the liturgy allows for joyful singing, dancing, clapping of hands, and beating of drums. Church members have official church attire and the different colours have symbolic meanings. The definition that Padwick (2003:110) suggests brings forth essential marks and origination of the Roho Churches. They include the coming of the Holy Spirit at Kaimosi in 1927, a tradition of spirituality derived from the Kaimosi Pentecost experience, the need for repentance and ritual purity, and the role of the Holy Spirit in cleansing and offering protection from evil. This concurs with the responses the interviewees gave to the question of whether ADC is a spiritual or Roho Church as explained in the findings. Thus, ADC falls in the category of Roho/ Spirit churches.

To meet the objective of this chapter, a qualitative empirical study based on a narrative research design was done. Narrative inquiry allows the collection of stories from individuals (known as the co-researchers) about their expressed experiences as lived and told stories. The inductive strategy was followed to gain empirical data that could support the intended theory and doctrine formation.

In this chapter, aspects of the planning of the empirical research are discussed, followed by a discussion of the findings of the empirical study and concluded with suppositions that will be taken into consideration in Chapter Five for the formulation of guidelines for a paradigm shift towards an understanding of Jesus Christ's role in

Trinitarian ecclesiology and missiology. This paradigm shift will support the formulation of a doctrine of Trinitarian mission in the African Divine Church of Kenya.

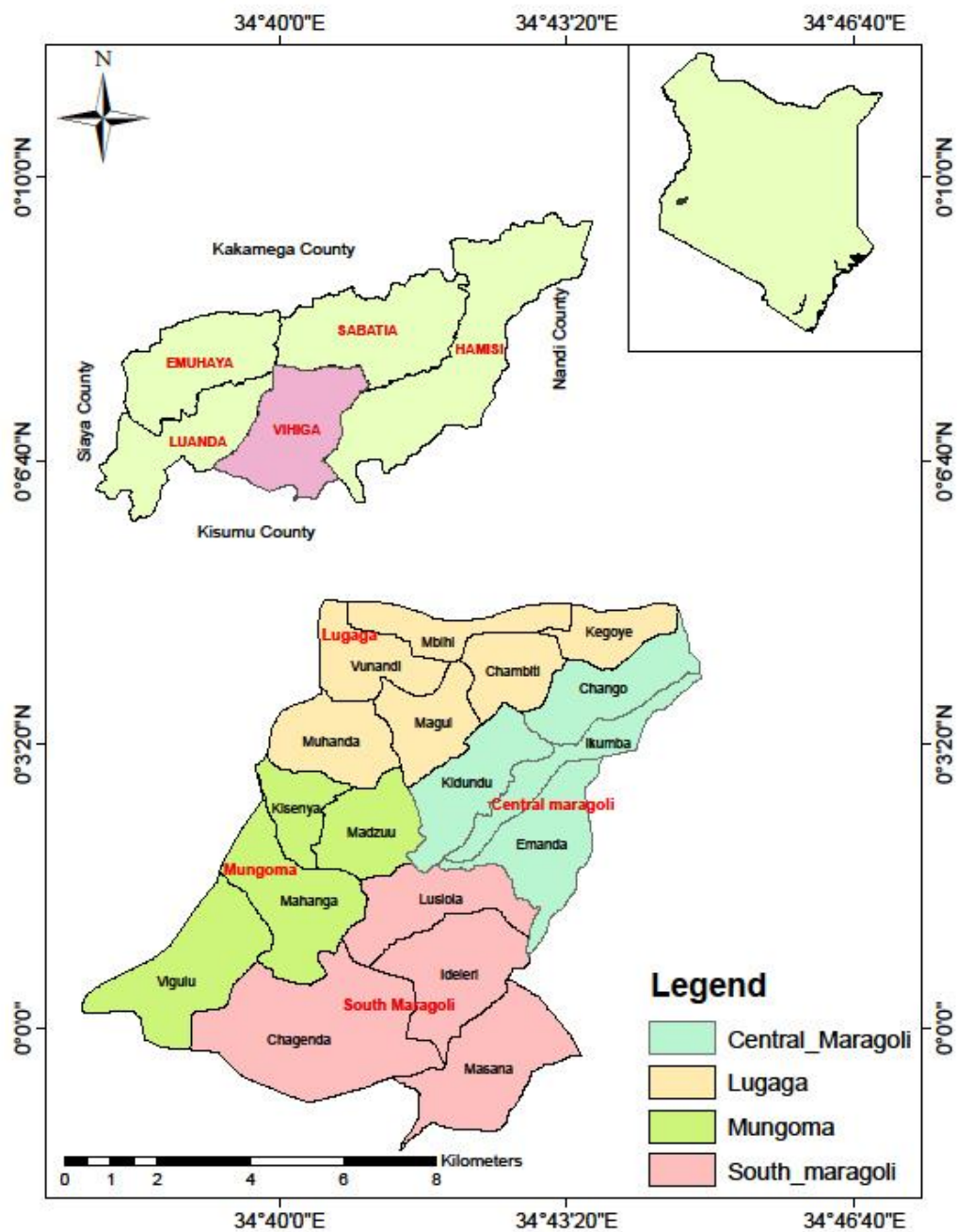
2.2 Description of the empirical study

The empirical study was done with the NWU's ethical approval. The ethics clearance certificate number is 01901-19-A6 (attached as Addendum A). Other clearance approvals that were needed are:

- Letter from promoters (NWU Addendum B)
- The clearance certificate from the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI), license number NACOSTI/P/19/3074 (attached as Addendum C)
- Clearance letter from the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government from the County Commissioner of Vihiga, reference number VC/ED.12/1VOL.III/63 (attached as Addendum D).
- Permission of authority to conduct research from the Ministry of Education, State Department of Early Learning and Basic Education from the County Education Office of Vihiga County, reference number CDE/VC/ADM/VOL.2/39/159 (attached as Addendum E).
- Finally, a letter of goodwill from the leadership of ADC (attached as Addendum F).

2.2.1 Research setting

The research setting for the empirical study is the African Divine Church of Kenya in Vihiga County. The Vihiga County is located in the Western region of Kenya and is one of four counties in the former Western Province of Kenya. Vihiga County has five constituencies, namely Luanda, Emuhaya, Hamisi, Sabatia, and Vihiga. The Vihiga district has more than 50 Christian denominations, besides other faith groups.



The map of Vihiga County and its five sub-counties.

Source:https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.researchgate.net%2Ffigure%2FMap-of-Vihiga-Sub-County-in-Vihiga-County_fig1_319645069&psig=AOvVaw0W5RfvFscQLOxFTpDnUJp2&ust=1624535035919000&source=images&cd=vfe&ved=0CAoQjRxqFwoTCoi984vfrfECFQAAAAAdAAAA

ABAD

The headquarters of the ADC is in Boyani. The head of the ADC in Kenya, Archbishop John Chabuga, has acted as the gatekeeper of the study and gave his consent to the study. Each region is headed by a chief vicar, known as the *Chief Kasisi*.

The gatekeeper gave consent for the study in all five regions and requested the chief vicars to give their support to the researcher in conducting the study in the individual regions. Creswell & Creswell (2003:233) highlight the importance of a gatekeeper, also referred to as an informant (Hammond & Wellington, 2012:3). The informant acted as the mediator to guide the researcher in establishing reliable observations and interviews in the study site. The gatekeeper can either be an official or an unofficial participant who provides entrance to the site and assists the researcher in recruiting suitable participants for the study.

After consent was obtained, the researcher scheduled a meeting with each of the various regional chief vicars to discuss and plan the visitations to the different congregations and sites for information gathering. This action is in line with what Hennink *et al.* (2011:120) and Taylor *et al.* (2016:62) report in their writings about qualitative empirical research, especially Taylor's suggestion (2016:41) about the importance of obtaining research ethics approval that protects the human rights of research participants, as well as evaluating the level of risks involved. The empirical research was done from 28 February to 30 March 2020.

2.2.2 Participants

A qualitative study typically involves a small group of participants. The sample participants are recruited from a larger group of people, known as the population (Kombo and Tromp, 2006:76; Gall *et al.*, 2003:167). The researcher selected a sample (Gall *et al.*, 2003:167) to represent the general population. During an interview with one of the church leaders, Pastor Mahero, mentioned that the ADC membership in the County of Vihiga is estimated at 25,000 people.

The participants were recruited according to the purposive sampling method because the researcher purposely targeted a group of people who were reliable for the study in terms of providing the relevant in-depth information for analysis that was needed in accomplishing the research study (Kombo & Tromp, 2006:81, 82; Cooper & Meltzoff, 2018:64; Gall *et al.*, 2003:170, 175).

Participants were recruited from the leadership office and ordinary church members. A total of 55 respondents were chosen to participate in the study. The sample included both men and women.

2.2.3 Data collection

Data was collected in three parts through semi-structured interviews, observation, and questionnaires. Kombo and Tromp (2006:100) describe the relationship between the researcher and the participants as direct involvement through interviews, discussions, and observations. Gay *et al.* (2006:10) argue that during a qualitative empirical study, “the researcher interacts extensively and intimately with the participants.”

In Part One, the researcher did semi-structured interviews with 25 participants during March 2020. The participants who were interviewed are church leaders from different congregations in these regions. The interview questions (Addendum 5) were compiled before the interviews and the researcher used them to guide the interviews, which resulted in a rich discussion. The interviews were audio and video recorded and the researcher transcribed the data within one week after the interviews. The triangulation method was used to ensure the credibility of the transcriptions. Taylor *et al.* (2016:85) warn that recording devices may cause possible changes in the behaviour of the participants and therefore it can have an effect on the data. The researcher took cognizance of this possibility and after describing the goal of the recordings the risks of non-compliance or bias were reduced.

For Part Two, the researcher attended four different congregations during the four Sundays in March 2020 to observe the services and how the members responded during the services, namely Boyani, Muzulyu, Owamasiolo, and the Evangelists service at the headquarters. Through direct observation, the researcher was enabled to put the participants’ behaviour into context, thus enabling a better understanding. The observations were unstructured, because of the descriptive approach (Kombo & Tromp, 2006:96). Tomal (2003:28) proposes numerous advantages with direct observation as it gives the possibility of obtaining actual first-hand information. The researcher had an opportunity to collect the data in the real-life situation of the co-researchers. The researcher could observe the liturgy, which included a thematic emphasis on preaching, songs, and prayer. The responses and reactions of the church members during the

service were observed as indications towards ADC Trinitarian ecclesiology, the missional community, and the place of Christ in the Trinity. The researcher also recorded the observations and stored them for transcription.

Lastly for Part Three, with the help of Archbishop Chabuga, the questionnaire was disseminated to 30 church members who were chosen as part of the sample. Two weeks were given for the completion of the questionnaire. The chief vicars helped with the collection of the questionnaire and handed them over to the researcher. The questionnaire is attached as Addendum J.

The researcher stored all the recordings, transcriptions of interviews, and scanned copies of the questionnaire on his computer. The computer is password-protected and all the data will be destroyed after three years.

2.2.4 Data analysis

The data was analysed according to certain categories and themes that are in accordance with the central theoretical argument of the study. The analysis was also based on a continuum where feelings and facts were taken into consideration. The researcher adopted Creswell's (2014:197-200) six steps for the analysis of data, which included:

- a. Transcription of the interviews and observed field notes.
- b. Getting the impression of what the participants were trying to say.
- c. The coding process involved organizing the data by bracketing chunks into categories.
- d. Generating categories or themes for the analysis.
- e. Conveying the findings of the analysis through narrative.
- f. The researcher's responses and personal interpretations of what he learned from the findings.

Kombo and Tromp (2006:119) also suggest a thematic analysis approach where the topics or major subjects and concepts are identified through a coding system. The

coding process helps to generate themes from the data (Creswell & Creswell, 2003:194; Punch, 2006:199). Gay *et al.* (2006:468, 469) describe this as constructing meaning by identifying emerging patterns and themes through reading and rereading, listening and re-listening to the data collected. The process is finalized by categorizing and organizing data to bring the respondents' intended meaning (Renner, 2003:2).

The researcher did not lose focus of the narrative nature of the study, which called for living, telling, and retelling of the stories (Clandinin, 2013:22, 34). In the end, the narrative as part of the qualitative approach provided a useful means that identified key themes drawn from the repeated subject matter (Phoenix, 2013:75). The narrative consolidates fundamentals of experience, thought, and feeling into a unified whole and is connected to a central purpose (Gilbert, 2002:224). Rosenthal (1993:63) writes that the context of interaction with the co-researchers is essential in a narrative inquiry.

Furthermore, an inductive approach was followed while analysing the data, which enabled the development of concepts from the data into abstracts in establishing the relationships and commonalities. With an inductive approach, the researcher began with specific experiences and further developed them into general conclusions or theories (Walliman, 2011:17).

Having explained the planning of the empirical study, the second part of the chapter will now focus on the findings of the empirical study.

2.3 The findings of the empirical study

The researcher will first discuss the findings of the semi-structured interviews (2.3.1), observations (2.3.2), and questionnaires (2.3.3) separately, and only thereafter he will conclude with a comparison between the findings (2.4).

2.3.1 Findings of the semi-structured interviews

As mentioned earlier in the chapter, the researcher used a questionnaire as a guideline for the interview. The findings were coded according to the three parts of the questionnaire, namely historical, practical and theological aspects, and the findings will now be discussed according to these three parts.

a. Historical

In the historical investigation of the history of the church and its name, various themes emerged. Themes such as prophecy, prayer, and repentance recurred in almost all the interviews. Most of the participants witnessed that ADC (under the leadership of the first bishop, the late Saulo Lilege Chabuga, together with Zablon Mugunda, Ezekiel, Awiti, Zilpah Mwingeresa, and others) originated out of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC) in 1948. The split between ADC and PAOC was due to leadership disputes, misunderstandings, and the exclusion of African leaders.

The mission group imposed leadership on the church, a decision that did not go well with the group led by Chabuga. Mr. Morrison expelled this group from the church, and they moved away with many followers. This wave affected the PAOC because the Lou people at Nyahera also decamped. The reason for the splinter, as S12 hinted, was the mission's appointment of John Ananda, an African pastor, but he was from the Bunyore sub-tribe of the larger Luhya tribe. As S12 explained, the Chabuga-led group rejected Ananda because he had married from Nyang'ori and therefore they would not be comfortable being led by their brother-in-law. The Chabuga faction did not prefer the mission's choice of Ananda. S12 explained that the schism was not a matter of doctrine that led to the rejection of Ananda but it was a cultural issue since it is a taboo in the Maragoli sub-tribe of the Luhya tribe for an in-law to lead them. Before they settled on the name African Divine Church, they called themselves "Pentecostal B Church" but they were ordered to drop the name because it implied that they were still members of the PAOC. However, after prayer and meditation, God revealed to them the name African Divine Church (ADC). This resulted in the formation of a counter alliance led by Chabuga and others.

The missionary church considered this faction as *Dini ya Musambwa* (Kiswahili phrase for a religious cult). *Dini ya Musambwa* was both a neo-traditionalist and nationalist movement. As a neo-traditionalist movement, *Dini ya Musambwa* embraced three gods to whom it aligned the community. They included *Wele Khakaba* (god the provider), *Wele Murumwa* (god the sent, responsible for peacemaking), and *Wele Mukhobe* (god of peace). The three leaders of the movement, the late Elijah Masinde, Joash Walumoli, and Israel Khaoya, used wisdom, intelligence, knowledge and guidance given by *Wele Murumwa* to deliver messages to the people. Thus, people were rooted in the teaching

about dreams and visions as passed on from the deities through departed ancestors of either gender (Simiyu, 1997:3-4). *Dini ya Musambwa* was also involved in nationalistic activism. In the context of political decolonization, its leaders invoked *Wele Mukhobe*, the deity responsible for war and peace. The warriors prayed and sought direction, power, strength, courage, and tactics for removing the white man from Kenya. In addition to this activism, the movement resorted to armed struggle against the colonial powers (Simiyu, 1997:3-4).

The missionaries forced the Chabuga alliance to drop the name Pentecostal to show a complete cessation of their relationship with the defunct group. Interviewee S12 explained that the case was filed with the District Commissioner (DC) of Kakamega, Mr. Hunter, who helped to end the wrangles and facilitated the Chabuga group to be legally recognized as a Bible-preaching church. S02 and S05 agreed with S11 and stated that the final split was after the leaders received a prophecy through prayer that they needed to liberate themselves from a mechanical way of worship to a more *Roho-led* (Spirit-led) the way of worship. The researcher thinks that the root cause of this misunderstanding was the incompatible cultural worship demonstrations between the Kenyan people and the missionaries. All the respondents agreed that most of the traditional Pentecostal practices that characterize the African Divine Church of Kenya came from the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. However, S19 believed that not everything they do resembled the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. In his view, the charismatic expressions witnessed in ADC are influenced by their context.

The first bishop of ADC was Rev. Saul Chabuga Chamwama, who served from 1949 to 1970. After his death, his son Rev. James Chabuga inherited the bishopric office from 1970 to 2005. The third bishop is Rev. John Lilege Saiya, who is also the first archbishop of the African Divine Church of Kenya. He assumed office in 2005 after the death of his father (Bishop James Chabuga). The name African Divine Church was derived from the Gospel of John 15:1-17 in 1950 after a consultative prayer meeting in which the Holy Spirit directed them to the passage and helped them to settle on the name African Divine Church. As the chapter speaks of the true vine and the branches that produce fruits, ADC is likened to the tree that John is speaking about, thus it is called to grow and bear fruits, a similitude to geographical and numerical growth. According to interviewee S11, the church was founded during the colonial period under

the leadership of Saul Chabuga. For respondent S22, since the church is connected to the vine, who is Christ, then anyone who breaks away from the church is considered to have broken away from Christ, then he or she cannot succeed in their work of ministry. S06 observed that all ADC members believe that the church is rooted in the scriptural foundation because the founders were guided by the biblical teachings in laying down the foundation as the Holy Spirit directed them.

S01 observed that as an African Independent Church (AIC), ADC has been in Kenya for the last 70 years and is responsible for the construction of a hundred schools and five colleges. In their struggle for recognition, the ADC was often branded as a church experiencing continuous leadership conflict, but S01 dismissed these allegations as coming from Satan.

Interviewees S04, S12, S18, S19, and S20 all agreed about the origin of the name and vision of the church. They said that God revealed the name and vision to the founders while they were praying and that it is based on John 15:1-17. They stated that ADC is a branch of the Vine and while the letter A symbolizes Africans, the letter D (Divine as the Vine) means that ADC is a branch of a tree that is planted at the river, which cannot wither, but is fruitful in all seasons. This also refers to the missional calling of the church. Regarding Christology, only S18 mentioned Jesus Christ as the true Vine from which ADC is a branch.

From the 25 participants the researcher interviewed, only these seven (S01, 04, 11, 12, 18, 19, 20) were aware of the historical roots of the ADC. The other participants all mentioned that they may have heard something about the historical roots, but they did not know exactly where and when the church was founded. Most of them became members after they visited a church service or a prayer meeting.

b. Practical aspects

The theme of the second division of the questionnaire was more focused on practical aspects and the role of the Trinity or reference to the Trinity in these aspects. This included aspects like how they worship, their understanding of the manifestation of the Holy Spirit, and symbolic meanings of the colours of their flag and uniforms, et cetera.

The liturgy of ADC is charismatic, and the singing and praying are loud and expressive. A common practice is the stamping of feet while praying aloud. S03 and S18 said that these actions are a form of self-sanctification in order to move closer to God and show the manifestation of the Spirit. They claimed that it is a biblical instruction and referred to Ezekiel 6:11. S04, S18, and S25 said that these actions are also evidence of the work of the Holy Spirit because the intensity and volume of the actions increase. The church is also spiritually cleansed through these actions, as they drive demons away. The liturgy is seen as founded on the *Roho* (Spirit). S11 claimed that the foot-stamping implies sanctification and a total turn away from unrighteous deeds or works, thus the believer moves closer to God. A repetition of the phrase, '*Oh samee Yesu! Oh samee Yesu! Riswa!*' (Oh, forgive me Jesus, forgive me, Jesus. Satan and demons go away!) forms part of every prayer. According to S12 and S22, genuine confession demands physical energy (Eccl. 12:1-4), which also includes falling down and crying. S12 elaborated that these practical acts take the believer into a trance where the Holy Spirit moves them into speaking a new language (Acts 2). S16 and S17 also agreed that believers have to stamp their feet and pray loudly because they are *Roho* (Spirit) people. These traditions are passed down to the church from the past generations. S14 argued that these actions assist the believer in repentance and the cleansing of one's heart from the weekly evil acts. S09 and S15 perceived this as 'crushing Satan on the ground'. The practice was likened to what took place on the Day of Pentecost and is seen as a sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit. Only one interviewee (S23) stated that these actions had no special reason and place in connecting with God or the Spirit, as it is without any spiritual implication and instead it is a borrowed tradition.

Apart from foot-stamping and loud prayers, drum-beating is another practice common to the liturgy of ADC. Their understanding of drum-beating is evidence of their singular focus on the Holy Spirit. S02 and S03 said that the beating of drums opens the way for the Holy Spirit to heal the believers. They mentioned that the manifestation of the Holy Spirit depends on the type of songs they sing. Some of their songs help believers to get emotionally active and allow the Spirit to "dance in the worshipper's heart or spirit". The worshipper will fall down in response to the Holy Spirit and begins to speak in tongues. These spiritual songs are known for the repetition of the phrase, '*Roho buula, Roho buula*' (Holy Spirit reveal) together with rhythmic clapping of hands and beating of drums. S18 termed the power that comes down as "the strong power of the Spirit". For

S22, the drums are musical instruments, just like those used by David in the Bible (1 Sam. 18:6; 1 Chr. 16:42). He also referred to the success of the Israelites in conquering Jericho through singing and playing instruments, while they worshipped God. In ADC, drumming establishes an atmosphere for the Holy Spirit to work, encouraging emotional excitement and warmth among the people. In drumming and singing, the Holy Spirit possesses the believers, and miracles of healing follow. S25 argued that the beating of drums helps them to maintain unity in the Spirit. Unpretentious drumming, singing, and praying make the Holy Spirit bring miracles to believers like healing, a blessing on marriages, people getting jobs, and new tongues. Four interviewees, S10, S11, S14, and S15, identified the beating of drums as a source of emotional excitement suitable for the visitation of the Holy Spirit. Moreover, it initiates the transformation of people from the past life to the new life, during the prayer of repentance. According to S16, the ADC uses drums as a tradition they received from the pioneers and observed that drums make the environment conducive for *Roho* because the Spirit functions in a lively atmosphere. Conversely, Satan and demons are driven away through the same practice. Whilst the majority agreed that drumming and singing influenced the manifestation of the Holy Spirit, one interviewee (S23) disagreed and argued that drums do nothing else other than making people emotionally excited in worship, thus they have nothing to do with bringing down the Holy Spirit.

Concerning baptism, all the participants agreed that baptism must be done in the Trinitarian name as commissioned in Matthew 28:18-20. The ADC immerses believers during baptism, on the basis of Jesus' baptism in the Jordan River. When asked who is to be baptised, most of the participants argued that one can only be baptised after physical circumcision. Normally, traditional circumcision of male children is between 12 and 15 years of age. Baptism is seen as more or less the same as conversion and the candidates undergo teaching beforehand to know the meaning of baptism. The act of immersion was likened to burial and emersion to the resurrection of Jesus. Only S22 mentioned the importance of salvation through Christ before baptism. S25 said that the Holy Spirit resides in the believer after baptism to display spiritual gifts, such as prophecy, preaching, singing, etc. Most of the interviewees had a similar perspective on baptism.



Photo showing three important colours of ADC: Red, White and Green

Other aspects involved the symbolic meanings of the colours of their flag and uniforms, and it seems that the participants had a clearer understanding of the reference thereof to salvation and the Trinity. The colours of the flag and the uniforms are white, red and green.

Regarding the flag, S05 explained that green shows farming and agriculture; red refers to the blood of Christ and white refers to the Holy Spirit. He said the flag shows the Trinity as well, because the white colour refers to the Father and the Holy Spirit, and the red represents the Son. The green represents the relationship God has with the land. S06 agreed with S05 in the meaning of red and white, but he associated green with peace. S12 argued that the Holy Spirit revealed the colours to the pioneer leaders when they were praying.

Uniforms: Initially the pioneer leaders decided to keep the uniform only white, however, they felt that the Spirit directed them to add the green and red colours as well to distinguish them from Kenyan Muslims' white uniform. There were different opinions about the meaning of the colours of the uniforms. S12 explained the red as referring to the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanses us from the sins of the world; white refers to walking in the light, and green is the sinful environment full of evil. S13 differed on the meaning of white, which he understood referred to blessings. S18 and S19 maintained a similar view on the green as a state of sinfulness because not all humans are reconciled with God. They explained that the red represents the blood of Christ that was shed on the cross, which washes the sin of the world, and the white means a believer has been washed in the blood and through constant sanctification through liturgical

practices such as the stamping of feet during prayer, he or she can maintain their whiteness. S16 observed that the red colour is first a reminder of the political freedom and independence that Kenya obtained from European colonialism. Secondly, it is the blood of Christ for the remission of sins. The green colour identifies the earth and it shows where ADC came from, as well as showing togetherness. S22 argued that green implies that all humans are still on the earth as sinners, needing to be born again. The red refers to the blood of Christ. When one is converted to Christ, one moves from a worldly green lifestyle to become a Christian by accepting the effect of the blood of Christ. The interviewee further argued that the pain that Christ experienced in shedding the blood consists of all the pain that the redeemed should go through in this life. The white is representative of the peace that one who has been washed by the blood of Christ experiences. S23 argued that the thin white stripes refer to a new-born child who is sinless. Green refers to the earth and environment, which bring humans in contact with sin and evil. The larger white part refers to the complete washing of the sinner by the blood of Christ, which makes them righteous to become the light of the world. All the interviewees agreed that the uniform with its colours is recognized by the Kenyan courts of law, such that they do not remove the head cover when they are in court.

c. Theological

During the third division of the interviews, the researcher asked questions about seven aspects that are characterised as theological. The researcher wanted to understand their views on the Trinity, the mission of ADC, their responsibility towards the community, the place of prophecy as a spiritual gift, the role and place of ancestors, what healing entails, and the spiritual dimension.

Trinity

Questions about the three persons of God raised a variety of perspectives, and there was confusion in the understanding of the Trinity. S02, S03, and S04 agreed that the Trinity works together, for example, believers pray to God the Father, through Jesus, while the Holy Spirit guides them in prayer. S06 and S25 agreed that the Trinity was involved in the creation of the world (Gen. 1:1). They stated that the Trinity relationship is more explicit in the creation of humanity (Gen. 1:26), where God is perceived talking to the other Trinity members – therefore the reference to “us” and “our”. S25 further

explained the Trinity like this: God warns us against evil, Christ came to reconcile us with God through his crucifixion, and the Holy Spirit replaced Jesus as the Helper of the believers. He further argued that the frequent mention of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament is evidence that believers live in this dispensation today. The Holy Spirit is at work in believers and that is why believers pray in *Roho* (Spirit). The confusion about the Trinity is also seen as S05, for example, identified the Holy Spirit as the one who instructed Noah to build the ark and Abraham to move to the unknown land. S06 also attributed the change of Jacob's name to the work of the Holy Spirit. S13 argued that God created Jesus Christ first, who became the Spirit, and only then did they become three persons in one, namely God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. S15 claimed that in ADC God is seen as the Healer, and Jesus is God because He does the work of God, while the work of the Holy Spirit is to awaken people's spirits and emotions to a level of speaking in tongues. For S22, God's work is to manifest Himself to the people, and He cannot do the work of the Son. S23 alluded that God the Father is above all, who carries the prophecy of the Trinity; the Son is the interpreter and executor of God's prophecy, and the Holy Spirit's work is to reveal to Christ what God is saying before he can execute it.

Mission

A majority of the interviewees understood the mission as a place. A common view amongst interviewees regarding mission was that it is a place where the decisions and directives of ADC are made and disseminated. The common expressions used included a place where the church has established the headquarters; a place where the guidance of ADC comes from; a place where the bishop lives; a place where the denomination carries out the day-to-day affairs; a church that is in charge of all other branch churches. Some interviewees argued that mission is a duty that ADC has been called to accomplish. For example, S05 identified mission as an office that sends someone to go and preach somewhere. The one sent becomes a missionary of Christ. S12 observed mission as the proclamation of the gospel of Christ, for people to know Christ and also to receive healing. Moreover, the mission includes other development projects, for example, education and health engagement. This is done through the construction of schools and health centres, including a special programme that supports the less fortunate through the Bishop Chaguba Community Foundation (BCCF)

initiative. S17 conceived mission as the responsibility of taking the gospel to both near and far places. S24 spoke of mission as God's calling to spread the gospel to the whole world. S03 perceived mission as praying for the people of God to get the Holy Spirit. The most divergent opinion came from S16, who argued that mission is where the archbishop and the Holy Spirit stay.

The missional mandate of ADC is rooted in John's illustrative analogy of the productive tree, the true vine, in John 15:1-17. The mission of ADC is to spread the gospel through the art of preaching and teaching through those who have been called and ordained by the church.

ADC's worship, as S04, S06, and S22 say, is a form of evangelism. The worship includes public confession of the people's wrongdoing in the week. Songs, drums, and vigorous dancing follow this as a sign to show the presence of the power of the Holy Spirit. S25 explains this illustration as the manifestation of the Holy Spirit and that this is seen as the ripe time for healing and prophecy. The Holy Spirit moves in the service to fill some to speak in tongues. These things attract the outsiders who become permanent members of the church. The church is actively involved in the proclamation of the gospel both in the church building and in the marketplaces, including the open-air evangelism commonly known as crusades.

Training in theological education has become a tool in the mission of ADC. S01 confirmed that they had so far trained over 1000 people, some of whom are serving as pastors, regional leaders, and evangelists. The latest graduation was approximately a hundred people.



*Archbishop John Lilega Chabuga addressing and commissioning the clergy of 2020
Graduation Class*

The African Divine Church has an outreach ministry to physically challenged children, which S01 said is part of the mission of the African Divine Church. In the photo shown below, the archbishop is on mission. According to S01, Jesus Christ reached out to people's spiritual and physical needs, and that is why the archbishop has brought both the word and food for the children. The parents of these children are members of this church because of what the church is doing to their children. Through this church programme, S01 said that the physically impaired children who had been hidden by their parents now have the opportunity to hear the word, get a formal education and help for other related physical needs. According to S01, the mission in ADC is holistic, dealing with the spiritual and mental health and social wellbeing of a person. He

reiterated that as an African Instituted Church, where ADC is affiliated, they do ministry with an African perspective. S01 was emphatic that giving food as shown in the photo is an indication of a missional practice that is close to the ministry that Jesus did, such that after preaching and teaching people, he gave them food to show complete ministry.

The children being prayed for are in a school for the physically and mentally challenged children, especially those who have poor sight. As far as S01 is concerned, ADC's mission cuts across the whole of humanity in reaching out to the needs of the community. This is another tool for mission in ADC.



ADC Archbishop praying for special needs children as part of holistic mission



ADC's open-air evangelism as part of outreach mission

Open-air evangelism is used as a tool for outreach. The photo above shows an additional means for the ADC mission. Open-air outreach, explained interviewee S19, is under the Department of Evangelism in the ADC denomination. S19, who is also the chief vicar, explained that mission is understood as outreach. According to his view, ADC has placed much value in open-air meetings as a means of reaching out to many people. Through such meetings, S22 explained that they usually experience the working of the Holy Spirit whereby many people are born again, delivered, and healed. S20 observed that in such meetings the leaders participate and their church attire explains to the outsiders who they are. That is why S22 said, "We encourage all the evangelists to wear our church clothes so that people can know who we are." In these meetings, explained interviewee S18, we sing and dance and this attracts people to attend the meeting. Our singing, continued S18, is spiritual, which means we sing songs that will bring down the Holy Spirit to take over the meeting. When this is done, we expect extraordinary things like miracles to accompany the meeting. He further said that African Divine Church adheres to the call of going out to all nations to make disciples for the Lord. The chief vicar S19, who is also in charge of the Evangelism Department, said that through open-air meetings African Divine Church has spread to all parts of Kenya and beyond to Uganda and Tanzania. Plans are underway to reach out to South Sudan.

Community

Talking about the community, most of the interviewees said it is people living together for a common purpose. The prominent phrases used include a united family that prays together, an ecumenical spirit that brings together both ADC and non-ADC members, and people who are trusted and faithfully live together. S16 said that community is a united family that prays together in the Spirit. S22 argued that a community includes those who have believed in Christ, those who have changed from physical to spiritual things.

Prophecy

A common view amongst the interviewees was that prophecy exists in ADC as a gift given by God and it happens when one prays in faith. The prophecy was understood as the Spirit's influence, a spiritual engagement that is beyond the natural mind of a person delivering the prophecy. S2, S3, and S4 agreed that prophecy is still common in ADC and it is the work of the Spirit. If the prophecy is positive, people will continue to pray for its fulfilment; but if it is negative, people will take time in prayer to repent and rebuke the spirit in charge of the foretold predicament. S05 argued that prophecy in ADC is active because there are times when what a prophet revealed turns out to be true in the life of a person. Prophecy comes through talent and the Holy Spirit and it can take place in prayer, worship, and preaching. The magnitude of the prophecy determines whether the prophecy is to be communicated in public or in private. S06 confirmed that prophecy is an activity of the Holy Spirit and argued that true prophecy enlightens the community by transforming people through repentance. S18 alluded that prophecy was strong and reliable in the past when the pioneers committed their lives to God and ministry, compared to nowadays when prophets live loose moral lives and are concerned more with economic gains. The decline in yearning for prophecy was attributed to unfulfilled predictions. S19 and S20 reiterated their decline among the new generation, because of the negative economic attachment to it. For interviewee S09, prophecy is laudable in ADC through respected aged and elderly people to whom God gives his message through the Holy Spirit. Other interviewees tied faith to prophesy, like S13, who argued that both prophet and prophecy come through *Roho* (Spirit). When a person prays in faith, God reveals a message in the form of a vision, which comes like images that repeatedly pass in one's mind in the form of a picture or television screen. That image

becomes vivid in the prophet's mind and the prophet can then speak the revealed message with ease.

The researcher also asked about the frequency of the prophecy and interviewee S12 argued that it takes place anywhere and anytime. In the church, for example, God can reveal things that he needs Christians to do. He alluded that prophecy is not limited by time; so long as one is in prayer, God will deliver a prophetic message. In the prophetic service, at times people fall, and this confirms that one has encountered Christ, like Saul, whose name was changed to Paul after his conversion, when he fell on the Damascus Road. S10 and S11 observed that true prophecy is part of the life of the ADC community. S24 argued that the frequency depends on whether the atmosphere has been established for the Spirit to operate. S23 gave a contrary view that in ADC prophecy ceased and what is left is the gift of evangelism, and if prophecy has to be revisited training is needed, like the way Christ taught his disciples.

Ancestors

Several issues were identified during the interview on the question of ancestors. However, what was common throughout was that ADC does not honour the pioneers as ancestors, though it recognizes their good work, especially in establishing the denomination. They are usually mentioned in the special calendar events of the church. The theme of remembrance recurred throughout the interviews. Two groups emerged, with one side supporting the issue of remembrance and the other side denying it.

Some of the interviewees support the notion of honouring ancestors; for example, S05 argued that ancestors are our forefathers, and therefore the believers should honour them and seek their guidance as it will make their spirits peaceful. He believes that their spirits are alive and conscious of what is happening in the world and with their families. Their spirits can bring some constructive dreams to the living. S06 said that since Christians believe in Christ as their first ancestor, ADC Christians must believe in their ancestors who died in righteousness because they will bring constructive information on behalf of the living. During memorial services, these ancestors are encouraged to continue speaking with the family through dreams. According to S07, the ancestors can bring a dream to the living depending on their relationship with the living before they died. However, we cannot pray to them and ask for any instruction because they can

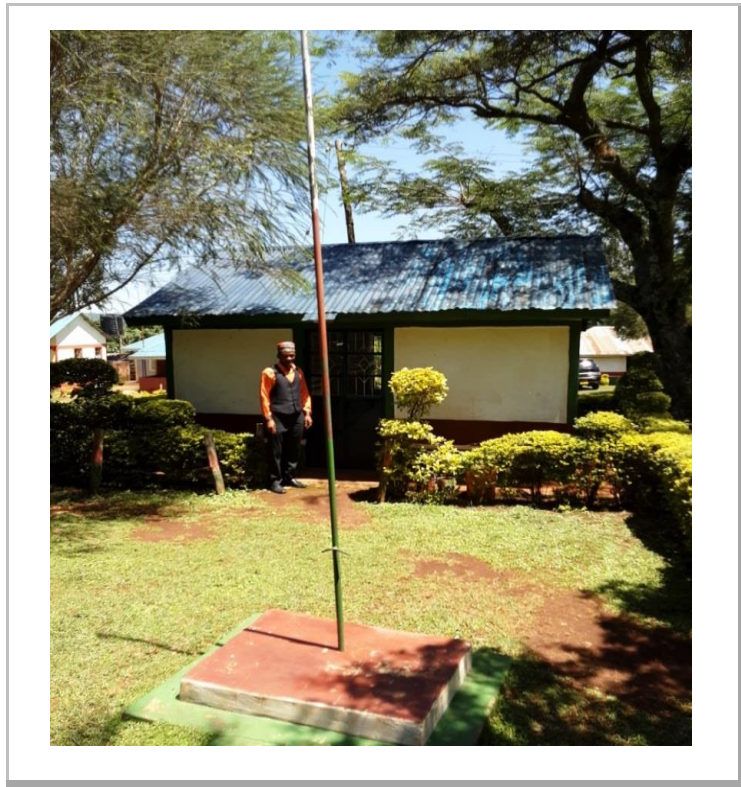
get used to bringing us information that can later turn out to be malevolent. S08 pointed out that when a non-believer who passed on wants to bring a message through prayer, they rebuke them in prayer because non-believers are considered to be demons and have nothing good to do for the living. S10 added that ancestors are remembered by their actions while they were alive, and by naming their children after the ancestors. He calls the ancestors the living dead and believes that they speak to believers through dreams. The ancestors are also honoured through regular memorial services. S12 and S14 argued that the living dead are remembered for their teachings and instruction on how their descendants should live. The ADC pioneers are remembered for their labour of establishing the ADC denomination and they are mentioned in special events. According to S16, the ADC pioneers are honoured for discovering and organizing the Holy Spirit in ADC. S22 observed that their good part of life is remembered, especially if they were born again. The interviewee further claimed that the graves of the righteous shall be remembered (Acts 2:27), that is why the first two archbishops' graves have been secured by building shrines for them as a sign of love, as "we remember Chabuga and the rest for the tribulations they went through in establishing ADC to deliver African churches from spiritual colonialism to spiritual freedom in worship and leadership". S23 argued that ancestors are important because they sometimes visit the living in dreams and visions to bring teachings and blessings. When asked about their position, interviewee S25 reiterated that ancestors should be given priority in matters of spirituality and faith, hence they recommended that they be given special honour.

Apart from this support of ancestors, other participants rejected the idea completely. S2, S3, and S4 dismissed any relationship with the living dead. They agreed that after burial, a memorial service is only done once after 40 days, and so believers cannot pray through dead people. S13 denied any relationship with the ancestors but did mention the possibility of their presence in bringing a dream. In such cases, the elders will seek to interpret it prayerfully to determine the desire of the living dead. For example, if they left unpaid debt, the living can make plans to repay. After that, the elders will pray and disconnect their visitation. When S15 was asked to comment on the place of the ancestors, he argued that any living dead who comes in a dream is to be treated as either a demon or malevolent spirit, thus, they do not need to appear. "That is why after any burial, we usually have a special prayer, where we dramatize the chasing away of

the spirit of the dead never to reappear to the living.” S18 agreed with S15 and said that the dead has finished their race, and their presence is only malicious.

The graveyard of the second bishop of ADC

In referring to the shrine or the graveyard of the second bishop, interviewee S24 said that the church and its leaders decided to build a house to enclose the grave as a way to show respect for the work that the second bishop had done for the African Divine Church of Kenya. He said that the church leadership did this to keep the grave of the bishop safe and clean and to keep both domestic animals and people from making it dirty. Lack of care upon the gravesite would be interpreted as a lack of respect to the departed bishop as well as the legacy he established. All African Divine Churches have been gathering at the late bishop's home for the memorial service for the first five years. The memorial service, said S24, was accompanied by the beautification of the house and the grave itself with flowers and giving of testimonies about the work he did. The legacy left behind by the bishops, said S24, has made ADC always mention their names and the work they did before they can proceed with any special events on the church calendar. S24 explained that the house implies respect for the departed bishop. The grave building, said S24, was intended to make it easy for future generations and any visitor or tourist who would want to see it. If the grave was left open, it would disappear with the erosion that is always experienced. Thorough cleanliness is observed to keep the site neat. S24 confirmed that the five years in which they observed the memorial celebration are now over, thus it does not hold a strong influence on the spirituality of ADC. After five years, the grave is open for anyone to come in and see. There are so many things that are associated with the second bishop, which makes us remember him. For example, his picture appears on ADC's yearly calendars, and the church has established an organization, the Chabuga Foundation, in honour of him. This deals with sponsoring education for less advantaged girls.



The Graveyard of the Second Bishop of ADC

Healing

A common view amongst the interviewees was that healing is prominent in ADC but it depends on the faith of both the person praying and the sick person. However, divergent views also emerged about the person who can pray for healing to occur. While some held that anyone including a child could pray so long as they are connected in the Spirit, others with contrary opinions attributed healing to pastors.

S2, S3, and S4 all agreed that healing is common in ADC but depends on the faith of both the sick and the one praying and that it is the Holy Spirit who heals. S03 shared a personal experience:

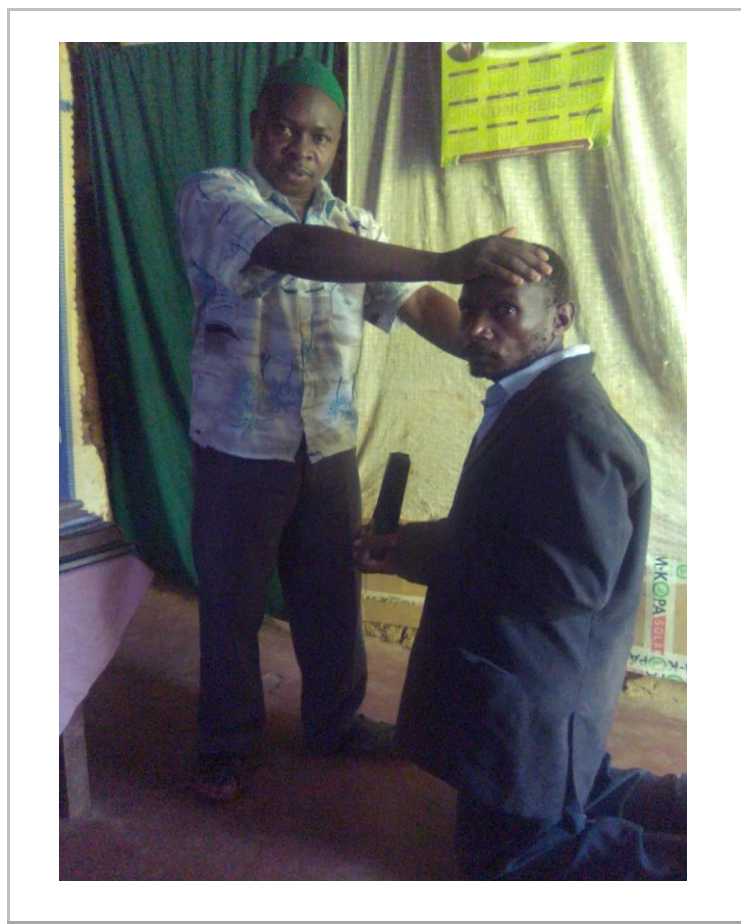
I suffered for a long time. I attended several hospitals with no improvement. I gave up taking conventional medicine. I prayed and one night an angel visited me. He brought a screen with words written in tongues, and the Spirit enabled me to read. On a different day, an angel instructed me to go and pluck the guava leaves but I ignored it. The angel held me and questioned why I was ignoring the word of the Spirit of God who had brought me the medicine. I woke up, repented, and went to pluck the leaves. I told God if this

is the medicine that will heal me, may it be so. After taking, the sickness disappeared and to this day, I have never been seriously sick.

S22 shared his experience in his ministry where he prayed for a woman suffering from infertility and she received healing by getting children. He also narrated how he prayed for a mad man who received healing, which made some people leave their churches to join ADC. S05 said that the Holy Spirit brings healing because we “apply him more.” S06 and S07 emphasized the role of faith in healing. S12 and S13 also agreed on the importance of faith and that the person who prays should depend on God as the Healer.

S14 remarked that a church without healing miracles is not a church at all. The researcher believes that this suggestion threatens the doctrine of ecclesiology by narrowing it to miracles only. S14 attributed healing to the Holy Spirit and emphasized the importance of the sick person falling on the floor during prayer, as proof of deliverance and breaking of chains and ushering him/her into the new life.

The following photo illustrates a person healed from mental illness. It is used with the permission of interviewee S22. In the interview, S22 narrated how the man represented in the photo had suffered for a long time from the illness. The man was brought to him for healing and deliverance at his house. According to interviewee S22, he used the green head cover in praying for the person because green means he is still in the world of sin, at the same time he was still “green” meaning he did not know anything concerning the spiritual matters. Again, the green colour implied that he (S22) had lowered himself to the level of the sick unconverted man. When asked the meaning of the healed man holding the Bible, S22 said that it implied replacing Satan with God in his life. He said, “The word of God has now replaced the dealings of the evil one in his life. There is no need to pray for someone and leave him or her without the word of God. It means the devil still has another chance of coming back. But when Satan sees the Bible he sees the power of God which is the Holy Spirit and he will run away.” S22 said that many people have come to the church where he preaches because of the divine healing gift that he has. According to him, he was emphatic that a church without healing does incomplete ministry. However, he reiterated that because of the money economy, many people, especially the pastors, practice fake healing, but for him, he said it is a gift because he does not call for people after the miraculous healing.



ADC Pastor praying for conversion after divine healing from mental illness

Spirituality

Regarding the questions about their view of the spiritual dimension, the most common view that dominated the interviewees' perspectives was prayer to be filled with the Holy Spirit. This was expressed in various views throughout the interviews. Although the theme of the Trinity emerged prominently in this section, the Holy Spirit appeared more visible compared to God the Father who was minimally mentioned, while God the Son never appeared completely. Talking about this issue, the interviewees were asked about who is a spiritual person, and from their views, the work of the third person of the Trinity emerged.

S2, S3, and S4 described a spiritual person as one to whom God speaks and in turn communicates the same information to the people as God's messenger. S05 and S06 considered such a person would have the ability to perform miracles like healing. When asked to comment on who a spiritual person is, S07 linked it to prophecy, while S12 connected a spiritual person to one who observes the gospel and loves God, is

prayerful, and hates sin. S13 gave a similar view as S12 and described a spiritual person as always thinking of the word of God, one who does not concern him or herself with unrighteousness, except they are concerned with church matters. S13 and S15 linked spirituality to the aspect of receiving visions from God. However, others like S16 perceived a spiritual person as having a calling to preach and pray. A number of the interviewees understood a spiritual person as one who exhibits the fruit of the Spirit. For example, interviewee S18 said the Holy Spirit controls, while S19, S20, S21, and S22 talked of such person manifesting the fruit of the Spirit. Interviewee S23 lauded spiritual persons as miracle workers and exhibitors of the light of the gospel; they also see spiritual images that bring prophecy. The element of the Trinity was noted by S24, who observed that a spiritual person should be born again. Such a person strives by faith and grace to live a life full of repentance and sanctification.

2.3.2 Findings of the observations during the church services

The researcher was also privileged to visit four distinctive congregations each Sunday during March 2020. During these services, he was able to see how much of the information given to him during the interview could be observed in practice.

- In all four congregations, the liturgy was marked by a gradual increase in volume and the urgency in which the pastors prayed and preached. When the researcher asked them about it, they said that it is a sign to confirm that the Holy Spirit had come upon them.
- The repetition of phrases, such as *Oh samehe, Oh samehe* (Oh forgive me, Oh forgive me) was also heard in all four churches. It is explained as the climax of prayer and in preparing the members to be filled with the Spirit. The repetition was accompanied by the rhythmic beating of the drums to create an atmosphere for the Holy Spirit to manifest in miracles like healing and in chasing away the evil spirits and demons that could be wreaking havoc for the believers.
- The rhythmic clapping of hands and the stamping of feet during prayers symbolized the overshadowing of the Spirit upon people for sanctification.
- During the preaching, the pastors moved charismatically everywhere in the church to show that the Holy Spirit had possessed them. Sometimes the Spirit

would interrupt the preaching by bringing to the pastors' mind a spiritual song as an additional element in preparing for the manifestations of the Holy Spirit, for example, pronouncing some prophetic statements.

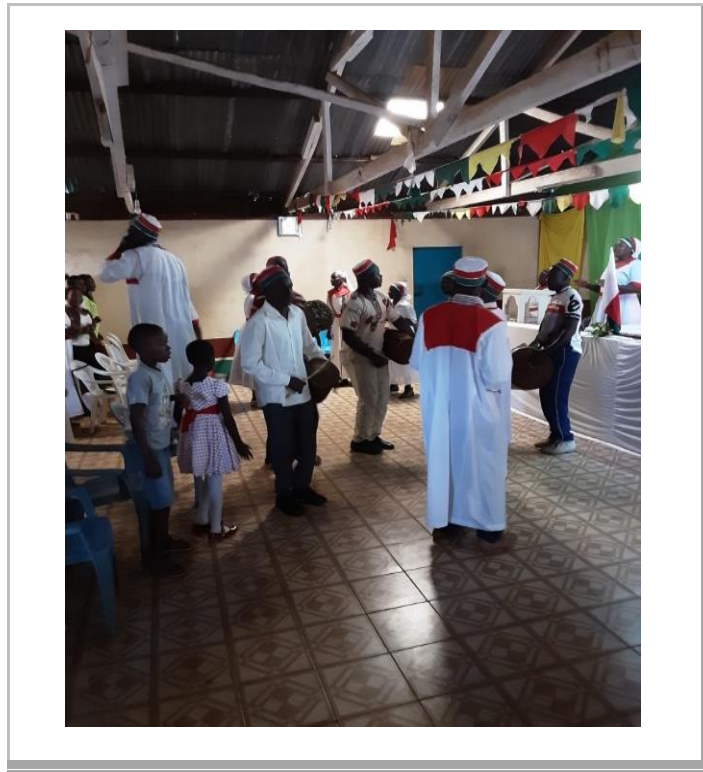


Photo taken at Boyani ADC Headquarters during the Sunday service 2020

This photo was taken during the observation in one of the African Divine Churches during the worship service. What is seen happening in this single church is a replica of all that takes place in all churches during any Sunday or any mass worship. As can be observed, the service involves energetic singing, and movement inside the church by the people led by the pastor. The drums are beaten by professional drummers, who attain the skill through practical experience and apprenticeship. Children are usually part of this service as a way of inducting and orienting them before they become real ADC members. Dramatic charismatic encounters are taken as part of their Pentecostal experience. It is believed that such movements made during the service have a role in preparing the ground for the outpouring and working of the Holy Spirit. The pastor revealed that at times people receive healing in this setup even before the preaching or before the pastor can pray for those needing such healing or any miracle.

2.3.3 Findings of the questionnaires

The last part of the empirical study included a sample of 30 ordinary church members who completed a questionnaire. The findings of the questionnaires will be discussed here. The number of “yes” or “no” answers will first be listed in a table form and then the explanations will be discussed.

Table 2.1

	YES	NO
1. God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are involved in salvation.	30	00
2. Do you think God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are all involved together in healing ministry?	30	00
3. Do you believe in baptism in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit?	30	00
4. To your understanding, is the mission of the church the same as the mission of God?	27	03
5. Do ancestors have a place in prayer and worship?	20	10
6. Is ADC a Roho / Spirit church?	25	05
7. Do you think the African community is related to the community of God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit?	29	01
8. Do you think the colors of the church flag represent the church's mission?	30	00
9. Does the Holy Spirit have a central place in the songs, preaching, and prayer of the church?	30	00

The participants explained their understanding as follows.

God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are involved in salvation

All the participants responded with a “yes” on the question investigating the functions of the Trinity in salvation. This question aimed at examining the theme of the Trinity in ADC theology. Most of the suggestions given were descriptions of Trinitarian attributes related to the creation and not necessarily to salvation. For example, God was

described as the creator rather than the sender. Jesus's prominent role was his propitiation function at the cross. Many understood the functions of the Holy Spirit as being a comforter and a teacher, whereas his salvific role of conviction of the sinner was less prominent. Other perspectives are: first, God is the creator, Jesus is the Saviour and the Holy Spirit is the only way we communicate with God. God created human beings and gave them strength and knowledge to worship, repent, and be saved. Jesus spread the word of God to people and preached about salvation and repentance. The Holy Spirit protects people when they are in danger and reveals to their hearts about salvation and the love of God. Secondly, God has given Christians special gifts and responsibilities, thus expecting Christians to use the opportunities to give him glory. Jesus blessed the little children and forgave sinners. The Holy Spirit was sent by God on earth after the ascension of Jesus to act as our mediator. God uses Jesus and the Holy Spirit to heal and to do ministry and church work. Jesus was controlled by God to minister to the church; for example, he died for our sins. God uses the Holy Spirit to guide and control the church and what people do. Some felt that God's work is to ensure that people worship him, while the Holy Spirit is to connect people to God when they want to speak to him. Jesus' work was to preach as God assisted him, and he continues to encourage people to trust in God. Others felt that God is the creator and he empowers Jesus. Jesus is the Son of God, and he receives the Holy Spirit from the Father for the salvation of his people.

The involvement of God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit in healing

In the question concerning the role of the Trinity in healing ministry, a variety of responses were noted, even though all responded with a "yes" answer. The theme of the Trinity was detected in all the responses, because all three persons were mentioned, except that the theology contained in the responses demonstrates a continued need for reconstruction through teaching. Moreover, the idea of healing is key in ADC ministry as indicated in the responses.

It was argued that the Trinity works as a team to facilitate healing, and for this reason, the Father cannot work without the Son, the Son cannot work without the Spirit, and this argument was supported by Genesis 1:26. In another response, it was argued that God sent Jesus for two reasons; first to preach so that people may believe in his Son, secondly to heal people. One argued that since God is the Supreme Being, healing

comes when someone knows Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Therefore, all are involved in healing because they heal by the Holy Spirit and they work together in the same space. In one of the findings, it was expressed that God instructs the rest of the persons in procuring healing. For example, "God uses Jesus and the Holy Spirit to heal his people and even God sent Jesus to purify the hearts of God's people and to forgive their sin." In the findings, two divergent and conflicting views emerged. First, healing happens because all three persons are involved in the same role, which is Trinity. Secondly, the Trinity is involved in healing because when our bodies, souls, and spirits are weak and unwell, God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit are involved.

These responses show the zeal that ADC has for the doctrine of the Trinity, but the theological machinery is lacking and needs urgent reconstruction.

Baptism in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit

Everybody agreed that baptism needs to be in the name of the Triune God. However, various opinions arose from the descriptions, which confuse baptism with conversion. While some merged baptism with conversion, others made a distinction.

Several expressions that tended to merge baptism with conversion unfolded as follows. First, unless one is baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, one cannot enter the kingdom of God. Secondly, through baptism, one is sanctified and cleansed from their sins and this symbolizes a state of holiness as a Christian, and it helps them to perform miracles. Thirdly, one argued that Jesus was baptized in the water and after his baptism, he said that whoever comes after him should be baptized in the Holy Spirit. Fourthly, through baptism one gains new life in Christ.

In the biblical analysis of baptism, belief precedes external religious practices. If these views from the findings are maintained, then there is a possibility that the repentant sinner at the cross did not enter the kingdom, which then invalidates Jesus' statement of assurance to him.

Those who distinguished baptism from conversion maintained their correlation. The first opinion is that when one is just about to be baptized, they must believe in the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit since Jesus said whoever needs to be called his son must be

baptized. The second view was that whoever accepts the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit would be baptized.

In the findings, three discrete reasons emerged from this subject. First, that we are baptized because Jesus washed the sins of all the people in the world, hence saving all. This is a view that seems to support universalistic theology, which is unbiblical. Secondly, baptism is a request for a good relationship with God so a Christian should be baptized not just when they are old enough to learn about God and become a disciple of Jesus. This is a polite suggestion, but it does not meet the salvific threshold because age is never a factor in the theology of salvation. Thirdly, that baptism in the name of the Godhead is practicable because God is the Father, Jesus is the Son and the Holy Spirit is the living Spirit.

Is the mission of the church the same as the mission of God?

On whether the mission of the church is the same as that of God, 90% answered “yes” but 10% said “no”. In the findings, the respondents narrowed mission to salvation, miracles, worship, and growth in faith but the question of the kingdom did not surface. The comments below show some of the “yes” responses.

- The mission of God was to heal and forgive sinners and that of the church is to pray for the sick and tell the people to repent of their sins, before the rapture.
- The church’s mission is to accomplish God’s mission, thus the church’s mission is the same as the mission of God.
- God promotes his mission through the word, prophets, humans, angels, dreams, and visions. Likewise, the church is a vessel of God to pass his message to the whole world.
- Because our main purpose as the followers of Jesus is to accomplish the will of God, so the mission of the church is the same as God’s.
- The mission of the church is to unite people from different places as God did.
- The mission of the church is to strengthen our faith in God. The mission of God is to give us the power to grow in his word and faith.

- People go to church to worship and pray to God and seek his guidance to salvation. It helps people to perform miracles and read the Bible.
- Because God used Jesus and the prophet Abraham in mission to different parts, the church now sends pastors to preach in different places.
- It is the same because the mission of the church is based on salvation, which is also the mission of God.
- The church works in God's mission as he guides them in prayer.
- God created us to worship him and the mission of the church is to bring people to worship God, so it is the same.
- Because God uses the churches to spread the gospel and bring salvation, likewise the church preaches about the gospel of God and salvation.

The views of those who said “no” were summarized as follows. God's plans are not the same as human plans because human beings lead the church humanly while God the Spirit conducts the mission of God. One is finite and the other is infinite. The second argument was that among human beings some do the mission of God as led by the Godhead while others engage in it for self-ambition. The “no” views see the mission in terms of what is happening in the life of the church and individuals, thus, they regard mission as a list of programmes that need to be accomplished. This deviates from perceiving the grace of God at work in calling sinful humanity into the new covenant of Christ, inviting them to participate in the life and mission of God.

Do ancestors have a place in prayer and worship?

The question of the place and role of ancestors during prayer and worship was answered by two-thirds “yes”, while the rest answered “no”. This question aimed to establish the position held about Christ without having him merged with the traditional ancestors. From the findings, the “yes” answers seem to have been influenced by three perspectives. Some understood ancestors as the biblical patriarchs of faith; others based their conclusion on Christ as the Christians' ancestor, while the others arrived at the decision through the African traditional ancestors. The “no” respondents approached the question from the perspective of the African traditional concept of ancestors.

The responses that referred to the biblical patriarchy, like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, argued that they believe in ancestors because they were very close to God and that God used them to bring information to people, and because God answers their prayer through them, therefore they are included in worship. "God answers our prayers when we chant the patriarchs' names in prayer and worship." From the perspective of Jesus as the Christians' ancestor, some felt that because Jesus is the chief ancestor of the Christian faith, worship and prayer through him form the basis for including ancestors. Emerging from the African traditional concept of ancestor worship, several issues were identified. One respondent argued that ancestors are key because we make our supplications through them. Another view was that ancestral visitations through dreams and visions are vital in worship because they bring benevolent information to people. Their appearances may also come in the form of human beings, animals, and birds, and for this reason, their shrines or graves are held in high regard. There was a feeling by some that the living repent on behalf of the dead to avoid their sins from affecting them, while others perceived them as mediators of their prayers to God. Those who answered "no" to the question, argued that as a Christian one must worship and pray to God only, as it is stated in the Ten Commandments to worship no other god. The other comment was that once a person dies, those living have no relationship with them. From these findings it can be seen that Christology is sandwiched between the patriarchs and the African traditional ancestry, thus threatening the place of Christ in the Trinity.

Is ADC a Roho/Spirit Church?

83.3% answered "yes" and 16.7% "no" to this question. While some felt that ADC is a *Roho* church, because they believe in the unseen God and they witness signs and wonders like healing in the services, others felt that the Holy Spirit usually comes upon them as a Spirit church and they speak in tongues, because Jesus left them the Spirit who directs all their operations. Another view in respect to the question was that they like communicating with the Spirit so that the Spirit can inform them of God's message so that they can communicate to the congregation in the form of prophecy. An additional view to ADC as a *Roho* church was that they worship God in loud songs, prayers, and beating of drums to create the atmosphere to allow the Spirit to descend in the service. Those that responded with a "no" did not express concrete reasons, but it seems as if their explanations are more of a "yes" answer than "no". For example, some of the

comments expressed that ADC is not a *Roho* church, instead, it is a church of God that preaches about the word of God. Another view was that ADC is a spiritual church through their preaching because they preach about the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. While this seemed to capture the theme of the Trinity, the economic functions of the two persons, i.e. the Father and the Son, did not come out as conspicuously as the role that the Spirit plays.

Is the African community related to the community of God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit?

96.7% answered “yes”, and 3.3% “no”. This question aimed at exploring the theme of the Trinity, particularly to underscore the function of Christ. From the responses, a variety of perspectives was identified from the “yes” position. For example, they relate because the Luhya community researched on believe in the Word of the Trinity. Secondly, in this community, the concept of the hierarchy of beings, which involves the categorization of traditional deities, symbolizes that of the Trinity because the beings collaborate in communion. Others felt that the relationship is identified in the African belief in the supernatural power that is controlled by God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Another perspective in support of the view was that the African concept of divinities, which they felt controlled the communication between the spirit world and the physical world, formed the link between the ancestors and the living, a connotation that is similar to the way the Trinity communes with the physical world. ADC partly embraces the African concept of divinities. The older generation is rooted in the belief that God speaks to people through the senior living dead as the custodians of the cultural and spiritual traditions. The younger generation, however, seems more influenced by their exposure to education and postmodernism, to reject this view and perceive spiritual issues rationally. The “no” position faulted the African concept of divinities, which includes trees, stones, and animals as gods, a belief which relegates the sovereignty of the community of the Godhead.

From the findings, the common trend in the perspectives given is that the African traditional philosophy still determines the understanding of the community. If so, syncretistic elements may be blended into the African understanding of the Trinity. Usually, Africans have no problem with understanding the role of God and the Spirit. What is problematic is the existence of African traditional mediators in relation to the concept of Christ as mediator. The African position of the traditional mediators is a

positive attempt to exploring the Trinity. However, the challenge comes in the transition from African divinities to the biblical Trinity.

Do the colours of the church flag represent the church's mission?

All the participants agreed that the colours are representative of the theme of the Trinity, and the function of Christ in particular, in the mission of ADC. Out of the three colours, only the red one maintained any consistency in the meaning, while the other two kept fluctuating in what they symbolized. There was a common view that the colours preserved the unity of the ADC believers, which is an ecclesial and missional element. Some of the descriptions are as follows. For the red colour, while a minority mentioned that it represented the blood of people, most agreed that it symbolized the blood of Christ shed for the remission of the sins of the world. Alternative views emerged for the meaning of the green colour. First, some argued that green represents those not yet born again, while for others it symbolizes the earth and the vegetation that God gave to humanity, and thirdly, some observed this as a symbol of God's glory. For the white colour, some connected it with salvation, the peace of those converted to Christ and the peace of the whole world, the peace given by the Holy Spirit, purification, and the faith of those who are born again. Others interpreted it as a symbol of the blamelessness of Christ. However, two divergent and conflicting perspectives emerged, with the introduction of the black colour, which symbolized Africans; conversely, the same colour was assumed to represent the sinners. This is puzzling because ADC does not have the black colour on its flag.

Does the Holy Spirit have a central place in the songs and prayers of the church?

All the respondents agreed that the Holy Spirit has a central place in their songs and prayers in the ADC. It emerged from the findings that the centrality of the Holy Spirit in songs and prayers was based on his functions. From the findings, several issues were identified. First, the centrality of the Holy Spirit in the songs and prayers was located in healing miracles, and in the Spirit's revelation of the divine will to the church. Secondly, his centrality spiritualizes the songs and prayers that strengthen the faith of believers. Thirdly, the Holy Spirit completes the communication between God and members through the songs sung and the preaching. Some felt that the Holy Spirit mediates believers to Christ through songs and prayers, who afterward present those requests to

God, while others argued that he is central because he is the last person of the Trinity and thus he is easily accessed compared to the rest, hence he is preferred most of the time. Fourthly, his centrality is witnessed when he possesses the believers by teaching them how to pray in tongues as a sign of his presence in the ongoing service.

2.3.4 Comparison of findings of the three parts of the empirical study

While an empirical study is usually known for a smaller number of participants, the researcher wanted to get a more reliable view of the theme. The study was conducted in three parts. First was the interviews with the leaders, secondly the observations by the researcher himself, and lastly was the completion of the questionnaire by church members. Through the three parts, the researcher was able to get a broader understanding of the theme from different perspectives. The findings will now be evaluated by comparing the similarities, differences, and some misunderstandings.

All the participants agree with the liturgy followed in the ADC. They all mentioned the loud prayers, clapping of hands, and the stamping of feet during the prayer and worship. Drum beating during the worship and the singing of *Roho* (Spirit) songs are key in accelerating the descent of the Holy Spirit. The visitation of the Holy Spirit upon people is manifested in tongues-speaking, prophecy, and miracles of healing. The concept of ancestors received much attention in the interviews compared to the questionnaire approach, and the misunderstanding is clear.

The concept of the colours of the flag, which also appear on the turbans and the women's headscarves, expressed the ADC mission but elicited some differences. The symbol of the red colour was maintained as the blood of Jesus that redeemed humanity, while in the questionnaires, some respondents associated it with the blood on people. The white and green colours maintained their symbolic meanings, except in the questionnaire where the respondents gave varied meanings. One participant added a fourth colour, black, which was associated with the African people and sinners. The colour black does not appear in the flag or the uniform.

The aspect of baptism resulted in a variety of responses. While the majority merged it with salvation, the minority described a distinction between salvation and baptism. It is evident that some of the participants wrongly replaced salvation with baptism. Such a perspective poses a threat to Christology, which articulates the role of Christ in the

missio Dei. While the entire *missio Dei* begins at creation through the Garden of Eden and ends in the new city of Jerusalem, through the old and the new covenants of grace, the findings are void of these. The mission in which the Trinity is involved is localized in the church programmes. In letting the mission of God remain as preaching and miracles, the Christological mission is reduced to preaching, which limits Christ's role to owning and sending the church on mission, thus deemphasizing his role.

From the findings, a few misunderstandings during the interviews and questionnaires are also clear. First, there was a difference concerning the additional black colour on the flag, which was said to symbolize African people and sinful humanity. The black colour was nowhere in the thematic inquiry and therefore it was a misunderstanding. The second was the question of ancestors' involvement in prayer and worship, where some of the interviewees and respondents misunderstood it to mean the biblical patriarchs. Thirdly, there was a misunderstanding in the investigation of whether ADC is a *Roho*/Spirit church. While some respondents argued that it was not a *Roho* church, the reasons they gave to back their argument were indeed a confirmation that ADC is a *Roho* church. The mention of preaching, dependence on the Holy Spirit, and miraculous experiences are in themselves characteristics of a *Roho* church as was indicated by the majority who agreed that ADC is a *Roho* church.

2.4 Suppositions of findings

From the discussion of the findings, the following considerations seem of importance for the guidelines that will be formulated in Chapter Four.

First, there is the need to establish an urgent biblical, missional hermeneutic where the Bible is read with an understanding of how the flow of the *missio Dei* unfolds as one story from the Old Testament through the New Testament. This will assist in locating the equal involvement of the Trinity in mission.

Secondly, for ADC to establish a coherent Trinitarian theology of mission, there is a need to maintain a cohesive meaning and symbolism of the colours of the flag, turban, and headscarves. As established in the findings, the three colours are iconic in understanding the salvific involvement of the Triune God in mission. The ADC colours are symbolically rich and suitable for upgrading their understanding of the role of Christ in the Trinity's functions.

Thirdly, an understanding of a Trinitarian community is necessary. Throughout the findings, less understanding of this was noted in the perspectives that were given by both the interviewees and the respondents to questionnaires.

The fourth shift to be revisited is the ecclesial mission. From the views expressed by both the interviewees and the respondents, the concept of the church maintained a localized dimension. Once it is rescued from the localization to a universal dimension, without embracing universalism, the Trinitarian mission theology of ADC will be balanced. The shift from a centripetal missional ecclesiology towards a centrifugal one is a matter of urgency in ADC theology.

The fifth consideration is that, although the ancestral concept is shifting towards cessation, there is still a need to form a concrete theology of Christ that will dilute adherence to the African traditional hierarchy of beings, which hinders the development of Christology. From the findings, the lack of correspondence between the African traditional ancestry and the work of Christ calls for a theological deconstruction in order to reconstruct a balanced Trinitarian mission for the ADC.

2.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, an empirical study was used to collect the data. The data was analysed and the themes were developed from the findings of the interviews and questionnaires and were written in a narrative style. From the findings, the researcher made a comparison of the data gathered from the three parts of the empirical study (interviews, questionnaires, and observations). The comparison of the findings was achieved through tracing the similarities, the differences, and some misunderstandings as derived from the data. The researcher identified five hypotheses that will form the guidelines for Chapter Four. The OAIC's basic faith that acknowledges the economic function of the Trinity (Addendum 3, Art. 8.1) and the eligibility for membership (Addendum 3, Art. 8.3) is beneficial in the reconstruction of ADC's Trinitarian mission according to the suppositions. Since OAIC acknowledges Jesus as Lord and Saviour, and the Holy Trinity as declared by the Apostles' Creed, it opens up the use of the ecumenical creeds in constructing the ADC's Trinitarian mission. However, OAIC only mentions the Apostles' Creed and not the others, so this study proposes the inclusion of the Nicene and the Athanasian Creeds.

CHAPTER 3:

A HISTORICAL VIEW OF THE THEOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT OF TRINITARIAN ECCLESIOLOGY AND THE MISSIONAL COMMUNITY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE ROLE OF JESUS CHRIST

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This review chapter uses the theology of the ecumenical creeds as the framework to suggest theological principles that can be used by ADC to reconstruct its Trinitarian and missional theology. The approach is to make prominent the theology found in the creeds as the basis for evaluating the practical theology of ADC. This approach takes cognizance of the fact that there are other theological frameworks, but chooses the ecumenical creeds as a primary guideline for this theological reconstruction. This means the ecumenical creeds are not necessarily a norm, but are used as a critical methodology in ADC's theological process. This chapter draws from the empirical study and analysis of Chapter Two and the five central points that emerged, which are essential in answering the question of what theological principles can be articulated about Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community that can assist the African Divine Church of Kenya regarding the place of Christ in Trinitarian mission. The findings of the empirical study and analysis led to the identification of five suppositions that seemed to be of importance for the creation of the guidelines for Chapter Four. These suppositions are critically developed through the ecumenical creeds, from which theological principles are drawn. These principles can function as theological pillars for ADC's theological reconstruction.

The first supposition pointed to the need for establishing a missional hermeneutic of the Bible for locating a united involvement of the Trinity in mission. The second supposition suggested a need to establish a concept of Trinitarian mission to harmonize the meaning of the three colours of ADC. The third supposition pointed to the need to establish a theology of Trinitarian community that will enable an understanding of Trinitarian perichoresis in the theology of the ADC. The fourth supposition hinted at the need to establish an ecclesial mission in order to establish a Trinitarian basis for the mission of the church in ADC. Since the third and the fourth suppositions are closely related, they will be combined into one—that is, the relationship between the Trinitarian

community and the missional community. The fifth supposition was to form a concrete theology of Christ. This pointed towards the need for a more highly articulated Christology to address the underlying interaction between the traditional African hierarchy of beings and the lived experiences of the people. It is against these suppositions that the study seeks to evaluate the literature towards answering the study's central question. The order of the propositions did not suggest any hierarchical preference.

The four major periods under review are the early church period (100-476 AD), the medieval period (476-1453 AD), the Reformation (1500-1750 AD), and the modern period (from the eighteenth century). The review of the literature uses the ecumenical creeds to establish a framework for the evaluation of the theological basis for the place of Christ in ADC Trinitarian mission. The delimitation of the review to the three ecumenical creeds rests on the argument that delimitation is usually concerned with the study's theoretical background, the objectives, and the research questions, which form the boundaries of the study's aims and objectives (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018:157). Since the theoretical background, aim, and objectives are succinctly theological and historical, the three creeds, which are accepted by most of the Protestant churches, are used as standards against which to address the primary research question.

Calvin (1845:625) in *Institutes*, Book IV, 9.8-9 discusses the orthodox councils in detail but holds the scripture as the supreme authority. According to Calvin (1845:623-624), the councils of Nicaea, Constantinople, the First Ephesus, and Chalcedon are sacred because they deal with the doctrine of faith. He accepts them because of the early fathers' spiritual prudence. What Calvin is arguing is that the intention of the early fathers was pure because it aimed at maintaining an honest interpretation of the scripture, which by so doing, preserved the doctrine of the persons of the Trinity. For Calvin, the scripture is the basis for determining orthodoxy. Giles (2017:4) argues that the creeds are reliable standards of the doctrine because they are based on the scriptures. According to him, the creeds reflect the teachings of the Bible.

This review is limited to three ecumenical creeds, namely the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed, although other creeds will be mentioned so far as they complement these three creeds. There are two reasons for this delimitation. First, these creeds define the core orthodox beliefs of the Christian Church. Secondly,

the majority of theological traditions including the Roman Catholic, the Greek Orthodox, and Protestant churches subscribe to them. In each period under review, the role of the ecumenical creeds will be examined using the framework of the suppositions drawn from the empirical research. This includes, in each historical era, an examination of the development of Christology in the ecumenical creeds, their development of Trinitarian theology, the relationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community, and the evidence for a missional hermeneutic of the Bible. In the modern period, the review will end with a discussion of the place of the ecumenical creeds in Pentecostalism and African Christian theology.

3.2 The Early Church Period AD 100-AD 476

The Apostles' Creed

"I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell. the third day he rose again from the dead. he ascended into heaven and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the holy spirit. I believe in a holy catholic church, the communion of saints. The forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting".

(Addendum 2, A1)

This review begins with the Apostles' Creed because it is the first document created to reflect the faith of the apostles. Bayes (2010:1), argues that the Apostles Creed was not written by the apostles but was derived from the statement of faith that was in use in the Church of Rome. However, the present format was arrived at in the sixth century. Rausch (1987:xiii) argues that the title Apostles' Creed first appeared in the letter from the synod of Milan AD 390 to Pope Siricus, and it was embraced as the rule of faith or the standard of belief. Rausch (1987:xii) further notes that the creed had an interrogatory format of three questions which enabled the candidates to profess the God of the Trinity: "Do you believe in God the Father Almighty? Do you believe in Jesus Christ the Son of God...born by the Holy Spirit from the Virgin Mary...? Do you believe

in the Holy Spirit, in the holy catholic church, and the resurrection of the body?” In his view, the Trinity is the heart of both the Christian faith and the Apostles’ Creed (Rausch, 1987:xiv). Holcomb (2014:25) argues that the Apostles’ Creed has preserved the rule of faith as it was transmitted from the apostles. Matthew 16:16 is the response that Peter gave to Christ’s question, “Who do people say the Son of man is?” and “Who do you say I am?” According to Schaff (1877:36-37), this is a key Christological statement and a baptismal formula that undergirds the Apostles’ Creed and from which the Trinitarian order is derived.

The use of the Apostles’ Creed in history is important in explaining its relevance to the church. Firstly, its application by the Ante-Nicene fathers confirms that it was rooted in the scripture because they did not accept anything less than scriptural authority. Secondly, it was still relevant in the fourth century when the Roman formula gained acceptance in the West with the addition of several clauses, for example, “descended into Hades” (which was taken from the Creed of Aquileja), the predicate “catholic” (borrowed from the Oriental Creeds), the “communion of saints” (derived from Gallican sources) and the “life everlasting” (from the symbols of the churches of Ravenna and Antioch, Schaff, 1877:38-40). Barclay (1998:3) argues that the Apostles’ Creed is an expansion of Matthew 28:19, showing coherence with the argument that the Apostles’ Creed is rooted in the scripture. Since the above confirms a historical commitment of the Apostles’ Creed to the scripture, the Apostles’ Creed is significant for ADC today because it remains the standard for orthodox faith statements about the place of Christ in the Trinity.

3.2.1 A biblical missional hermeneutic

In this period, the missional hermeneutic that the three creeds display is rooted in the unity and divinity of the persons of the Godhead. Any biblical interpretation and theological development should be anchored on the Trinitarian consubstantiality, coeternity, coequality, and interpenetration of the three persons as one God. The need to maintain the Trinitarian indivisibility, inseparability, and functional distinction is key in developing an orthodox doctrine of the Trinity.

O’Keefe & Reno (2005:11) argue that literalism functioned as the basis for interpreting the Bible in the patristic period. In the view of Rogers & McKim (1999:3-4), the early

Christians' task was "to demonstrate that historical and literal types and figures used in the Old Testament pointed to the fulfilment in Jesus Christ as the Messiah." The *Epistle of Barnabas* depicts a good example of a typological interpretation of the scripture. In Chapters VII-VIII the analogy of fasting, the goat sent away, and the red heifer (Justin, 1885:380-382) are Christological typologies pointing to the missional salvific theme necessitated through the blood of the covenant. If this is assumed as a true typology to work with, then interpretative typology assists in reading the two testaments of the Bible as a single missional narrative. Rogers & McKim (1999:9) argue that typology stressed both the historical interrelationship of the past event as a promise and a later event as a fulfilment.

The other concept common in the patristic period is accommodation. This involved reading the Bible with the understanding that God revealed himself through what people could identify. Incarnation is key in understanding the notion that God "accommodated himself to humans' limited and sinful capacities" (Rogers & McKim, 1999:9-10).

Origen (1936:2-3) in *On first principles*, Book I, section 4, presents doctrines that in themselves were informed by his understanding of the Bible. Those doctrines preserve the unity of the biblical narrative and point to a missional task as well. First, he maintains the pre-existence of one God, the creator, the sender of Jesus Christ to call Israel whose unbelief opened a way to call in the Gentiles. This God, who gave the law to the prophets in the Old Testament, is the Father of Jesus Christ and the God of the apostles in the New Testament. Secondly, he preserves the notions of Christ's pre-existence and incarnation, in which he did not lose his equality with God. Thirdly, the Holy Spirit is "united in honour and dignity with the Father and the Son". Rogers & McKim (1999:12) argue that Origen embraced allegorical interpretation such that for him the scripture was the message of God's salvation in Jesus Christ as well as a guide to Christian living.

This understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity, in the light of their perichoresis and economic functions, provides a missional hermeneutic that sees the biblical storyline as a single story encompassing the missional salvific plan of God. Thus, the Trinitarian thread, kept in the reading and interpretation of the narrative, provides for the equality of the three persons of the Trinity with distinctive yet complimentary *oikonomia* in accomplishing the Trinitarian mission in the world.

3.2.2 Trinitarian theology in the ecumenical creeds

In the Apostles' Creed

The Apostles' Creed was used as a baptismal affirmation of the faith of the church in Rome. It was not to be recited but it had a form of question-and-answer response to the baptismal candidates (Pannenberg, 1972:1). Schaff (1877:35-37) states that the Apostles' Creed is Trinitarian, having the person of God the Father as the Maker of heaven and earth, the person of Christ identified as the Father's only Son, our Lord and Saviour, and the person of the Holy Spirit. In the second article, the stress is put on the "supernatural birth, death, and the resurrection of Christ"—the themes which underpin the development of the hypostatic nature of the person of Christ, which is key in revealing the divinity of the Holy Spirit through his functions.

Below is a comparative table of the Ante-Nicene rule of faith as related to the Apostles' Creed. This comparison is used to ascertain the development of the Trinitarian theology in the Apostles' Creed.

Table 3.1

The Apostles' Creed (Rome) About A.D. 340 Later additions are in italics.	Irenæus (Gaul) A.D. 170	Tertullian (North Africa) A.D. 200	Cyprian (Carthage) A.D. 250	Novatian (Rome) A.D. 250	Origen (Alexandria) A.D. 230
I believe	We believe	We believe	I believe	We believe	I believe in
1. in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth	1. in one God the Father Almighty, who made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is;	1. ... in one God, the Creator of the world, who produced all out of nothing	1. in God the Father;	1. in God the Father and Almighty Lord;	1. One God, who created and framed everything Who in the last days sent
2. and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord	2. And in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God [our Lord];	2. And in the Word, his Son, Jesus Christ;	2. in his Son Christ;	2. in the Son of God, Christ Jesus our Lord God;	2. Our Lord Jesus Christ ... born of the Father before all creation ...
3. who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary	3. Who became flesh [of Virgin] for our salvation	3. Who through the Spirit and the power of God the Father descended into the Virgin Mary and was made flesh in			3. born of the Virgin and the Holy Ghost... made incarnate while remaining God ...

		her womb, and born of her			
8. And I believe in the Holy Ghost;	8. And in the Holy Ghost...	8. And in the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete, the Sanctifier, sent by Christ from the Father	8. in the Holy Ghost;	8. in the Holy Ghost (promised of old to the church, and granted in the appointed and fitting time	8. the Holy Ghost, ... united in honor and dignity with the Father and the Son

Adapted from Schaff (1877) Creeds of Christendom, with historical and critical notes vol. II

In the developments as tabulated, the Ante-Nicene fathers affirm that the Apostles' Creed conveys Trinitarian theology as follows. First, the Father of the Trinity is One. Irenaeus describes him as the maker of heaven and earth, for Tertullian the Father is the creator and producer of all *ex nihilo*, and Origen speaks of him as the creator and framer. However, Cyprian and Novatian only mention the name, not the function. Secondly, concerning the person of Christ, Irenaeus acknowledges that Christ is One and he is the Son of God. Tertullian on the other hand presents Christ through the Logos incarnation. Cyprian is very brief and only states that Christ is the Son of God. Novatian adds to the Son the title of "our Lord God", which suggests the *homoousion* concept. In Origen's development, Jesus is "our Lord": he is uncreated and he is the Father's emanation. Thirdly, while the rest, i.e., Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Origen, point to the incarnation of Christ through the conception by the enablement of the Holy Spirit, which makes Christ attain his humanity, Cyprian and Novatian do not deal with the concept of incarnation. Fourthly, the person of the Spirit is well developed as follows. Irenaeus only mentions the Holy Spirit, without giving detail. Tertullian brings forth the functions of the Spirit, also showing his equality with both the Father and the Son, because he calls the Holy Spirit the Paraclete, the sanctifier sent by Christ from the Father, which reveals the sameness in the nature of the three persons. Origen seems to fall back to Tertullian's view because he maintains the divinity of the Holy Spirit as being equal to the Father and the Son; he is "united in honour and dignity with the Father and the Son".

In the second century, the baptismal questions were developed around the Trinity. Pannenberg (1972:1) lists these as: “Do you believe in God the Father Almighty? Do you believe in Jesus the Saviour? Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, holy church, and the forgiveness of sin?” The three articles of the creed show connectivity among the persons, and Barth (1958:53) attempts to show this linkage. He says the first speaks of God the Father of Jesus Christ, the very God above the man. The third article deals with God the Holy Spirit, where man is within man. The second speaks of God himself as man, thus becomes central and it determines or validates the interpretation of the first and the third articles because it is the hinge of the God-man relationship expressed also in the first and the third. On this connectivity, Calvin in *Calvin’s Institutes* Book 3, chapter 1, section 1 indicates a relationship within the persons. He observes that the blessings of God are bestowed on Christ, and through the Spirit, they reach to us. Calvin’s witnesses in heaven (the Father, the Word, and the Spirit) and on earth (water, blood, and Spirit) imply the Trinity (Calvin, 1845:278-279). The discussion reveals both the ontological Trinity and the economic Trinity, where equality begins from the ontological coequality and flows towards the world through the economic functions, thus the economic Trinity.

Symbols used in the ancient period to illustrate the Apostles’ Creed show Trinitarian theology. Jensen (2000:749) argues that in the period AD 180-240 Christ was represented as the Good Shepherd. Jensen (2000:748) further argues that the Good Shepherd is a metaphorical type for both Christ and God. Good Shepherd reveals the human nature of Christ, as well as an anticipation of covenant blood, all of which denote the place of Christ in the Trinity. Other symbols that signified Christ were grapevines or dolphins. Close to the Good Shepherd is the symbol of the Lamb of God, and the Lion representing the Messianic title of Christ (Steffler, 2002:12, 15). Steffler (2002:10) argues that by the end of the second century a dolphin was used as a symbol of Christ, which connoted a rescuer of the shipwreck and a guider of the ship. Steffler (2002:7, 8) uses the symbols of the wheel taken from Ezekiel 1:1-28, and Daniel 7:9 to symbolize God and his eternity. The article “I believe in Jesus Christ his only Son and Lord” is symbolized by the light and candle as the light of the world. Jesus Christ is the illuminator of God to man. The two candles put on each side of the altar or communion table signify the two natures of Christ, the divine and human. The symbol of a dove symbolizes the Holy Spirit (Matt. 3:16; Lk 3:22; Jn 1:32); the reason for this is that the

Holy Spirit was present in the form of a dove at Christ's baptism. Steffler says that in Christian art a dove is indicative of the Trinity and the annunciation. As in the early period, the African Divine Church embraces the use of symbols to indicate the Trinity. For example, the red colour represents the blood of Christ of the new covenant for the redemption of sins, and the white colour represents both the Father and the Holy Spirit.

In the development of Trinitarian theology in the patristic period, various views emerged, especially in denying it. Harvey (1854:89-93) shows the explanation of the phrase "I believe in God" in two perspectives: from natural theology, which upholds reason from facts, and revealed theology, which upholds faith and revelation in understanding the same phrase. Because revealed theology argues from the known towards the unknown as it unfolds through the revelation of God's power, it can embrace the Trinitarian subjects like the resurrection of Christ from the dead, but natural theology is limited to facts, which cannot comprehensively explain and embrace the mystery of the Trinitarian persons.

From the Apostles' Creed, there emerged two theological principles that can be used in developing the Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community. The first is to embrace the ontological Trinity that explains the coexistence and coessentiality of the triune God. The second is to acknowledge the economic Trinity where functional Christology is expressed in the story of salvation involving all the members of the Trinity. According to Torrance (1996:8), both the ontological and economic Trinity "overlap with one another and belong to one another", and are inseparable. This will inform the development and location of the place of Christ in the Trinitarian mission. The heresies noted to be opposing the co-eternality and the coequality of the Triune God need to be observed in developing any concept of the Trinitarian mission to avoid diminishing the economic interpenetration within the Godhead.

In the Nicene Creed

Although chronologically Justin and Irenaeus are pre-Nicene theologians, their theological formulations on the Trinity shaped the discussions and deliberations of the Nicene Council, and that is why they are included at this point. In Justin's *First Apology* he introduced the concept of the Son of God as the second person and the Holy Spirit in the third place. This raised concerns in the orthodox tradition whereby such Justinian

gradation was taken for subordination and a threat to the equality in communion between the three persons of the Godhead (O'Collins 2013:71). O'Collins (2013:71) writes that "Justin's Trinitarian confession comes through most firmly when he echoes creedal statements and confesses 'the true God' (also named the *Father and Maker of all things*), the Son, and the Holy (or prophetic) Spirit." O'Collins (2013:66-71) and Carpenter (2005:305-306) observe that Justin's contribution to the concept of the Trinity, through the titles of Son and Word, concretize divinity. Christ, according to Justin, has eternal sonship preceding creation. Justin's analogy of sunrays and fire rekindling another fire articulate the Father-Son relationship sharing the same essence or *ousia*. Carpenter (2005:305), however, argues that Justin's inclusion of the Spirit in the Trinity is *oikonomia*, not nature. Carpenter (2005:306) further detects an element of subordination in Chapter 13 of Justin's *First Apology*, in which he declares Jesus as second to that of the unchanging and eternal God—a mystery that his accusers deem as madness. Thus, the elements of the shared divinity envisaged in Justin's development are what became key in the Nicene definition.

The Nicene definitions were borrowed from Irenaeus as well. For example, in Irenaeus' argument in *Against Heresies* Book I, he maintains the One God Almighty and Jesus Christ the only begotten Son, the creator of all things. Jesus is the Light who enlightens all men. Irenaeus uses the Word "incarnation" to build up his concept of the Trinity, which again speaks more of the Nicene declarations. He describes Jesus as the Word of God dwelling among us; he suffered, died, descended, and then ascended into heaven (Schaff, 1885:873-874). Finally, Irenaeus also builds his Trinitarian concept through the unity of the faith of the universal church to establish the economic Trinity. According to him, the church is anchored in one God Almighty, with the incarnate Son concerned with mediatorial salvation, and the Holy Spirit involved in enacting events—for example, the birth of Christ, passion, resurrection, ascension, and the future manifestation in the power of God in gathering all things to one (Schaff, 1885:876).

O'Collins (2013:72-76) sees Irenaeus' Trinity through the Son's co-eternality, unbegottenness, and pre-existence with the Father, using the analogy of the two equal hands. O'Collins also discerns the Trinity in the way in which Irenaeus determines the execution of salvation. In this economy, the Spirit prepares the sinner for the Son to redeem, and the Son leads the sinner to the Father. O'Collins perceives Irenaeus's

effort towards Trinity in his refutation of the Marcionites' separation of God the Father in the NT from God the creator in the OT, and of the Gnostics who denied the Son's incarnation for human salvation. Giles (2017:5) argues that the doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son is central to the doctrine of the Trinity. Torrance (1994:8,11) argues that although the Son is distinct from the Father, he is the offspring of the Father's being, and consubstantial with him. Thus, the deity of the Father and the Son is one and the same. He argues that since the Son is the Father's image, the Godhead and propriety of the Father is the Being of the Son, which further explains the characteristics of the Son's eternal generation.

This subsection evaluates the development of the Trinitarian theology in the Nicene Creed in the early church. The Nicene Creed is distinguished in three forms: the original, the enlarged, and the Latin. The original Nicene Creed settled the Arian controversy, which we have dealt with in the previous section. Second is the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed that dealt with the clause on the Holy Spirit, and third, the Latin creed, which dealt with the question of the double procession of the Spirit from the Father through the Son (Schaff, 1877:47). This review will include a discussion on the Chalcedonian Creed because as Schaff (1877:49) writes, it will provide a corrective remedy against Nestorianism and Eutychianism. After all, the heresies it combats are concerned with the development of the Trinity.

Meyendorff (1989:9) shows how the Council of Nicaea (AD 325) settled the theological dispute regarding the two Christological expressions of Athanasius and Arius. Meyendorff argues that the debates revolved around Athanasius' insistence on the biblical and soteriological importance of the divinity of Christ—that "if God did not become man, man does not become God". However, most of the eastern bishops distanced themselves from Athanasius' approach. For example, Marcellus of Ancyra maintained a modalist approach with the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit being identical in unity, and God was assumed to be a single essence. Nevertheless, various formulae such as "similar, similar in all things, of essence helped to explain the relationship between the Father and the Son as a way for preserving trinitarianism" (Meyendorff, 1989:9-10).

The Cappadocian Fathers continued to contribute to the development of the Christian theology of the Trinity, especially in their thinking concerning God the Father and Jesus

Christ the Son (Van Dam, 2003:1,6). McGrath (2016:11) argues that the discussion of the Cappadocian Fathers adds to the development of the Nicene Creed from which Trinitarian theology is developed. He writes that Basil the Great (c.330-79), Gregory of Nyssa (c.335–c.394), and Gregory of Nazianzus (c.329-89) contributed to the doctrine of the Trinity through emphasizing the concept of substance (hypostasis), and that they developed a firm coherent conception of the Godhead that consisted of the three persons. Basil, in his work *The Book of Saint Basil on the Holy Spirit*, establishes the unity of the Godhead. For example, in Chapter V, section 7 he uses 1 Corinthians 8:6 to derive the Trinitarian unity, thus:

... that the Father does not first take “of whom” and then abandon “through whom” to the Son; and that there is no truth in these men’s ruling that the Son refuses to admit the Holy Spirit to a share in “of whom” or in “through whom,” according to the limitation of their new-fangled allotment of phrases. There is one God and Father of whom are all things, and one Lord Jesus Christ through whom are all things (Schaff, 1894:149).

Next, Basil in Chapter XVI, section 37 argues for the unity of the Godhead by maintaining the inseparability and incapability of the Spirit parting from the Father and the Son. He proves this through the word of Peter to Sapphira, “How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Ye have not lied to men but unto God” (Acts 5:4,9). This, he argues, is an indication that sins against the Holy Spirit and God are the same. Through this economic function, the Spirit is closely conjoined and inseparable from the Father and the Son (Schaff, 1894:190). Lastly, Basil in Chapter XVII section 45 defends the unity of the Godhead through a non-numerical concept. He writes:

We do not count by way of addition, gradually making increase from unity to the multitude and saying one, two, and three... We have never heard of a second God. Worshipping as we do God of God, we both confess the distinction of the Persons... For the Son is in the Father, and the Father in the Son ... therein is the unity (Schaff, 1894: 200).

In this discussion, the three are one, although identified not as isolated entities but distinguished in terms of the role each plays symbiotically, without prioritization or superiorization, in the Trinitarian community. Zachhuber (2000:17) argues that Basil

acknowledges the sameness of hypostases in the Triune God through economic functions that bring out divine nature, for example, the properties of fatherhood, or the sonship or the sanctifying power.

Gregory of Nyssa (1892:109) in Book XII of *On the Holy Trinity and of the Godhead of the Holy Spirit* argues for the shared divinity of the Godhead through the salvific economy which he calls “the saving faith”. In this function, “the Lord, in delivering the saving faith to those who became disciples of the Word, joins with the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit also...”. He further argues that the power of the Spirit is included in the Father and the Son, to effect the transfer of man from his corruptible life to immortality. Gregory of Nyssa (1892:613) further affirms the unity of the persons in the begetting of the Son. He writes that the “Holy Spirit is the Unction of the Only Begotten, who is also called the Anointed of the Lord.” The Spirit is identified as the sign of the Kingdom, the Spirit shares in the glory of God, and the kingdom of the Son cannot be received without the dignity of the Holy Spirit. Since each person shares in the dignity of the other, they are all God. Turcescu (2005:5) argues that Gregory of Nyssa uses two steps in developing the concept of divine personhood. First, he uses the analogy of an individual as opposed to a species and contends that, while the nature of a species cannot be counted, persons can be counted. Second, he says “a person is a unique collection of properties that in themselves are unique. Each of the collection has a causal relationship and finds itself in a communion with other similar collections”, thus the collection of persons is derived from these relationships. Gregory uses these three expressions in the place of “essence”, “one nature” or “same in essence”. Barnes (2001:1-10) argues that the term “power” as used in Gregory’s polemic work shows that he held a pro-Nicene theology, which proves the consubstantiality of the Triune God, and their shared eternity and coequality. He further writes that the power of the first and the second persons is the same, thus the Father and the Son have the same or one power; this is to claim that the Father and the Son have the same nature. If the dual procession can be drawn into this discussion, what we get is the Holy Spirit displaying the same power as the two because his power proceeds from the dual power. Buck (1960:56) argues that Gregory of Nyssa perceived that the Godhead entered into and controlled the humanity of Christ and rendered Christ as “the God-receiving man, the man in whom he tabernacled”, or, the divinity tabernacled in Jesus, the human part. One common idea in the Cappadocian Fathers’ views is their

embrace of the Nicene definition, especially the Son and the Father sharing the deity, as well as maintaining the *homoousios* of the Godhead.

Berkhof (1949:58) acknowledges the Nicene definitions about the deity of Christ in the coeternal existence of the Father and Son. The Trinitarian formula is thus completed at the Council of Constantinople (AD 381) with the deification of the Holy Spirit as having the same deity with the Father and the Son. Berkhof's (1949:58-59) discussion is Trinitarian because he speaks about the interrelationship between the three persons. He argues that the Son is connected to the Father while the Holy Spirit proceeds from both the Father and the Son. He further contends that the Trinity of God is a Trinity in unity and this unity is triunal. Giles (2017:5) argues that the joint doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son and procession of the Spirit aims to explain the threefold eternal self-differentiation in the life of one God.

In the Athanasian Creed

Bray's (1984:177) argument in defence of the Athanasian Creed ascertains its Trinitarian content. First he argues against the notion that the first damnable clause is an intellectual requirement for salvation, thus "we are not just to believe in the Trinity, but to worship one God in Trinity". He points to the Trinity when he argues against the notion that the Logos or the Spirit is simply being part of the Father. Secondly, in the passage "for there is one person of the Father, another of the Son and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son and the Holy Ghost, is all one, the Glory equal, the Majesty co-equal", Bray argues that each person of the Trinity is determined by themselves. The question of the economic Trinity as well as the Trinity's consubstantiality, a characteristic of the Trinity in the Athanasian Creed, is evidenced because "the power by which they rule is co-equal so that none can claim superiority over the others by priority (Bray, 1984: 177-178). Finally, articles 7-11 (see Addendum G3), underpin the Trinity's *homoousion*, with terms such as uncreated, incomprehensible, and eternal, for which Bray (1984:178-179) argues that the prevalence of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit "over the common term person is reinforced in the level of nature".

O'Collins (2013:91) writes that Athanasius' construction of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit resulted from the challenge from the "Tropici," a group that exclusively explained

“uncomfortable texts as mere figures of speech or tropes” and in doing so, like the Arians, they denied and spoke evil about the Holy Spirit and the Son. The Tropici relegated the Holy Spirit to the level of a creature, who is only different from other angels in rank. In what seems to be a response to the above argument, Anatolios (2004:19) says that Athanasius developed a Trinitarian hermeneutic through which he sought to undergird the Nicene Trinitarian theology in “narrativity and linguistic intertextuality of the scriptural witness”, all presented in his *Four Discourses against the Arians*. In Discourse IV (Athanasius, 1891:1070), the concept of the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son comes to the fore:

The substantiality of the Word from the Scripture. If the One origin be substantial, its Word is substantial, unless the Word and the Son be a second origin, or a work, or an attribute or at the same time Father or involve a second nature in God, He is from the Fathers’ essence and distinct from Him.

The argument is that Christ is God from God, and is God’s Word, Wisdom, Son, and power, but is one God. He argues further that while the Word is the Son, the Son of God, then the Father and the Son are two, but of one Godhead, indivisible and inseparable. For Bindley (1950:87-91), Athanasius’ doctrine maintained the Logos incarnate as one person, both Godhead and manhood, without separation or confusion, as a way of settling the Nestorian problem of the incarnation. Geis (2013:23) perceives the Athanasian Creed as a warning against the tendency to confuse the Trinitarian persons or to divide the substance of God.

In the subsequent development of Trinitarian theology, differing views of the Athanasian Creed emerge. Robinson (1896:55-56) writes that Felix of Urgel and his contemporary orthodox opponents accepted the whole doctrine of hypostasis and dual wills, but they held to the Lord’s human nature as an adopted Son, thus introducing the concept of a dual personality. This endangered the account of singularity of the person asserted by clause 33. Felix is said to have held that the Lord assumed human nature as slightly higher than the first Adam’s fallen state, thus was not tainted by the original sin, but he was subjected to mortality and other consequences of sin, a position that is faulted in the words on clause 30 (Robinson, 1896:56). Another negative theological force that challenged the Trinity is the heresy of Priscillianism, which is closer to Sabellianism combined with Manichean elements, with some tendencies towards an Apollinarianism

that denied the Lord's human soul. Similar anti-Athanasian views threaten the development of the Trinitarian theology in the ADC and stand as a warning to reconsider the place of Christ in the ADC Trinitarian mission. In the empirical research in Chapter 2, what emerged for the ADC was an emphasis on the Spirit Christology more than the Logos Christology, because the Spirit Christology is associated with the power that necessitates the supernatural experience and manifestations, which is at the centre of the ADC theology. The Athanasian Creed as the rule of faith then acts as a guard against this heresy. In the Creed (clause 30), Christ's true human nature is affirmed in contrast to the Priscillian's Apollinarian tendency (Robinson, 1896:75, 76). A combined Spirit Christology and Logos Christology (Liston, 2016:78-80) in a sense creates a balanced Christology which the Nicene Council preserved in the Nicene Creed and the Nicene-Constantinople Creed.

Robinson (1896:77) suggests that the dignity of the human body, which the Manichean teachers dismissed, is safeguarded in the Creed (clause 38), such that in our fallen human nature, which Christ took upon himself, we are assured of hope for the redemption of our bodies through his resurrection. Weinandy (2007:12) writes that in Athanasius' theology, Jesus stands at the centre in accomplishing the economy of the Father in the saving action and that this centrality is "rooted in his being the Son or Word of God incarnate". The concepts established from the Athanasian Creed help to answer the question of what theological principles can be articulated about the Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community that can assist the African Divine Church regarding the place of Christ in Trinitarian mission. Such principles include the centrality of Christ in the economy of God, which reinforces the incarnation theology. In the next section, the concepts of the inseparability, indivisibility, eternity, nature, and interpenetration of the Godhead will be seen to be helpful towards the full development of Trinitarian theology, and the identified heresies stand as a caution against deviation from this path in the development of the theological understanding of the Trinity.

3.2.3 The relationship between the Trinitarian community and missional community in the ecumenical creeds

The analysis of the findings from the empirical study in Chapter Two pointed towards a misunderstanding of the relationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community. Because of their close relationship to the concept of the term

“community”, the two suppositions (3 and 4), namely, the need to establish the understanding of Trinitarian community and the need to establish an understanding of ecclesial mission from localized to the universal mission, are combined. This subtopic aims to evaluate the relationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community in the early church with a view to responding to the question, “What theological principles can be articulated about Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community that can assist the African Divine Church of Kenya regarding the place of Christ in Trinitarian mission?” Since Stanfill (2019:899, 900) argues that there is little evidence that between the second and fourth centuries bishops played a major role in initiating, sponsoring, and overseeing missionary undertakings, most of the review here deals with the development of creeds, and the apologetic refutations of various heresies, because in the creeds the Trinitarian community is preserved. Secondly, the study of the contributions of the early church fathers in the doctrinal development is hereby assumed to be key in moving forward the missional community.

In the Apostles’ Creed

The article “I believe in a holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints” is used to establish the relationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community. Ashwin-Siejkowski (2009:98-99) argues that the phrase points to the Holy Spirit continuing with the mission of Christ in the visible world in and through the church. He further argues that only in the context of holiness does the church play both theological and political roles, such that only in the church can the process of regeneration take place in an apologetic context. The church not only functions in the missional role, it also has a political responsibility. The role, however, is not political partisanship, or to influence the direction of the political landscape, but as an institution is to provide a theological position and biblical standards through which political enterprise is to be practiced and lived out. When the church engages in political partisanship, the ecclesial prophetic role/voice as God’s representative in the world is endangered. On the same note, Harned (1981:101-102) points to mission in the phrase in three ways. First, the church is holy because it is the creation of the Holy Spirit; secondly, its catholicity implies a universal nature, such that being the body of Christ the reconciler, it has a mission to unite all people. Thirdly, the apostolicity of the church is contained in the proclamation of the gospel and the mission that was initially entrusted

to the apostolic community. He further argues that the phrase “communion of saints” (*communio sanctorum*) denotes a concept of a church set apart to accomplish the mission entrusted to it by Christ because the church is “elected for service”. It is thus important to note that the apostolic character of the church primarily originates from the New Testament, and it is built on the doctrine of the apostles in their relationship with Jesus Christ. Howell (2005:116) understands the phrase to mean prayer, a longing, a searching after our elusive unity in Christ. His concern, however, is not necessary to discuss mission, as he is concerned with the unity of denominations in the world.

The statement “and the forgiveness of sins” suggests a missional theme. Harned (1981:103,105) observes that it is the heart of the biblical narrative and the substance of the missionary proclamation of the church, such that through the Spirit we access forgiveness because the Father incarnated in the Son necessitates reconciliation of the world to himself. Referring to the same article, Ashwin-Siejkowski (2009:108) argues that this statement suggests the authority that the Catholic Church has “in the administration of absolution and assumes the role of the institutional and visible *ekklesia* as the mediator of God’s grace.” Ashwin-Siejkowski’s argument about the church as the mediator of God’s grace is problematic. This is because it elevates the church to the position that belongs to Christ as the sole mediator of the grace through his blood of the new covenant. Additionally, it threatens to make the church the dispenser of grace, which is incorrect because the dispenser of the grace of God is both human and divine. Jesus Christ alone satisfies this demand.

Sullivan (1988:4-5), writing from a Roman Catholic paradigm, states that after confessing that we believe in One God, One Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit, we yield to one holy catholic and apostolic church. He maintains that to profess belief in God the Father confirms the belief in what he has revealed to us about his work. Secondly, to confess our faith in One Lord Jesus Christ is to express or believe in his incarnation, death, resurrection, ascension and his coming back in glory. To believe in the Holy Spirit is identical to believing in the church, baptism, resurrection of the dead, and life everlasting. Ashwin-Siejkowski (2009:97) asserts that since the article “the holy catholic church” is between the articles about the Holy Spirit and the resurrection, two things are implied. First, it stresses the connection between faith and the holy Catholic Church and the confession of the belief in the Holy Spirit, previously affirmed. Secondly,

it firmly reasserts the nature of the visible church, which emerges as holy, sanctified by God, and through the sanctification, God is envisioned acting in his authority. Barclay (1998:49) says that in Christological sonship, the Father shares his life with the Son who as an agent extends that life to us. The sending of the Son by God is indicative of mission, through which the Son brings glory to the Father, but such glory is not the glory of honour and privilege, but of service to God the Father in the world.

The church as a missional community can be explained through the theme of the kingdom of God. Augustine (1954:66) in *The City of God*, Book 17, Chapter 16, argues that “Christ as God founded this city (the church) in the patriarchs and prophets even before as a man he became through Mary a citizen”. He further argues in Chapter 18 that the Lord Jesus is Saviour and the God of salvation (Augustine, 1954:71). In Book 17, Chapter 20 (1954:75-77), he explains the concept of the church in relation to the kingdom as follows. He argues that phrases like “let him come to me”, “come eat my bread and drink the wine which I mingled for you” in Proverbs 9:1-5 connote the Wisdom of God the Father and his coeternal Word, who has built a house for himself called the body in the womb of the Virgin Mary. Christ is the head of that body, the church, which he has united as his members. The missional mandate, which the church is entrusted with, is described in the phrase “let him come, come and eat my bread and drink my wine”. Christ is the king of the “queen-city” church. Ladd (1959:15) argues that the kingdom of God in some ways relates to the church. He refers to Augustine, who identified the kingdom with the church; as the church grows, the kingdom is extended in the world. The missional nature is identified by Guder (1998:4-5) who says that God’s mission is continued through the sending of the Holy Spirit to call and empower the church to witness. The church as a community of believers consists of people in the world who believe in the kingdom of God, and that Christ is the one and only King and Head.

Concerning the communion of saints, Balthasar (1990:83) although writing from a Roman Catholic tradition, expresses important concepts that help locate the place of Christ in the relationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community in the article under study. First, he says that the article acknowledges what God has done through grace, which is the gift of the church. Secondly, the sacred community of the church is the work of the Triune God, which he first called Israel, the

pioneer community. Next, Jesus Christ, who triumphed over the cross, replaced the old Israel to establish the new Israel of God (Gal. 6:16) as a representative model. Thirdly, the Spirit of Pentecost is on a mission to complete this work by appointing members of the community to continue with Christ's mission to the whole world. Lastly, the church is the bride of the Triune God with the duty to bring creation to completion. The act of human transformation through Christ (Lee, 2006:105) reveals the place of Christ in the economic role of the Trinity in the Church. The Holy Spirit, as the third person, creates the link between the people who are baptised into the body of Christ and the other existing body of believers (Hultgren, 2002:127).

McCarthy (2012:37) writing from the Roman Catholic background, does not look at the communion of saints missionally, but is concerned with the departed saints, where she argues that since they are members of the heavenly communion "they are remembered and venerated in and over time". However, Jeske *et al.* (2000:2-5) view it differently, as they argue that the church is a community that comprises all the saints who "were, or are, or will be justified and are made holy by one faith, stamped with one Spirit and made into one body over which Christ is the head". The communion of saints is a communion among the living, who are in communion with Christ (Jeske *et al.*, 2000:2). The term "saints" draws from the O.T work of God in sanctification (Exod. 31:13), and God's holiness that is imputed to the nation of Israel (Lev. 11:45; 19:2). The promise of God to Israel of being a peculiar people, God's kingdom of priests, and a holy nation to shine the same light to the rest of the world is interpreted by the apostle Peter to show the inclusion of other nations of the earth into saints (1 Pet. 2:9). Thus, only the living saints take part on the earthly mission of God.

Regarding the early church period, Ashwin-Siejkowski (2009:98) speaks of a paradigm that saw the Holy Spirit embraced as an agent to continue the mission of Christ in the visible world. The same Spirit dwelt on both individuals after baptism and amidst the local Christian community and sanctified it by his grace. The holiness of the church was an extension of the life of the Spirit in the community. He adds that the early church perceived itself as the origination of the Holy Spirit. For Ashwin-Siejkowski, the early church fathers understood the holiness of the church from the cleansing, sanctification, and dedication to God through baptism and the process of regeneration through the Holy Spirit. Zizioulas (2007:289-290), writing from an Orthodox tradition, classifies the

characteristics of the body of Christ in the patristic period in three purposive meanings. The first is the Christological purpose referring to Christ's body in the risen state. Second is the ecclesiological purpose referring to the church as the body of Christ, and thirdly the Eucharistic purpose, indicative of the broken body of Christ shared and communicated in the Eucharist. Zizioulas (2007:294) writes that for the body of Christ to connect economically to ecclesiology, justice has to be done on the mystical Chalcedonian Christology by involving the Spirit in this development because the body of Christ does not automatically imply the community of many in realizing the unity with God.

This review responds to the central theoretical question by providing the theological principles relevant in locating the place of Christ through the article "I believe a Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints". The principles for articulating the response to Trinitarian mission include the united relationship of the Triune God, which breaks out into the missional community through the love of God in Jesus Christ. The life and continuity of the missional community are derived from the intercommunication in the Godhead, which means that the exclusion of Christ will not produce a balanced Trinitarian theology of church and mission. The balance that Zizioulas talks about in actualizing the Trinitarian balance helps articulate each Trinitarian person's responsibility with the missional community in accomplishing the salvific mission.

In the Nicene Creed

This section concentrates on the article "and I believe one holy catholic and apostolic church" in the Nicene Creed. The review aims at articulating various theological principles about Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community that can be used to develop the theology of the African Divine Church of Kenya regarding the place of Christ in Trinitarian mission. To start with, Redmile (2006:33) clarifies the apostolicity of the church:

We declare that this church ... [is] an integral portion of the one body of Christ, composed of churches which, united under one divine head and in the fellowship of one holy catholic and apostolic church, hold the One Faith revealed in Holy Writ and defined in the creeds as mentioned by the undivided primitive church in the undisputed Ecumenical Councils ... teach the same word of God; partake of the same divinely ordained sacraments, through the ministry of the same Apostolic Orders and

worship, one God and Father through the same Lord Jesus Christ, but the same Holy and Divine Spirit....

From these arguments, three comments can be made. First, the apostolicity of the church is not about the succession of one bishop (pope) or even the continuation of the office of the bishop, but it is about the succession and continuation of the doctrine of the apostles, which they received from their Master Jesus Christ. Secondly, the church executes the mission of God as led by the Spirit. Thirdly, the four marks point towards the economic unity of the triune God in effecting extra-Trinitarian engagement with the world.

Torrance (1997:252) argues that the phrase “one holy catholic and apostolic church” is a functional belief in the Triune God, that is, in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Clément’s *Letter to the Corinthians* 7:4-5 shows the catholicity of the church where the mission is determined by the Godhead. He writes, “Let us fix, or gaze on the blood of Christ ... to his Father, seeing that it was poured for our salvation and brought the grace of conversion to the whole world.... From generation to generation the Lord has given an opportunity of repentance to all who would return to him”. In 8:1 the proclamation is done under the help of the Holy Spirit (Glimm, 1947:15). In Clément’s letter, the Trinitarian community begets the one church through both intra- and extra-perichoresis, which is accomplished economically in their movement towards the world. In his chapter 30:1,3, the one church derives its holiness from the “Holy One” thus the one church is admonished to do all that belongs to holiness.

In the letter of Ignatius of Antioch to the Ephesians (1:5) the notion of unity or harmony of the church depicts a Trinitarian consideration. He writes, “the church is one with Jesus Christ, as Jesus is one with the Father” (Walsh, 1947:89). In Verse 9, Ignatius analogously articulates it clearly thus: “like the stones of a temple, cut for a building of God the Father, you have been lifted to the top by the crane of Jesus Christ, which is the cross, and the rope of the Holy Spirit...” (Walsh 1947:91). Torrance (1997:253) argues that for Ignatius, the members of the church or community are united with Christ, and in the same way, Jesus is united with the Father. The analogy shows an indivisible economic distinction in which the Trinity is missionally bringing about a holy community, dependent on the Godhead. Additionally, Ignatius’ *Epistle to the Romans*, Chapter IV, points the Church to God the Father and Jesus Christ the only Son as the origination of

its mercy. The ecclesial salutation is in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father (Walsh, 1947:107), a depiction that the being of the church is the product of a Trinitarian initiative. Torrance (1997:253) argues in connection to this that the church as a human institution was founded by the Lord, and is rooted in the Holy Trinity.

Clément's description of the church in *The salutation. Praise of the Corinthians before the breaking forth of schism among them* Chapter 1, shows its rootedness in the Father and the Son in mission. Thus, the church is the church of God, sojourners, those called and sanctified by the will of God through Jesus Christ our Lord (Justin, 1885:11). If the term "sojourner" is used to refer to the pilgrims, it brings about the mission of proclamation in the world, which the Holy Spirit helps the sojourners to accomplish. This makes the church a proceed of the Triune God. Justin, writing on "the unity of the faith on the church throughout the whole world", demonstrates the concept of the catholicity of the church. He argues that the church is catholic in the sense that it has received the faith from the apostles and disciples. This faith is believing in one God the Father almighty the maker of all things, and in one incarnate Son of God, Jesus Christ, for human salvation, and in the Holy Spirit through whom all Christological events were accomplished (Justin, 1885:876).

The creeds, as Scudieri (1997:64) asserts, are missional and so they have missional functions because they are tools necessary for the proclamation of the faith. For example, they indicate the essential truths of eternity, i.e., the oneness of God the creator, the incarnation of Jesus, and his death, which was an atonement for the sin of the world, so the Trinity still functions in the world towards establishing the kingdom of God. The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed professes the one united church and one faith that is rooted in significant events, e.g., Christ's resurrection and Parousia. In this expectation, the Spirit of God in one true faith that is centred on Jesus Christ (Scudieri, 1997:69-70) unites the church.

The theological derivation from the above arguments forms essential theological pillars in attempting to develop the Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community that can be used to establish the theology of the African Divine Church of Kenya regarding the place of Christ in Trinitarian mission. First, the Nicene phrase above is to be understood as an expression of faith, whose basis is in the indivisible, coeternal, and consubstantial Trinitarian community of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Secondly, the phrase should be understood in the light of the shared economic functions of the Trinity, from which the missional community of the church is derived, exists, and functions. Thirdly, the church universal still exists in its missional functions, enlivened by the holy Trinitarian community, thus the ecclesial community is made holy on account of the Triune God. This interrelationship makes it possible to articulate the place of Christ in the Trinitarian mission.

In the Athanasian Creed

Of the three ecumenical creeds, the Athanasian Creed does not mention anything about the predicated catholicity, unity (oneness), exclusiveness, and apostolicity, but it gives a comprehensive explanation of the Trinitarian community and interpenetrations mentioned in both the Apostles' and the Nicene Creeds. Since the Athanasian Creed does not contain explicit mention of the missional community found in the other two creeds, the missional nature of the community will be implied from the various verses. Schaff (1877:38) classifies the creed into three clusters and he says that the first, which contains verses 3-28, sets forth an orthodox doctrine in an Augustinian formula, which excludes any traces of subordination. The Trinitarian community is explained. He says the divine persons are presented as contained in one another, forming a perpetual intercommunication and motions, which are inherent in the divine essence. This does not diminish the character of individuality, or property, which form the peculiarity of each person, such that the Father remains unbegotten, the Son remains the begotten, and the Spirit remains as proceeding. The arrangement in this community dispels any kind of priority or posterity of time; there is no superiority or inferiority in rank, but instead the three are coeternal and coequal. These divine qualities enable them to cooperate in their distinctiveness both within themselves and without. For example, while the Father is unbegotten, and the begetter of the Son, he sends the Son on the salvific mission with the help of the Holy Spirit. The Son economically accomplished the mission which is demonstrated in the inauguration of the church. The Holy Spirit who proceeds from the Father through the Son witnessed the birthing of the missional community and continues with the Christological mission through the church.

The third cluster, which Schaff (1877:39-40) calls damnatory clauses, gives some glimpses towards the missional community and its link to the Trinitarian community. He says that at the beginning and end, the catholicity of faith in the Trinity and the

incarnation is explicitly laid out as the basis and condition for human salvation. The missional community is created by believing in the only true and living God, the Son and the Holy Spirit who are one, in essence, three in persons and one Jesus Christ who is very God and very man in one God. Bray (1984:176) sees the damnation in the passage, "Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith. Which Faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt, he shall perish everlastingly." This argument points to a future mission through which people will be called to join the community of Christ. In an attempt to demonstrate the interrelation between the Trinitarian and missional community, Bray (1984:176) shows the balance between the church and the believer with faith as an "objective reality". The faith is catholic because it is universal and offers a response to people's spiritual aspirations. For the sake of Christians, this means regeneration into a new life and a calling to absolute commitment. Bray (1984:177) says the missional community "worships one God in Trinity". He extensively argues further that the worship of the One God in Trinity brings the sense of perspective of personal relationship at the heart of faith.

From this review, we sense the presence of connectivity either implicitly or explicitly in the interrelationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community. In the discussions, the place of Christ, especially his divine and human nature, are central in arriving at the complete intra-Trinitarian community. Through the damnation clauses, a direct linkage begins to emerge in the catholicity of faith, which is the intercommunication of the one God of the Trinity, which brings salvation. So, a missional community is established through an ecclesial commitment to the Trinitarian universal faith, for the survival of the community. Therefore, the damnation is used here to keep and distinguish the holy Catholic Church from the profane community. Based on this assumption, the theological principles for articulating the Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community regarding the place of Christ in the Trinitarian mission are explicit.

3.2.4 The place of Christ in ecumenical creeds (Christology)

Christ in the Apostles' Creed

The Apostles' Creed assists in responding to the question of the place of Christ in ADC Trinitarian mission through its articles that point to Christology. First, according to Schaff (1877: 41-42) the article "And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord", is reminiscent of Peter's confession in Matthew 16:16, which is the nucleus showing Christ in the Creed. Secondly, Holcomb (2014: 27-30) argues that there is incarnation in the Creed in the phrase "Christ...was conceived by the Holy Ghost" and this extends to the gospel story in the phrase "he suffered...was crucified, died and was buried...He rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven". Additionally, Jesus Christ of the Trinity is identified through the description of God's forgiveness of sins and the physical resurrection. Thirdly, Harvey (1854:11) observes generally that the source of the Apostles' Creed is full of the words spoken by Jesus Christ, which authenticates the rule of faith. Stenschke (2013:111) also considers the second article as a Christological and incarnational emphasis in the Creed. However, Stenschke (2013:113-115) sees the inadequacy of the Creed in omitting the foundational confession of Israel in the role that the OT plays in various ways in the NT and throughout the history of the church. He attributes the exclusion to the allegorical interpretation of the OT that has resulted in the omission of the role of Israel in the formulation. He suggests what seems to be an expansion of the Creed by elaborating on the origin of Mary of Nazareth as a Jewess and mentioning David as Jesus' ancestor in underpinning human nature. Fourthly, an argument by Skarsaune (2008:229-230) seems to be a response to Stenschke because he argues for Christology in the Creed by describing the humanity of Christ through the Virgin Mary, which at the same time is a fulfilment of the promise of God to David.

These arguments are relevant towards the development of the African Divine Church's theology. This is because the elements safeguarding Christology underpin the argument, and such Christological pieces of evidence as to the incarnation, and the expression of the equal divinity with that of the Father, strengthens the possibility of a paradigm shift towards theological principles in formulating the ADC Trinitarian mission.

Christ in the Nicene Creed AD 325

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made.

Who, for us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again, with glory, to judge the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life; who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spake by the prophets. And I believe one holy catholic and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come (Richardson, 2016d).

The Nicene Creed (AD 325) makes succinct statements that safeguard the place of Christ in the Trinity. This can be seen in the second article, “And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made.” Christ’s divinity as equal to that of the Father through the unique descriptions is presented in the *homoousion* illustration. The phrases act as pillars in defence of the divinity of Christ because they describe the sameness in essence and the consubstantiality of God the Son with God the Father. The sameness in divinity guards Christology against being reduced to one nature of humanity. It also corrects some insinuations that there was a time that Christ was not, because *homoousion* preserves the concept of Christological pre-existence.

There are three versions of the Nicene Creed: the old Nicene Creed, the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, and the Latin or the Western Creed. However, for the sake of Christology, the old Nicene Creed is evaluated here because it centres on Christ. The use in the creed of the terms “coessential”, or “coeternal”, “begotten before all worlds”, “begotten not made,” all establish the place of Christ in the Trinity, especially the relationship with God the Father. This was a defence against Arianism, which claimed that there was a time when Christ never was, that is, that he is a created being (Schaff, 1877:36). Arianism represented a theology that advocated a created Christ so that Christ was adopted as Son by God during the incarnation. Arius’ theology was anti-Trinitarian because he made the Christ of the Trinity a mere man (Berndt & Steinacher, 2014:13). This was a controversial position that was settled by the Nicene Council in its declaration of Christ as of equal divinity with God, sharing the same substance. The resulting format was intensified at the Council of Constantinople in AD 381 into the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. At the First Council of Ephesus (AD 431), it was ratified as a universal creed of the Christian faith. Apart from underpinning the divinity of Christology, it also affirmed the divinity of the person of the Holy Spirit.

Pawl (2016:12-15) compares the creeds, the canons of the Ecumenical Councils, and the anathemas in defence of the divinity of Christ in the Trinity. He shows that the place of Christ is established across the creeds and councils in three ways. First, Jesus Christ is described as the second person of the Trinity, whose two natures are identified through the incarnation. Secondly, the two sufficient natures, the divine and human, are such that the former is only divine nature, while the latter is fully human nature. Thirdly, the two natures combined in a unique hypostatic union. In this argument, there is one person of Jesus Christ who is the second person of the Trinity who exists with two natures that are completely distinct and that he existed before the incarnation. Pawl further argues that the anathema given in the second Council of Constantinople confirms the divinity and humanity of Christ; for example, the mention of the crucifixion of Jesus in human flesh, and the claim of him as God, preserves Christ’s place in the Trinity.

Pawl (2016:16) further confirms the homogeneity in the nature of the three persons. Thus, the Christ of the Nicene Creed shares the character of immutability and impassibility with God because the incarnation did not terminate or weaken them. The

term *homoousios* (of one substance) dominates the discussions around the coessentiality of Christ with God. Concerning the nature of the Trinity, in his study on the Nicene Creed, Scottish theologian Thomas F. Torrance (1996:8) argues for an overlap in the economic and the ontological Trinity, since they belong to one another, and that God and his actions are inseparable. He further claims that what God is towards humanity in his revealing and saving acts in the incarnate economy for the sake of humanity he is also in his divine being as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. On the other hand, what God is in his divine being as the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit he is towards us and for us in the revealing and saving acts of his incarnate economy, thus safeguarding the place of Christ. While Pawl safeguards the place of Christ in the Trinity through a conciliar perspective, Torrance approaches it from a practical Trinitarian faith. In his argument which underpins the conciliar perspective, he argues that “an outstanding mark of the Nicene approach was its association of faith with ‘piety’ or ‘godliness’, that is, with a mode of worship, behaviour and thought that was devout and worthy of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit” and he calls this doxology (Torrance, 1997:17). This can be summed up by Torrance’s (1994:11) argument that the Christian faith is hinged on the truth that all the three persons share the same oneness in Being, in the sense that the Being that the Spirit possesses is one with the Son as the Son is with the Father.

While it is important to articulate the development of the doctrine of the Trinity in tracing the place of Christ in the early church, it is also necessary to consider the contributions by the early church fathers and later the Cappadocian fathers towards establishing the divinity and humanity of Christ. One of the reasons to study their contributions is found in Torrance’s (1996:17) argument that the Christian doctrine of God is “inescapably and essentially Christocentric” and “acts as a hinge of God’s self-revelation and self-communication through the incarnation”. Since the patristic fathers were the custodians of the apostolic tradition in which Christology was at its centre, the development of the doctrine of the Trinity in the Ante-Nicene period is important for this review.

The development of the Christology of the Nicene Creed can be traced to the works of the early church Fathers. Justin (AD 100–165) in *The first apology* Chapter XXI, (Justin, 1885:446) establishes the nature of Jesus Christ through a historical analogy. In his argument, the Logos is the “first-birth of God.” Justin establishes Christ’s humanity

through Jesus, who was a teacher, who experienced crucifixion, death, resurrection, and ascension, which makes Christ the Son different from the sons of Jupiter (Justin, 1885:446). Justin in Chapters XXII and XXIII further uses the analogies of the sonship of Christ to develop his relationship with God. In his view, Jesus is the Son of God through birth and wisdom. Jesus Christ is described as “the only proper Son of God who has been begotten by God, being his Word, and first-begotten, and power, and, becoming man according to his will...” (Justin, 1885:447-448). Olson & Hall (2002:22) picture Justin’s Christological phrase of “Light from light” as indicating the divinity of Christ. On the other hand, Justin’s titles for Christ such as the Son and the Word are seen by O’Collins (2013:66-71) and Carpenter (2005:305-306) as further indications of Justin’s high Christology through the eternal sonship that preceded creation.

Irenaeus of Lyons’ (AD 130 – 200) argument in *Against Heretics Book 1*, maintains the Nicene Christology in two ways. First, in Chapter IX.2 he argues from John’s Gospel by upholding one God Almighty, revealed in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is extensively described in what would later become Nicene language as “the only-begotten, the Creator of all things, the true Light who illuminates men, the creator of the world, the incarnate one, who dwelt among us as a defence against impious heretics.”² Secondly, his concept of the incarnation of the Word suggests the humanity of Christ in his suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension (Irenaeus, 1885:873-874). Thirdly, Irenaeus’ supposition is indicative of the later Nicene proposal of the Logos Christology which preserves the hypostatic formula of Jesus Christ, that “If the Word of the Father who descended is the same also who ascended, he, namely the only-begotten Son of the only God who according to his good pleasure of the Father became flesh for the sake of men, the apostle does not speak of any other, or concerning any Ogdoad but respecting our Lord Jesus Christ” (Irenaeus, 1885:874).

Tertullian’s (AD 160 – 225) argument in *Apology* Chapter XIII discusses the Trinity with the Nicene formula in perspective. The sameness in nature and the coeternity with God is explained as follows: “... there is one God, and that He is none other than the

² The impious heretics corrupted the doctrine of Christology by teaching that there was another Monogenes also called Arches. In their teaching, they had “another Saviour and another Logos, the son of the Monogenes and another Christ, produced for the re-establishment of the pleroma.” John’s gospel does not dichotomise Christ, but handles the doctrine as one with two natures his deity and humanity. Thus, the impious teaching of the heretics suggests a divided Christ, which leaves a Christ who cannot be a Redeemer and Saviour.

Creator, who produced all things out of nothing through His own Word, first of all, sent forth, that this Word is called his Son..." Not only that, but he also shows Christ's humanity: at the right time, by the Spirit and power of the Father, Christ was brought into the womb of the Virgin Mary where he attained human flesh and was born as Jesus Christ. The same Jesus Christ preached about the kingdom of heaven with the accompaniment of miracles. He was crucified, rose again, and ascended into heaven, and is now seated at the right hand of God the Father. This conception of the incarnation is preserved in the Nicene, and the Nicene-Constantinopolitan, and Chalcedonian Creeds on the humanity of Christ. The Ebionite position, which refuted the dual nature of Christ, is rebutted in Tertullian's teaching that preserves the hypostatic union (Tertullian,1885:513). Additionally, Tertullian (1885:1184) argues for the humanity of Christ in *Latin Christianity on the flesh of Christ* XVII that the human Christ, Emmanuel God with us, is "a new nativity: a man is born in God. And in this man, God was born, taking the flesh of an ancient race, without the help, however, of the ancient seed ... to reform it with the new seed ... to remove all its ancient stains". Tertullian (1885:1186) argues in Chapter XVII concerning the eternality of the Son of God that "in order therefore that he who was already the Son of God – of God the Father's seed, that is to say, the Spirit – might also be the Son of man, he only wanted to assume the flesh of the man without the seed of a man, for the seed of a man was unnecessary for One who had the seed of God". In Tertullian both Christology from above and that from below is captured, which helps to balance the Christology of the ecumenical creeds, enabling them to acknowledge the duality of his nature, divine as in from above, and humanity as from below.

Origen (AD 185 – 254) in *On Christ*, Book 1, Chapter I, section 1-6 (1885:574-578) gives explanations about Christ that give further indications towards the Nicene Christology. First, the begotten Son is presented as Wisdom, which is of the same nature as the first-born, which makes Christ uncreated by being begotten. Secondly, Origen argues, "the Only-begotten Son of God is his Wisdom hypostatically existing". Thirdly, Origen insists on the pre-existence of Wisdom who is the Word of God, through whom all other beings are derived, to arrive at the coeternity of the Father and the Son, because he argues that "Wisdom has her existence nowhere else save in him who is the beginning in all things ... because he himself is the only one who is by nature a Son and is therefore termed as Only-begotten". Lastly, Origen discerns the Nicene Christ

through the analogy of the “invisible image” by arguing that through the image analogy, we can perceive the way God becomes the Father of his Son. Origen states that this image enables the argument for a unique unity of nature as the substance that both Father and the Son possess. Thus, “for if the Son do in like manner all those things which the Father doth, then in virtue of the Son doing all things like the Father, is the image of the Father formed in the Son, who is born of him, like an act proceeding from the mind” (Origen, 1885:574-578). The three hypostases that Origen gives with the Father as the first person and “God in the fullest sense”, secondly the Son as his “*dunamis*” which is the concept of the power of God, and thirdly the Spirit as a “dependent” whose economy continues in the elect, reveals a community of the three who are both eternal and incorporeal (Edwards, 2018: par 2). This aligns with the Nicene formula which supports the eternity and the equality of the three Trinitarian persons.

The development of Christology can be seen clearly in *Origen on Prayer* (1885) which also shows elements of the Nicene Christology. For example, in Ephesians 1:5ff, he sees the Father accomplishing election and predestination through Christ, and at the same time he describes the Son as God’s High Priest mediating people’s supplications (Schaff, 1885:10, 18, 21). Torrance (1981:5-6) argues that Origen maintained the Nicene proposal by developing the concept of *homoousion* from John 2:2, 26, where he refers to the unity of the Father and the Son as a correlation between light and its brightness or between water and the steam that rises from it. He claims that although the Father and the Son are different in form, they share the same essential nature, not because the Son is not God or does not possess the Godhead, but by the fact of the Son possessing it by participation.

Origen in his *De Principiis* considers the points delivered by the apostles to be important. The second point concerning Christ is important because it reveals the Nicene Christology. First, Origen argues that Jesus came into the world through birth. He was born of the Father before all the creatures, and he co-created with God. Secondly, Christ emptied himself of all to become man, the incarnate God, through the virgin birth and of the Holy Spirit, thus he did not lose his divinity. Thirdly, that Jesus being truly man suffered, died, was resurrected, and ascended into heaven (Schaff, 1885:562-563). The Nicene elements include the generation of Christ from the Father,

which means he shares the same divinity, essence, equality, and eternity with the Father. Additionally, his humanity is alluded to through the incarnation that was accomplished in the virgin birth through the Holy Spirit.

The proclamation of Christ as the Son of God received the political support of Emperor Constantine after the Edict of Milan (AD 313). To underscore the importance of the Council of Nicaea to the church, it is imperative to note the significance of Emperor Constantine's Edict of Milan in AD 313, which allowed freedom of worship to Christians (Kelly, 1991:17). This means by AD 324, when the theological disputes between Arius and Bishop Alexander regarding the hypostatic nature of Jesus Christ in the Trinity turned problematic, the Edict of Milan enabled the matter to be debated openly, rather than continuing underground. Emperor Constantine intervened in the theological quarrel in AD 324 by convening the church leaders and enabling the council that met in the Bithynian city of Nicaea to produce a statement of faith in AD 325. This described the Son as the generation or emanation of the Father, (Ayres 2004: 17-18), and set the stage to refute Arius' notion that Jesus Christ is a created being. Kelly (1991:19) points out that the question that Arius was asking was, "If God the Father is a deity, and God the Son incarnate in Jesus is also a deity, have Christians not compromised monotheism by believing in two gods?" According to Kelly (1991:19-21), Christians preserved monotheism and insisted at the same time on the divinity of both the Father and the Son.

Kelly (1991:22-23) argues that since there was the need for a formula to pin Arius down, the Nicene Creed's affirmation about Christ was relevant and it fixed the problem of Christology. The anathema in the statement intensified the decision of the Council. Thus, this led to Arius's banishment to Illyria, and two of his bishops were removed for declining to sign the Council's affirmation statement (Kelly, 1991:23). The anathema announced by the Council reinforced the Council's theological statement of faith as well as affirmed its position against Arius. Spilman (2015:22) argues that the affirming statement of "only-begotten, begotten from the Father, that is from the substance of the Father, consubstantial with the Father, and true God from true God", helped to stop the misinterpretation that Arius had advanced, therefore anathema is a form of rebutting such teaching.

The Church Fathers sought to interpret the exact meaning of the *homoousion* in the period after the Nicene Creed of AD 325 (Torrance, 1981: xii). The Cappadocian fathers considered the Nicene promulgation and denied any attempt towards a materialistic explanation of *homoousios* because materialism and quantifiability are divisible thus do not favour the indivisible, which is the quality of *homoousios*. Spilman (2015:27) argues that all the Cappadocian fathers opposed Arianism and other heresies. St Basil argues that the number of the deity be used reverently, and argues further that while each person is designated as One, it does not suggest an additional formula since the shared divine nature is both simple and indivisible. Like St. Basil, St. Gregory of Nazianzus argues for the deity that is of simple and indivisible substance, indivisible and uniform, and one without parts (Torrance, 1981:8). These arguments derive from the Nicene Creed the essence of the indivisible deity that informs the coeternity of the Father and the Son. Weedman (2008:24) argues that Gregory of Nyssa's interpretation of Philippians 2:5-7 supports Christological elements without subordinating the relationship of the Father and the Son by proving the Son's hypostatic nature, which is key in underscoring Christ of the Nicene Creed.

Apart from identifying Christology in the Nicene Creed, opposing and contrary opinions are inevitable. For example, Pawl (2016:13) points out three philosophical objections against conciliar Christology. First, the God-man in Jesus Christ is characterized by two incompatible predicates. In his second objection, he states "were the second person of the Trinity immutable, as conciliar Christology requires, then that person could not become anything, and so could not become a man. Becoming is a type of change and the second person if the conciliar Christology is correct is unchanging. However, he did not become a man according to conciliar Christology. Therefore, conciliar Christology is inconsistent". The third objection is that if there is a single Christ, then his nature or will be single as well, i.e., the conditional claim. It claims that if the conditional claim is true, conciliar Christology is falsified, given that it affirms the antecedent of the condition to be true but denies the truth of its consequent. Pawl (2016:15) answers these philosophical questions by arguing that in conciliar Christology, the very person who pre-existed the incarnation and was generated outside of time, from the Father before all ages, is the self-same person who was made from flesh and born into a man from the Virgin Mary. The singleness of the person of Christ is protected in the anathema at the second Council of Constantinople. It demands the acceptance of the teachings of

the holy fathers about the union of the Word of God with the human flesh, possessed by rational and intellectual soul wherefore this union is by synthesis and by person thus one person, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Nicene Creed helps in answering the question of what theological principles can be articulated about Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community that can assist the African Divine Church of Kenya regarding the place of Christ in Trinitarian mission. The Nicene Creed lays out the theological principles through its preservation of coeternity and coequality with the Father and its defence of incarnational Christology. Thus, any theology that has anything less than this is not a Nicene position. The way the early church fathers presupposed and then supported the Christological positioning of the Nicene Creed speaks to the ADC about the Trinitarian mission and the need for a balanced and orthodox treatment of the person of Christ. This is because it helps in understanding the place of Christ and his complementarity in the Trinity.

Christ in the Athanasian Creed

Richardson explains the Christology of the Athanasian Creed as follows:

(29) Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation that he also believe rightly the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. (30) For the right faith is that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and man. (31) God of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; and made of the substance of His mother, born in the world. (32) Perfect God and perfect man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting. (33) Equal to the Father as touching His Godhead, and inferior to the Father as touching His manhood. (34) Who, although He is God and man, yet He is not two, but one Christ. (35) One, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the manhood into God. (36) One altogether, not by the confusion of substance, but by unity of person. (37) For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ; (38) Who suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose again the third day from the dead; (39) He ascended into heaven, He sitteth on the right hand of the Father, God Almighty; (40) From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. (41) At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies; (42) And shall give account of their own works (Richardson, 2016b).

Bray (1984:111,175) argues that the Athanasian Creed, also called *Quicumque vult*, was “an anonymous creed which appeared in Southern Gaul about 500 A.D, and it was attributed to Athanasius”. Bray further argues that Athanasius' authorship could be linked to the fact that he was a leading theologian of his time, and his name became a “leading hallmark of orthodoxy”, such that any great western creed was attributed to him. The main themes in the creed are the Trinity and the nature of Christ, developed to refute Arianism and other heresies like Nestorianism and Eutychianism. However, this creed is also less popular because it is more of a theological exposition than a creed, and its damnation clause that excludes from salvation those who deny its teaching is considered controversial (Lindbeck, 2020: par 16). Bray (1984:176), however, argues that the damnatory clause (“whoever will be saved before all things it is necessary that he holds the Catholic Faith, which Faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled without doubt he shall perish everlastingly”) is not a controversy per se because it emphasizes the right belief as to the basis for salvation. He maintains that those who criticize the author as proposing salvation as an intellectual argument misrepresent the purpose of the creed. Bray further argues that the creed “speaks of believing the Catholic Faith, but not holding it”.

The Athanasian Creed has two parts. The first part is contained in verses 3-28 and the second part consists in verses 29-44. Since the second portion of the Creed is what deals with Christology proper, it will be examined under this heading and the first portion will be examined under the subject of Trinitarian theology. The second cluster of the Athanasian Creed contains the doctrine of Christ as settled in the Councils of Ephesus (AD 431) and Chalcedon (AD 451). The Chalcedonian Council emphasized a true incarnation of the Logos as the actual and abiding union of the natures of Christ, a distinction between nature and person, the God-man as a result of the incarnation, the dual nature, and the unity of the person. It acts as a supplement to the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. The Christ of the Athanasian Creed has a rational soul, which counters the Apollinarian heresy, which limited Christ's humanity to a mere body with an animal soul taken up by the divine Logos (Schaff, 1877:60). The Athanasian Creed acknowledges the hypostatic nature with a congruent relationship of the divine and human nature in Christ (Schaff, 1877:61).

Bray's (1984:177) argument regarding the nature of the persons of the Trinity explains the *homoousion* concept in the clause, "there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father and the Son, and the Holy Ghost is all one; the Glory equal, and the Majesty co-eternal". That means the persons of the Trinity have one Godhead showing sameness not necessarily in quality but in quantity. Bray (1984:177-178) argues that the Creed supports One God, not three gods, and that the three persons each share the divinity fully. His analogous approach underpins his position for he says of the shared divinity, "the light they shine is equal, and the power by which they rule is co-eternal". In this, we find Bray acknowledging the preservation of the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son in the Creed.

Ferguson & Wright (1998:52) show that the Athanasian Creed's language regarding the inseparability of the Word and atonement means that while the Word represents the deity shared with the Father, the atonement points to the mission accomplished through humanity. Bindley's (1950:87-91) argument of the theology of the Logos incarnation defends the Godhead and the manhood of Christ without separating or confusing points to the deity envisaged in the Creed. Smedes (1965:13), writing from the Reformed tradition, presents elements of Christology in the Athanasian Creed when he says that "Jesus as a man subsisted of a reasonable soul and human flesh". On the part of Wilken (1979:4), he emphasizes the incarnation of Christ in the Creed by stressing the divine and human nature of Jesus Christ.

Various views contrary to the Athanasian Creed have been argued on theological and practical grounds. Smedes (1965:13), who approaches the creedal discussion from the point of form and content, expresses the view of some Reformed thinkers who argue that man is made of a soul that is separable from the body. They consider the human soul to be a spiritual substance separable from the body; this is a pagan theory derived from the Greeks. This, Smedes considers, is a deviation from the Athanasian statement because the Creed says that "Jesus had a rational soul" which the Reformed thinkers dismiss. However, on the other hand, Smedes thinks that the Reformed thinkers were not disputing the creedal affirmation about Jesus, instead, they were arguing about the vocabulary used in writing the Creed. Smedes, therefore, acknowledges how complex it is in distinguishing the content and form in the Creed.

Geis (2013:23-24) acknowledges that the three creeds, the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian, preserve the faith of One true God. He maintains that the three persons are both coeternal, and coequal such that each shares in the divine life and attributes of the one true God. The language used in the three creeds emerges in Geis' discussion, such as coeternity and coequality of the Trinitarian persons confirming their consubstantiality and *homoousios*. To the contrary, he argues that Arian subordinationism, driven through a hierarchy of the Father as Supreme over the Son and the Holy Spirit, is being continued through the modern evangelical scholars and teachers through the doctrine of the eternal subordination of the Son. Geis attributes this problem to "a failure to maintain a proper distinction between the ontological Trinity and the economic Trinity" because while the ontological relates to the triune God's eternity, the economic Trinity describes the activities concerning humanity and creation. Geis's argument about subordination between the ontological and economic Trinity is one-sided, thus not articulating an evangelical concept of the Trinity clearly. What is prevalent in evangelical scholarship concerning the Trinity seems to be an overemphasis on the economic Trinity over the ontological Trinity, which seems to be a little academic and philosophical. To develop a balanced Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community for the ADC requires bringing together both the ontological and the economic Trinity. These two approaches to the Trinity provide an understanding of how it moves to the world in establishing the kingdom through the Church, the body of Christ.

3.2.5 Conclusion

The early period's hermeneutic of literality (O'Keefe & Reno 2005:11) and the use of the historical figures of the Old Testament (Rogers & Mckim 1999:3-4) is important because these aspects were fulfilled in the messianic office of Jesus Christ. Out of the suggested approaches, what can be helpful to the ADC's hermeneutic is the literality and the historicity, because they help establish the original context and the intended meaning of the scripture. The literal and OT figures approach does not provide a means to study the original context of the scripture, thus they may result in misconstruing the original intended meaning. Since the ecumenical creeds defend the place of Christ in the Trinity, the fact that Jesus Christ is the Messiah becomes the hermeneutic that this work proposes to the ADC. The principle of typology (Justin, 1885:380-382) can help the

ADC because it has a direct pointer to Christ of the Trinity, whom the ecumenical creeds preserve, unlike Origen's allegorical approach, which entailed the reader to take the scriptural passages as they appear to and extract meaning without its spiritual component. (Rogers & McKim, 1999:12-13). This meant seeing Christ in any O.T typology for example allegorizing Jonah's three days in the belly of the whale to refer to the three days Jesus Christ remained in the tomb. Although the allegorical methodology functioned in the early period, it is not recommended for the ADC because it tends to give the Bible various meanings and its focus is more on spiritualization. The historical Christ presented in the ecumenical creeds is the same one that the Bible claims, thus, this Christ cannot be spiritualized or allegorized. Spiritualization denies Christ from being the actual Christ. This is not what this work proposes for the ADC towards its missional hermeneutic. It is the spiritualization of Christ that the ADC is shifting away from to the real Christ that the ecumenical creeds support which is also the Christ of the scriptures. The allegorical methodology of Origen is common in the ADC, as indicated in the empirical study. For example, Ezekiel 6:11 is interpreted to mean the feet stamping and clapping of hands in worship as a form of self-sanctification. It enables the believer to move closer to God (interviewees, S03, and S18). These actions are viewed as true evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is believed to determine the voice variations and actions during the prayer (S04, S18, and S25). In the case of the ADC, using the allegorical method can encourage the formulation of doctrines from isolated scriptural pretexts. Allegory is insufficient for the ADC in developing its missional hermeneutic because it can easily spiritualize the humanity of Christ (Christ from below).

The early Church Fathers laid the foundations for the creeds, which were further developed in the subsequent period. The ecumenical creeds are important because they help this work to establish the place of Christ in Trinitarian theology and mission. For example, in Rome the second century's three baptismal questions denoted the formula of the Trinity. The first established whether the candidate believed in God the Father Almighty, the second established if one believed in Jesus our Saviour and the third question established if the candidate believed in the Holy Spirit, a holy Church and the forgiveness of sins (Pannenberg, 1972:1). The questions hold together the Trinitarian elements in the Apostles' Creed regarding the nature of the Triune God and its role in mission. The place of God the Father as the creator, Jesus Christ the only

Son of God conceived by the Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, and the Holy Spirit is preserved. The Apostles' Creed does not articulate the role of the Spirit and his equality with the rest of the Godhead. This, however, is clarified in the Nicene Creed. The Nicene Creed is essential in developing the ADC Trinitarian theology because it expounds the Apostles' Creed's Trinity, by being explicit on the role of the Holy Spirit that makes him equal to the rest of the Godhead. This is important for the ADC because it helps to discount the passivity of Christ that is taken over by the emphasis on the activity of the Holy Spirit. Thus, phrases like "...in one God, the Father Almighty, maker ... and in one Lord Jesus Christ the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made...in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son...", are important for the ADC's theological process. The equality and coeternity of the Trinity are conveyed affirmatively in such a phrase: "But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and the Holy Spirit is all one, the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal. Such as the Father is, such is the Son and such is the Holy Spirit" (Art. 6-7).

The language of the ecumenical creeds that appears in Justin's *Apology* (O'Collins, 2013:66-71; Carpenter, 2005:305-306) is essential for the ADC's process towards its Trinitarian theology. This is because they articulate both the ontological and economic functions of the Godhead. Unlike the Apostles' Creed, both the Nicene and the Athanasian creeds express the ontological relationality of the Godhead. For example, in the Nicene Creed, the entire Trinity is worshiped and glorified as equal persons (Par. 4). This is explained in detail in the Athanasian Creed (art. 5-10), where the creed emphasizes that what each person is, the rest are, thus making Godhead consubstantial. The ADC needs to incorporate the whole Trinitarian ontology into its theological process to root its concept of the Trinity in the pre-existent relationality. This pre-existent relationality will transform the ADC's perception of the economic Trinity from its current passive view of Christ. It is not possible to have the Trinity exist in relational ontology only to part ways by either deactivating or activating the others in the economic functions. The sameness in the Trinitarian community as acknowledged by Basil (Zachhuber, 2000:17) is equally important in developing a concept of the Trinity that is rooted in the affirmations of the ecumenical creeds. They help both intellectual and philosophical Trinitarian theology, in which the place of Christ is located with ease.

It is problematic, however, to adopt Trinitarian concepts like coeternity, coequality, and consubstantiality that may not appeal to the African Divine Church's practical theology. The question is how orthodoxy, which emphasizes the right belief of the Holy Trinity, can be used to articulate Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community in the lived and sung theology of the ADC. One suggestion would be to bring the three strands together into balance. That is, orthodoxy, orthopraxis (which emphasizes morality and the liturgical aspects), and orthopathy (which deals with the place of feelings and experience in worship). First, there is a need to establish the orthodoxy, then orthopraxis and to finish with orthopathy, because this order will provide the framework for rooting feelings and experience in the scripture and doctrine.

The church consists of the saints who were, are, and will be justified (Jeske *et al.*, 2002:2-5). The saints who "were" (the already departed) make up the heavenly communion, and are remembered or venerated over time (McCarthy, 2012:37). Since the church is Trinitarian in origin and function (Harned, 1981:101-102), to include the saints who "were" in mission as Jeske *et al.* and McCarthy suggest would be received well by the ADC, but it misses out on the ecumenical creeds' elements of the universal church which seem to suggest a church in mission. The saints who "were" have no influence and role in the mission of the Church. The Christological mandate to the Apostles in the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20 speaks about making the disciples (saints who are). This work proposes a theology of transformative mission by the existing saints (militant church) which helps to deconstruct the African hierarchy of beings, to allow Christ to remain active in mission through the Holy Spirit. The Trinity is actively involved in the mission on earth (Walsh, 1947:89; Torrance, 1997:253). The church in mission are the sojourners, called and sanctified by the will of God through Christ (Justin, 1885:11). The phrase "the communion of saints" in the Apostles' Creed seems to suggest the church on earth, who are constantly in communion in honour of the apostolic tradition. This description befits a participatory militant, as opposed to the triumphant church. The ecumenical creeds do not give a clear distinction between the roles of the militant and the triumphant church in mission. Therefore, for the ADC to develop a Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community towards locating the place of Christ, it should embrace the ecumenical creeds, and remove the triumphant church (the ancestors in faith) as an invariable factor in developing mission, and become free from ancestral reference.

This work does not reinvent the ADC's Christology because its theology already exists in songs and lived experiences. Christology in the creeds (Schaff, 1877: 41-42; Holcomb, 2014:27-30; Pawl, 2016:16) is not meant to replace the ADC's Christology, but gives a framework for the ADC to reconstruct its theology. However, the framework as it is seems too abstract and "dry theology" to assist the ADC. To deal with the passive notion of Christ in ADC's mission calls for perceiving Acts 2 about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the light of John 20:21-22. Thus, Christ is in the Spirit and the Spirit is in Christ in mission. This is what the Nicene Creed defines: "And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life; who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified". The same is emphasized by the Athanasian Creed. The ADC needs a concept of the Trinity in which the three persons exist in and for one another: "And in this Trinity, none is afore, nor after another; none is greater, or less than another. But the whole three persons are co-eternal and co-equal. So that in all things, as aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped. He, therefore, that will be saved must thus think of the Trinity" (Art. 25-28). Thus, Christ is the invisibly present witness of mission in the ontological relation as the sender with the Father. Their nature of omnipresence allows them to be present in the ongoing mission.

3.3 THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD (AD 476 – AD 1453)

In the patristic period, the concern of Christology was on the hypostatic nature and the incarnation, expressed explicitly by the ecumenical councils. In the medieval period, the concern turned soteriological. Van Nieuwenhove (2012:2) suggests that while in the patristic period the debate rotated around the nature of the person of Christ, the medieval era's theology was deeply rooted in the issues of soteriology. While the three councils may not be mentioned directly, the soteriological work appears as an extended and explicit interpretation of the articles settled in the patristic councils. This section deals with the development of Christology in the ecumenical creeds, the development of Trinitarian theology in the ecumenical creeds, and the relationship between the community and the missional community, as well as addressing a biblical hermeneutic in the ecumenical creeds. Since the ecumenical creeds and councils had established the theological position of the Christian faith in the patristic period, the aim of this section is to articulate the explanations and discussions of the medieval theologians and

apologists. This is done by referring to the reconstructive theological work done on each ecumenical creed in the early medieval period. The works of Ambrose, Augustine, and Anselm are evaluated to show how the ecumenical creeds shaped their theological developments.

3.3.1 Missional hermeneutics in ecumenical creeds

In medieval Christianity, theologians built their hermeneutics around the definitions of the ecumenical creeds. Mayeski (2009:87, 89) argues that for medieval exegetes, the Bible was read as a vehicle for the story of salvation, and that the many books of the scripture constituted one whole book. Mayeski (2009:93) further maintains that historical, literal contexts dominated the medieval exegesis, and the kind of history he refers to “is always salvation history divinely initiated and predominantly guided with an eternal telos (ultimate purpose) in heaven. This means that when the Bible is read as one story in articulating the theme of salvation, Trinitarian perichoresis informs the way the Trinitarian community functions economically in accomplishing salvation. This argument collapses the theory of selective reading of the Bible, a theory that endangers a missional hermeneutic for reading the Bible. Such selectivity brings the possibility of seeing the Trinity as a separated and individualized entity, where each person functions alone, a notion that the definitions of the ecumenical councils do not support. Mayeski’s argument corrects the ADC’s selective reading, which is sometimes defended by arguing that the interpretation of a particular scripture was revealed by the Holy Spirit. What is true of the Holy Spirit is that he does not contradict the biblical story; he instead preserves it through reading that is not selective.

Augustine (1997), in the first chapter of his *On Christian Teaching*, provides hermeneutical approaches that allude to the definitions in the ecumenical creeds. Augustine identifies two things on which interpretation of the scriptures rely: “the mode of ascertaining the proper meaning of and the mode of making known the meaning when it is ascertained”. These principles extend to his Chapter 5, where he speaks of the subjects of enjoyment such that for the scripture to be enjoyed, it should be interpreted in the light of the subjects of enjoyment, namely the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit; these are the Trinity of one supreme Being. This Trinity is One God in whom are all things, and through whom are all things. Each of the three by himself is God, and all are God at the same time. Each of them by himself is a complete

substance and yet they are all one substance. In the interpretation, Father remains Father, the Son is Son and the Holy Spirit is Holy Spirit. In the Father, we see unity, in the Son is equality and in the Holy Spirit is the harmony and unity in equality (Augustine, 1997:5-7). Augustine's methodology misses out on the framework of scriptural historicity and literality which are essential, and without these, leaves the text as a pretext. If the ADC is to adopt Augustine's interpretational technique as laid down above, it will need the historical and literal contexts so that the enjoyment he alludes to is arrived at within the correct intended meaning. However, what could appeal to the ADC is Augustine's view of enjoyment, which has the connotation of emotional aspect in its hermeneutic. Vessey (2015:3) says that Augustine's biblical interpretation dominated the medieval period, which attempted to answer the question of how Jesus's teachings as relayed through the gospels and the epistles related to the writing of the Hebrew Bible. He further says that in the case of ambiguities in the scriptures Augustine used the less ambitious one to get the meaning. In cases where ambiguities were numerous, the teaching and guidelines of the church on the scripture about the catholic faith, or the rule of faith, were adopted. According to Augustine, the doctrine of the church on the Trinity determined the right interpretation of the scripture (Augustine as explained by Vessey, 2015:6). This argument is only favourable in the context where the church has ecclesial traditions that are rooted and articulated on the scriptural basis, and in the orthodox doctrine of the church. The ADC is at the stage of establishing documented traditions that are rooted in the Bible and theology. In this way, the ADC's underlying ambiguities in interpretation will not override but preserve the intended meaning of the scripture.

From the above arguments, the possibilities of interpreting the scripture in the light of the ecumenical definitions are evident. Although for the ADC to do its theology in the framework of the ecumenical creeds, there is a need to shift from the philosophical terminology approach by lessening the philosophical content towards a more practical approach. For example, the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed define the equal relationship in the Trinity in terms of the three persons being one and of the same substance, and of the interpenetration of the Triune God. The Athanasian Creed alludes to the unity, harmony and equality that the three enjoy. The Athanasian Creed expounds the articles this way: "... and the catholic faith is this: that we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in unity". The most likely challenge the ADC can encounter in

this is how to maintain the three persons at work in understanding their single role in salvation in the biblical narrative, at the same time preserving their distinction. This work proposes what it calls “a theological balance” whereby the ADC could rework their emotional and excessive reliance on the Holy Spirit by merging reason, faith, and feelings (experience). That means ADC would continue to preserve the faith and experience as has been its tradition, but it would also be exposed to the philosophical approach of the ecumenical councils through teaching. Hence, ADC would present a Pentecostal appearance, but would have a balanced emphasis on experience and reason in its approach to Trinitarian theology.

3.3.2 Development of Trinitarian theology in ecumenical creeds in the medieval period

The Trinitarian theology developed here results from the works of the medieval thinkers whose theological developments were responses to heretics of the time through formulas established by the patristic ecumenical creeds and councils. Van Nieuwenhove (2012:1) describes the theology of this period as radically theocentric and Trinitarian. Thomas Aquinas talks of two central mysteries in the Christian faith: the mystery of the Trinity and incarnation, such that at the heart of medieval theology is the mystery of the Trinity (Van Nieuwenhove, 2012:2). Aquinas, in *Summa theologiae*, question 11, article 1 on the unity of God, argues that the term Being does not connote divisibility, thus to talk of one is regarded as the same as Being. In his definition, Being is either simple or compound, thus what is simple is undivided both actually and potentially. On whether God is one, Aquinas argues in the third article for the oneness of God from his simplicity. He says that the singularity cannot be communicated to many because God himself is his nature, such that in the same way that God is God, it is impossible that many Gods should exist (Aquinas, 1912:47). The terms Being, simplicity, and oneness of God are drawn from the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, which clarified the God of the Trinity as one being, or the same substance, affirming the equality and co-eternality in the Trinitarian framework, as later expounded by the subsequent ecumenical creeds.

St. Ambrose's work on the Holy Spirit (Book I, Chapter 1, section 23-25 and Chapter II, section 27-30) defends the Spirit from being counted with all other things because all things serve but the Spirit is served, as God is. His Pneuma is coequal with the

Godhead, for Ambrose says that to conceive the Spirit as amongst all things, we deny that he searches the deep things of God, which is related to denying that God the Father is overall. For Ambrose, the Spirit is of God, the Spirit of his mouth; hence, God who is Spirit possesses the fullness of perfection and perfect power. St. Ambrose believed that the Holy Spirit proceeds from both the Father and the Son, therefore acquiring the status of divine equality (Schaff, 1893:137-139). This is a similar concept termed as *filioque* or double procession by the Third Council of Toledo (AD 589). The nature of the Spirit as coeternal and coequal, as Ambrose alludes to, is not a new development but an extension of the First Council of Constantinople (AD 381), which condemned Macedonianism, also known as Pneumatomachi, which denied the divinity of the Holy Spirit. The contemplative works and letters of Ambrose affirm the person, coeternity, coexistence, and consubstantiality of the Holy Spirit. He maintains a double procession of the Spirit from John 15:26 and his uncreatedness to justify his inclusion in the concept of God. He understands and includes the Holy Spirit in the statement 'no one has seen the Father except the Son' because the Holy Spirit's quality of omnipresence enables Him to know about God and He is God, based on His usual divine character and ability to search the mind of God (Schaff, 1890:238-248). St. Ambrose preserves the divinity of the Holy Spirit by announcing condemnation of the Arian Jews or Jewish Arians, whose tendency separated the Son from the Father and the separation of the Father from the Son (Ambrose, 1963:222).

St. Augustine in the *City of God* responds to the question "Who is God?" and points to the Trinity. He describes God as the creator of all we see, the same God from whom Abraham received assurance of a son who would be a blessing to all nations, the seed that is fulfilled in Christ and the divine Spirit (Augustine, 1871:333). In *Against the Manicheans and Against the Donatists* (Chapters 12-14) Augustinian Trinitarian theology emerges. He argues that the love of God, which is in our Lord Jesus Christ, is what unites us to God. Therefore, we are joined inseparably to Christ and His Spirit and thus we ought to love the Trinity in unity as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Schaff, 1893:72-73).

In *On the Trinity* in the Fathers of the Church (Book I, chapter 4, section 7), Augustine writes that the Catholic interpreters of the Bible teach of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit as constituting a divine unity of the same substance, indivisible and equal.

While they are three, they are not three gods but one God. The Father has begotten the Son; hence as the begetter, he is not the Son. Since the Son is begotten of the Father, he as the Son cannot be the Father. The Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son, but he is termed as the Spirit of the Father and the Son, thus he belongs to the Triune God's unity. Augustine shows the economic distinctions in the Trinity without collapsing the essential unity. For example, not the whole Trinity was born of the Virgin Mary, crucified, buried, and raised on the third day and ascended into heaven but the Son. Secondly, it is not the entire Trinity who descended upon Jesus in a symbol of a dove at baptism, and on the day of Pentecost in sound and signs of tongues of fire but the Holy Spirit. Thirdly, that it is not the whole Trinity who said to the three disciples on the mountain with Jesus "I have glorified and shall glorify him again" but the Father who spoke to the Son. The three work together inseparably (St. Augustine, 1963:10-11). The language of inseparability is a borrowed idea from the Council of Chalcedon (AD 451).

Torrance (1994:8) clarifies Augustine's position when he says that through the Trinity we believe in the unity of God, and through acknowledging the oneness and identity of being in the Son and the Holy Spirit with the Father then the faith in the Holy Trinity is perceived clearly. Torrance calls this "Trinity in unity and unity in Trinity." Gunton (2003a:12) in his outline of the doctrine of the Trinity warns of the possibilities of an imbalance in the singularity and plurality in describing the Trinity. A more stretched singularity threatens the involvement of the threeness of the Trinity in the world, while an expanded plurality threatens the oneness of God into three gods. He suggests their bonding together with one another's being to arrive at the one God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, in whose unity they make the being of God.

St. Anselm of Canterbury (AD 1033-1109) discusses the confessions of the ecumenical councils regarding the place of Christ in the Godhead. He maintains that the Trinitarian relationship is unique, absolute, eternal, and of the very being of God. The state of the relationship is immutable; thus, the God of the Trinity is always Father, always the Son, and always the Holy Spirit. The name God is used as a common reference to all the persons of the Trinity who are enjoined on such attributes as omnipotence and eternity (Evans, 2001:57-62). This is reminiscent of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. A repeated concept in the creeds that are concerned with singularity or plurality in the Godhead is explained by Anselm, who argues that God is one in number as he is in

nature or substance and so though Father and Son are two, they are predicated of a single substance which is God. For Anselm, the Holy Spirit is equal to the Father since he is called the Spirit of the Father and the Son. Anselm establishes this by his view of the Son's existence from the Father by being begotten, and the Holy Spirit from the Father by proceeding. Therefore, the Son and the Holy Spirit come from the Father, through begetting and proceeding.

St. Anselm in *Devotions of Saint Anselm Archbishop of Canterbury* (Chapter 22) discusses the Trinity in the following way. He calls God the Father "good" and this good, which is the Word, is His Son. The Word of God he describes as true as God himself. The truth, which is the Word, is God's truth and not any other truth. The nature of this God is referred to as noncomplex, and nothing other than God is of that nature. Between the good God and his Son, the Holy Spirit is introduced, designated as mutual love, who from such, the Trinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is realized because none of them exists independently but as "a supremely simple unity and supremely one simplicity, which cannot be multiplied nor differentiated" (Anselm, 1903a:45). The promulgations of the Nicene Creed are alluded to in which Christ is fully God. Additionally, Anselm refers to the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed's concept of processing that brings about the coequality of the Holy Spirit to the Father and the Son.

Aquinas (1947), in *Summa Theologica*, Question 27 on the *Procession of divine persons*, is instrumental in developing the Trinitarian theology in this period. First, in his response to the question in Article 1 on whether there is a procession in God, Aquinas argues that in the catholic faith there exists a kind of procession from God in the form of intelligible emanation. Thus "whatever proceeds within an intelligible procession is not necessarily distinct, indeed the more perfectly it processed the more closely it is one with the source whether it proceeds" (Aquinas, 1947:331-332). Secondly, in Article 2, on whether any procession in God can be called generation, Aquinas responds that "the procession of the Word in God is called generation". In his argument, what exclusively proceeds by way of similitude is called begotten. That is a way of asserting that the procession of the Word in God denotes generation and that the Word himself is called the Son (Aquinas, 1947:333). Thirdly, considering Article 3, on whether any other procession exists in God besides that of the Son, Aquinas maintains the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father (Jn. 14:16), and distinct from the Son. He emphasizes

the two processions in God, thus “the procession of the Word and another” (Aquinas, 1947:335). These three arguments show that Aquinas confirms the Nicene Creed’s concepts of coequality, coeternity, and consubstantiality of the Godhead because since the two processions of the Word and the Spirit are from the Father, they share the same nature, given that their sameness “proceeds by way of intelligible action from a conjoined principle, by way of similitude” (Aquinas, 1947:333).

While the works on Trinitarian theology were received well in the medieval period, Davies (2014:95-96) presents criticisms concerning Aquinas’s work on the Trinity as late as the *Summa* (1a,27) First, when Christians believe in God it automatically means that they acknowledge the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Secondly, Aquinas’s twenty-five questions about God are less significant because he does not take time to ground everything in the doctrine of the Trinity. It is argued that Aquinas needed to put plain the discussion on the nature of God and the God as Trinity because the heart of the Trinity lies in the distinction between God’s nature and God. However, Davies faults the argument in three points. First, he acquits Aquinas and argues that he does not deny the eternity of God the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit as three persons in one substance as the criticisms claim. According to him, criticisms arise from reading Aquinas’ work superficially, thus misconstruing his point of view. Secondly, he alludes that the criticisms do not put into consideration the historicity of the doctrine, which to some extent surprises those who think of God only in the OT terms. Finally, he calls for the need to underscore the content of the Trinity for Christians, which affirms that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. In the mind of Aquinas, there has to be a distinction in the word “God” since it is shared with the Jews, Muslims, and Christians, and out of them all, the God of Christianity is three persons in one substance. All three ecumenical creeds and the post-Nicene creeds assert the Trinitarian God as Aquinas affirms. The explications of the creeds by various theologians in medieval Christianity give articulate principles upon which to construct the place of Christ in the Trinitarian missions of the ADC. One key touchstone is the eternality and the divinity of the entire Triune God that is without division and separation, but understood in terms of intercommunication and interpenetration in the Godhead.

3.3.3 The relationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community in the ecumenical creeds

In the Trinity, there exists a community, both within and among the Godhead, and towards the missional community. On one hand, the missional community derives her mission from the Trinitarian community, and on the other hand, the Trinitarian community begets and sustains the missional community in her participation in the Trinitarian mission. While the Trinitarian community and the missional community may be assumed to mean the same thing, they are distinct. Trinitarian community is used here to refer to the unity among the Triune God, who works in cooperation in accomplishing the grand plan of salvation. The church is a community of saints and the body of Christ. The calling of the church is to do the mission of God. While the Bible does not explicitly call the church a missional community, the phrase is derived from the function and the nature of the church as being a community. Thus, this study assumes that this mission is done through the collective role of the church. The church is therefore a missional community within a community of the unregenerate. The terms Trinitarian and missional community are not found in the medieval period but they are hereby implied, through various theological works. The contributive articles of the ecumenical creeds are also not explicitly mentioned, but the evaluations of the theological statements of the theologians are studied alongside the creedal definitions. We note in Gunton (2003a:12) an element of relationality in the Trinity when he says that the relation of plurality and oneness of the Trinity is expressed in the concept of the person.

Bosch (1991:215) considers Augustine's response to the theological crisis advanced by Donatists in North Africa and by the English monk Pelagius (AD 354-418) as a missional mark in medieval Christianity. He observes that Augustine's theological argumentative response shaped the theology and the understanding of mission in the centuries that followed. Augustine refuted Pelagianism, which taught about the perfection of human beings by action, speech, and thought, wherefore there was no need for human redemption except inspiration. In other words, Pelagius disregarded Christ as the Saviour and his sacrificial death for the salvation of humankind. Instead, Christ was reduced to an exemplar for emulation. Augustine responded to this theological heresy with the doctrines of original sin and predestination. Augustine's teaching on this was rooted in Pauline teaching on justification by faith alone, in which

only God can change the human condition (Bosch, 1991:215-216). Augustine's response is consistent with the definitions of the ecumenical creeds contained in the second article that mentions the incarnation of Christ from heaven to the earth through the cross for the salvation of desperate humanity. Augustine writes in *On Trinity* Book I, Chapter IV, section 7), of the economic distinctions of the Triune God, in as much as the Trinity is a community, the incarnation is not the whole Trinity, because only God the Son was born, died, was crucified and resurrected on the third day for the redemption of humanity, although the rest of the Trinity were a silent company (Augustine, 1963:11). Deansley (1925:41) brings to the fore an element of mission in medieval Christianity. She contends that the consecration of Augustine as the bishop contributed to the mission in the sense that in his time he baptized ten thousand new converts, and he set up a cathedral and dedicated it "in the name of the Holy Saviour, our God, and Lord Jesus Christ". The phrase he named the church after and probably the baptism is a reminiscence of the creedal baptismal formula in most of the ecumenical creeds.

Augustine's contribution to the mission in medieval Christianity is expressed through the concept of justification as a similitude to the forgiveness of sins. This is because the mission involves being sent to bring people to the faith, and in doing so, such terms as justification and forgiveness of sins form the content of the missional message. Apart from the sender (God), the message is as important as its sender. In *On Trinity*, Book XV, chapter 52, Augustine argues as follows:

... the great mystery of the Holy baptism in the cross of Christ and that the baptism in Christ is nothing else than a similitude of the death of Christ, and that the death of Christ on the cross is nothing but a similitude of the pardon of sin, so that just as real as is his death, so real is the remission of our sins, and just as is his resurrection, so real is our justification (Augustine, 1887:534).

To become righteous, he explains, is the gift of God through the Holy Spirit such that God bestows it upon the believer through the Holy Spirit of grace and not by the law. From Augustine's point of view, justification is twofold. The first is a righteousness from Christ's redemptive work of the forgiveness of sins. Secondly, the righteousness from the new nature is changed by the Holy Spirit. While the first one is an undeniable and present reality to all Christians notwithstanding their performance, the second righteousness as the justice of the justified displays some struggles of the flesh, thus

calling for our cooperation with the Holy Spirit in our daily operations (Naidu, 2014:167-168).

Donatism from North Africa was a theological movement that emphasized sanctity as a prerequisite to church membership and celebration of the sacraments. This hindered the growth of mission in medieval Christianity because it taught total separation of true believers from the world, and to associate with nothing therein. For the Donatists, a church was not to be contaminated by the world. They emphasized that true church members were to observe total blamelessness and perfection without which their sins and those of the office bearers will spread to affect the whole church. Augustine refuted this and argued for the possibility that the church may have drunkards, misers, tricksters, gamblers, adulterers, fornicators, and many of the like. For this reason, Augustine argued that the church was not a refuge from the world but existed for the sake of the hurting world. Augustine concluded that all, including good people, were sinners, therefore the Donatists' claim of self-righteousness might be more vicious than the sins of others (Bosch, 1991:217-218). The holiness of the Catholic Church as stated in the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed is built on the affirmations made in the first and second articles of the creeds, which spell out the perfection of the Godhead. Thus, the holiness of the church is hereby derived and not its own.

Under Emperor Justinian (AD 527-565) the cause of the Trinitarian mission was advanced by a decree to include into imperial laws the canons of the church councils of Nicaea (AD 325), Constantinople (AD 381), and Chalcedon (AD 451). Thus, he considered his empire as a Christian society (Logan, 2013:30). Justinian considered most of Syria and Egypt as heretical because they did not fully accept the definitions of the Council of Chalcedon. They professed a Christ with one nature as the Monophysites did, instead of professing the Chalcedonian Christ of dual nature. Justinian's mission of reconciling the Monophysites and the orthodox is said to have been overlaid by the Monophysites who dominated in Syria, Egypt, and Armenia (Logan, 2013:30).

The Gregorian mission continued the advance of the mission of the church in the medieval period. Morato (2015:45) explains that the Petrine doctrine advanced by Pope Leo 1 (440-461) held that Rome was the true church on the basis that Christ designated Peter as the foundation of the earthly church and its gatekeeper of the heavenly

kingdom, the church situated in Rome. Petrine doctrine deepened the emphasis of the papal power in the middle ages with papal hegemony over all bishops and patriarchs of Christendom. Gregorian mission advanced the doctrine through which the pagan Kentish kingdom was converted. One of the negating theological forces was the Arian Christianity which the Visigoths embraced with its interpretation of Christological nature against the Nicene-Constantinopolitan definitions on the duality of the natures. The Visigoths eventually tended towards the Moslem faith. Gregory witnessed an interesting theological development in which he claimed that in water baptism God bestows the forgiving grace freely for the unmeritorious Adamic sins, but for the sins committed after baptism, people atone for themselves through penance, such that the more a person punishes themselves the more God will withdraw the punishment. This stratified forgiveness threefold: repentance, confession, and meritorious works (Fanning, 2009:9).

A closer view of the ecumenical creedal definition of the efficacious Christological atonement collapses in this argument. Apart from the Gregorian mission, Roest (2004:140-141) explains the Franciscan order, which began as a conversion movement through an evangelistic lifestyle and public invitation for repentance and conversion based on an eschatological emphasis. The friars embraced the Christological command to the disciples, "Go, I am sending you out like lambs among the wolves" (Lk. 10:3 and Matt. 10:16). They proclaimed their apostolic ministry as servants of Christ. The content of their proclamation was the Word of God, to praise God as the all-powerful Trinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Anselm, writing his first meditation in *On Meditation* (V), speaks of the church as "the body of Christ", which connotes a community. He describes this community as follows: "... thine eyes are the eyes of Christ... for Christ is the truth... Thy mouth is the mouth of Christ ... reserved only for the praises of God and the edification of thy neighbor" (Anselm, 1872:15-16). The metaphorical eyes and mouth point to the church's mission to proclaim the praises of God in Christ. In Anselm's perspective (VI), the unity of the church is derived from the unity of Christ, the Son with the Father, because he argues that "in Christ we are one, and are with him one Christ" such that as he and the Father are one so should the church be. In Christ, the bridegroom, the church becomes the bride. He is the bridegroom, and the church is the holy souls that he has bound to himself in an everlasting bond of love (Anselm, 1872:16-17).

Anselm (VIII) mentions Christological titles, which gives a hint about his view of the Christological mission. For example, a Redeemer is said to anoint his eyes with the ointment of his incarnation, which enabled us to look up to God in his glory. He further expounds on the incarnational Christology that he argues necessitates the calling of humanity back to the things of the Spirit. He explains that through incarnational Christology, humanity received what belonged to Christ as Christ took over what belonged to humanity. This is the heart of any salvific mission (Anselm, 1903a:61-67). In Anselm's argument, many things emerge that align with definitions of the ecumenical creeds. First, it is the incarnational Christology and the united relationship between the Father and the Son. Second are the catholicity, unity, and holiness of the church. While the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed speak of the catholicity of the church, the Athanasian Creed uses the term "catholic" religion or faith. All three creeds, including the Chalcedonian Creed, define incarnational Christology and coequality with the Father as Anselm adopts to shape his Trinitarian missional theology in medieval Christianity. The study of the ecumenical creeds through the relationship between the Trinitarian and missional community provides glimpses towards a response to the central theoretical question of this study.

The key theological issues or principles that emerge here are the incarnational Christology, the divinity of the Trinitarian persons, and the fact that the catholicity of the church is rooted in the functional relationship between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit in space and time in the event of the incarnation. This gives Christ an equal place in the Trinitarian missional discussion. However, this period was dominated by the Arian issues and the papal power from the Petrine doctrine that declared the pope as the Vicar of Christ, which threatens the orthodox position given in the ecumenical definition. This means the veneration of Mary the mother of Jesus and other saints occupies a special mediatorial position. This brings about the concept of ancestorology, a similar notion to that in the ADC that affects the development of Christology. This means then, that in the effort towards developing the Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community, the definitions of the ecumenical councils, which form the theological principles for Trinitarian theology, are to remain central against tendencies towards de-emphasis of any of the persons of the Trinity. The development of the Trinitarian ecclesiology which deals with the centrality of the Triune God in bringing about the Church is essential because it helps to preserve the place of Christ in its formation.

Secondly, the missional community, which includes those people called to faith as the body of Christ under his kingship, participates in the mission of God, as enabled by the Godhead, and brings the concept of the three working through the church in mission equally.

3.3.4 Development of Christology in ecumenical creeds in the medieval period

This section assumes that the ecumenical councils progressively interpreted or expounded the subsequent creeds. For example, the Nicene Creed expounds on the Apostles' Creed, while the Athanasian Creed combines the two with its detailed articles. Boethius Severinus (480-524), who was a Roman senator, consul, and magister, is significant in this period regarding the development of the place of Christ in the Trinity, as he confirms the definitions of the ecumenical councils. According to Evans (2002:29), Boethius defines a person as the individual substance of rational nature and argues this on the basis of Maxentius's view that Christ was one person with two natures, such that one nature is depicted in the incarnate word and that the incarnate Lord is one of the Trinity. Boethius was not beginning anything new, but upholding the declaration of the Council of Ephesus (AD 431), and condemning Nestorianism, which opposed the concept of the Christological hypostatic union and its position that the two natures were joined by will and not personhood. O'Collins (2013:101) gives Boethius' definition of nature as "specific difference informing anything", and that of a person as "an individual substance of a rational nature", to emphasize the full embracing of the Council of Ephesus. Evans (2002:29) argues that Boethius was present in the Ephesus Council where he learned about Nestorius's views of Christ being both "of" and "in" two natures, and the Monophysite and Eutychian view that Christ is "of" two natures, yet not "in" two natures. Therefore, his underlying question about nature, person, and their relationship undergirds his contribution to the explication of the Ephesus Council in this medieval period. Anselm (AD 1033-1109) in *Proslogium*, *Monologium* (Book I, Chapter VIII) responds to Boso, who struggled with the mystery of how the Most High would stoop lower to the level of humanity, in words reminiscent of the Nicene Creed. He writes, "But we say that the Lord Jesus Christ is very God and very man, one person in two natures and the two natures in one person". Anselm identifies humanity in the suffering that Christ endured, hence he is one person, both divine and human. He agrees with the

Athanasian Creed that in the incarnation of Christ, the Deity is not lost (Anselm, 1903b:193).

Richard of Saint Victor, in *On the Trinity* Book I, Chapter V, supports the Nicene statements concerning the persons of the Trinity, where he renders Christ as an equal member. For example, he argues that the Trinity has three persons, but they are not three eternal beings, instead, just one eternal being. The three are not three uncreated beings or “three immense ones”, but just one “single uncreated and one single immense being”. He further argues for the distinction and not separation within the Trinity because he claims that the Trinitarian Father is neither made nor created, the Son not made but begotten. Equally, the Holy Spirit is neither made nor begotten but he proceeds (Angelici, 2011:76,77). The Nicene terms of co-eternality, coequality, and consubstantiality of the Godhead are advanced in this argument, which makes Richard’s work potentially part of the theological principles that can be used in articulating the place of Christ in the ADC Trinitarian mission. Richard also approaches the Trinity using the concept of divine *benevolentia*, from which he derives the essence of divine sharing. He argues that given that there is one being, also one will exists, such that one will, one love and one indistinguishable goodness belongs to every member of the Trinity. He further argues for the complementarity of the Father and the Son, such that the Father himself is the exclusive goodwill to the Son, and whereby apart from the Son, the Father lacks another whose good he can intend (Coolman, 2011:38-39).

Richard’s two acts of will are distinct. In this willingness, one part has a person equal in dignity with the other and therefore willing to have another whom they love together. In the first willing, the Son establishes a divine duality in the communion of dignity, and in the second the Holy Spirit emerges in establishing the Holy Trinity in a communion of love. Richard argues that in this willing relationship both the Father and the Son unanimously share their love with the Holy Spirit. In this movement, the Spirit is described as one invited, or welcomed into the mutual love by the Father and the Son (Coolman, 2011:40). If the terms “invited or welcomed” explain how the Spirit gets into the communion, it raises some questions. First, did he exist independently of the rest from the beginning? Secondly, how did he come about? The terms connote a previously isolated community, which points to a suggestion that the Holy Spirit’s co-eternality and coequality with the rest of the Godhead began at the time of invitation, a proposal that

does not align with the Nicene terms of coeternity and consubstantiality of the Triune God.

During the Carolingian Renaissance (AD 800-888) opposing views arose. Cannon (1960) explains that the Nestorian controversy of Monophysitism expanded through the establishment of the Nestorian church. The Nestorian (Eastern) Church embraced the Nicene Creed's Trinity but denied *Theotokos* (Mary as the mother of God) and this was compounded through their denial of the affirmations of the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon. The Nestorian Christology advocated adoptionism and claimed that the historical Jesus was a means to express the personality of the second person of the Trinity. The doctrine of Monothelitism was a further development of Monophysitism, and it aimed at political conciliation when the Eastern Emperor Heraclius (610-641) saw it as the basis of reuniting the Monophysites of Egypt with the Orthodox Church. A statement of the union was formulated: "There was but one and the same Christ, working both the divine actions by one theandric operation". Maximus the Confessor (580-662) rejected this formulation, but the Palestinian monk and the patriarch of Jerusalem, Sophronius (560-639), supported it in the following formulation: "A nature is incomplete without a means of expression since Christ had both human and divine nature; each nature had its power of expression. The power of expression of human nature caused all his human deeds. The power of expression of the divine nature caused all his divine deeds". Cannon further shows Pope Honorius' effort towards Trinity by replacing the words energy, force, or power to will, and arguing that two Christological natures in one person did not constitute two wills, as will belongs to a person, not nature. Therefore, all Christological actions, human and divine, are expressions of the single divine will. Monothelitism was condemned by a conclave, which asserted that the incarnate Jesus Christ as a member of the Trinity is God and that his two natures consist in one person. Each nature wills and works following the salvific function (Cannon 1960:65-66).

Cannon (1960:86) also discusses Sabellianism during the Carolingian Renaissance in the reign of Charlemagne (742-814), with Magnentius (303-353) claiming the revelation of God through one man in three distinct personal categories: the Father as David, as the Son by Jesus Christ and as Holy Spirit by the apostle Paul. Evans (2001:69) observes the adoptionist controversy advanced by Elipandus (716-805) the archbishop of Toledo, who taught that Christ was an adopted Son of God. The teaching revolved

around David, Jesus, and Paul, as existing in Trinity as an extension of the Christological paradigm. Evans does not mention the Holy Spirit as does Cannon. According to Evans, (2001:67, 68) Elipandus, in trying to arrive at a one-person Christology, was condemned for adoptionism at the Council of Regensburg in 792 and finally condemned at the Synod of Frankfurt in 794.

The theological thinkers of the medieval period and their theological preservation of the promulgations of the patristic period by the ecumenical councils form the basis for articulating the theological principles of the Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community that will assist in the establishment of the place of Christ in the ADC's Trinitarian mission. The affirmations of the divine and human natures of Christ and his substantiality with the Father are key in arriving at the doctrinal articulation of the place of Christ in the Trinitarian mission. Equally, the Triune God as the One and true God in his work and involvement within the world is also involved in building up his church through the keys of the kingdom.

3.3.5 Conclusion

The development of the Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community and the place of Christ through the ecumenical creeds in the medieval period can be summarized as follows. First, the Trinitarian members are equal, including the Spirit who is worshipped like the Father and the Son, as Ambrose argued (Schaff, 1893:137-139). In this ontological relation, the Spirit shows a double procession, the teaching, which the ADC acknowledges. However, what is missing is a way in which the coeternity, the divinity, and coequality of the Spirit with the Godhead can be extended to feature in the ADC's experiential theology. The African reality of attaching charismatic experientialism to the Spirit, which has largely influenced the ADC, is a challenge to the affirmations of the ecumenical councils. The medieval period presents a Trinitarian theology that is both ontological and economic. For example, Augustine developed Trinity through the love that exists in the city of God (Schaff, 1893:72-73). Love is an experiential concept. Both Ambrose's work (Schaff, 1893:137-139) and Augustine's view of the Trinitarian love allude to economic and ontological aspects. What is missing are the demonstrative elements of love, which are at the centre of ADC theology. To deny emotional reality in spirituality, as the philosophical ecumenical creeds present, is to deny the importance of emotions.

Secondly, the Trinitarian and the missional community is preserved through the economic distinctions of the Trinity (Augustine, 1963:11), the meritorious accomplishments through the cross (Augustine, 1887:534), and the imputed righteousness as the gift of God through the Holy Spirit (Naidu, 2014:167-168). The church, as opposed to Donatists, as Augustine noted, has unholy people, which makes the church exist as the light to such people (Bosch, 1991:271-218). These arguments operate on the assumption that the Trinitarian mission is universal and thus creates a universal community of Christ. The ADC as a missional community needs to shift from a localized perspective of mission, based on a bishopric residence and the central organization of missions, to a Trinitarian missional perspective, which gives the mission a centrifugal approach. There is an urgent need to replace the ADC headquarters as the sending agent with the Triune God who is in charge of sending.

Lastly, the deity of Christ is undebatable in the ADC, but what is controversial is his deemphasized place in the Trinitarian mission. Richard of Saint Victor (Angelici, 2011:76,77; Coolman, 2011:40) and Boethius Serverinus (Evans, 2002:29), construct Christology around the ecumenical creeds' terminologies of the coeternity, coequality, and consubstantiality that confirm Christ's sameness with the Father. What the African Divine Church needs and seems to be missing in the development of Christology is the functional and continual practicality of Christ in the creedal terminologies. For the ADC, the notion that Christ accomplished and left all to the Holy Spirit is common. To address this theological problem, this work proposes "a nonrestricted theology of the cross" that is only limited to and ended at the cross. This theology presupposes that Christ's involvement in acts of divine providence did not cease with meritorious accomplishments. It suggests that the Holy Spirit impresses Christ upon the sinner continuously. It is Christ's coeternity, coequality, and consubstantiality with the Father that guarantees the accomplishments of Christological works through the Holy Spirit.

3.4 THE REFORMATION PERIOD (1500-1750)

3.4.1 Introduction

Various prominent theologians contributed to the development of the doctrine of the Trinity in the Reformation period. The Trinity is evident in Luther's (1483-1546) *Table Talk* on idolatry (CLXXXI). For example, in his interpretation of John 3:16 the Father is

perceived to love the world. He gives his Son who willingly suffers at the cross to redeem the world. The third person, the Holy Spirit, rekindles the faith in the heart through the Word to regenerate humanity into the children of God. Christ is the true God, as well as the Father and the Holy Spirit. The three are not three gods, nor three substances, because God is not separated or divided (Luther, as explained by Hazlitt, 1566:77). The Trinity is developed by preserving the theological properties that explain the nature, divinity, eternity, coequality, and the distinctive economic roles of the three persons without numbering them but enumerating their distinct functions. This maintains the one God of the Trinity with the three united persons.

Another influential figure in the development of the doctrine of the Trinity during the Reformation period is Zwingli (1483-1546) the Swiss reformer who called for reform in the Roman Catholic Church. In his *Sixty-Seven Articles* (1523) (Zwingli, 1984), the doctrinal development of the Trinity emerges, especially that which illustrates the divinity of the tri-personality. For example, in the second article, Christ is the true Son of God: “2. The sum and substance of the gospel are that our Lord Christ Jesus, the true Son of God, has made known to us the will of his heavenly Father” (Zwingli, 1984:15). The thirteenth article states, “We give heed to the Word; we acquire a pure and clear knowledge of the will of God and are drawn to him by his Spirit and transformed into his likeness” (Zwingli, 1984:57). The theological elements in this that further the development of the Trinity are as follows. First, Jesus is maintained as the Son of God, thus affirming his coeternity with the Father, and this proves his divinity. Secondly, the concept of incarnation furthers the Trinity such that it points to Christ’s humanity. Thirdly, the proof of the Holy Spirit as divine and coequal with the rest is confirmed in his work of drawing people to God by transforming them. In this article, the statement that a person is drawn to God by God’s Spirit and sanctified refers to God the Father who only can draw a person to Christ.

However, for the sake of maintaining the scope of the study, this review will examine the theological works of the Reformed tradition. Since most of the Reformed theologians develop their theological arguments from the Calvinistic tradition, Calvin’s *Institutes* (4:IX:1-14) is key in this review. Besides, the Reformed confessions derived from Calvin’s works form part of the literature evaluation. Most of the Reformed confessions can be considered as an interpretation and exposition of the ecumenical creeds and the

resultant affirmations as promulgated by the early church fathers. This is an indication that in the Reformation period no new creeds were written, but there was a continued explanation of the existing creeds through the theology of the various confessions. For example, both the Belgic Confession of 1561 (Articles 8, 10 & 27) and the Second Heretic Confession of 1566 do not suggest new creeds but affirm the statements of the ecumenical councils in developing the confessions about the Godhead. It is therefore the task of this review to point out how the ecumenical creeds and councils provided not only the background but also the criteria for developing the Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community within the Reformed tradition. To do this, the following subtopics are studied alongside their connections to the creeds: the development of Christology, the Trinitarian theology, and the relationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community. Additionally, the review establishes a biblical hermeneutic in the ecumenical creeds in the Reformation period. This review section responds to the question of whether there are any theological principles in this period that can be used to articulate the Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community in ways that can benefit the ADC regarding the place of Christ in Trinitarian mission.

3.4.2 A missional hermeneutic in the ecumenical creeds

This review section aims at evaluating the theological principles that were in place in the Reformation period that would later enable the development of a missional hermeneutic as an aspect of biblical theology in Chapter Four. This section looks at works and theological developments that follow the framework of the affirmations and definitions of the ecumenical creeds. As the other periods have shown in the previous discussions, the ecumenical creeds are rooted in biblical theology, thus they provide a basis for a theological formulation that informs the right hermeneutics of the Bible and mission.

In the Reformation period, systematic theology and exegesis influenced hermeneutics significantly as follows. Calvin's theology of scripture (I, VIII, i) as being "sole sufficiency" is important because it puts the scripture over and above any other orations or philosophies. He writes that "in the sacred volume [the New Testament] there is a truth divine, a something that makes it immeasurably superior to all the gifts and graces attainable by man". Secondly, his theology of inspiration of scripture contributes to hermeneutical development. He argues for the centrality and the work of the third person of the Holy Trinity in approaching the scripture: "... hence the office of the Spirit

promised to us not to form a new and unheard-of revelation, or to coin a new form of doctrine, by which we may be led away from the received doctrine of the gospel, but to seal on our minds the very doctrine which the gospel recommends” (I, IX, i). This helps to maintain the overarching theme driving the redemptive storyline.

Zwingli’s theology also influenced his hermeneutics. The most important hermeneutical principles included the perspicuity of the scripture and the knowledge of the biblical languages. Concerning the perspicuity of the scripture, Zwingli brought together two dimensions. First was the human reason, which is incapable of interpreting the scripture. Secondly, the divine revelation, in which he argues that the Holy Spirit alone is the agent for making the interpretation of the scripture clear (Sargent, 2014:327). Bromiley (1953:31) argues that the supremacy of divine revelation in the scripture and the sovereignty of God in the election of grace influenced Zwingli’s hermeneutics. There appears to be a contrast between reason and revelation in Zwingli’s hermeneutics. According to him, he argues that it is dangerous to interpret the scripture using the material aspects of the text, but instead, the interpreter should allow the voice of the Holy Spirit to reign since he is the creator of the text, through which God is revealed to the human mind (Sargent, 2014:327-328). Calvin on his side seemed to embrace learning, which involved having the biblical interpretation and theological reflection in dialogue. He acknowledged extra-biblical works, he called expressions of common grace, as an aid in interpretation, and viewed them as gifts that should not be negated. Calvin perceived the use of secular learning as significant because it reflected the key theological concept of his view of common grace (Silva, 2007:298-300). Calvin’s approach is balanced because it brings together faith and reason in reading to understand and interpret the scripture. Exegetical issues like the historical and literary backgrounds are factors that are derived from rational study, and Doriani (1996:29) argues that “a text without a context is a pretext ... practically, it takes time and effort to study the context of a passage”. Calvin and Zwingli’s theology of inspiration of the scripture and the sovereignty of God imply Trinity in the sense that the Spirit conveys the Word of God to the people, the very Word of God incarnated in the person of Christ. This understanding is predicated on the ecumenical creedal language, which affirms the un-origination of God the Father, the pre-existence or generation of the Son, and the procession of the Spirit.

In Zwingli's hermeneutics, literary and grammatical knowledge are important in deriving the meaning of the passage, but the features within the biblical text he argues do not give the meaning without the Holy Spirit. Additionally, Zwingli considers the concept of a *regula fidei* (the rule of faith) in reading the scripture to be essential to biblical hermeneutics. Zwingli further argues that interpretational tools are important but they do not determine the meaning apart from the Holy Spirit (Sargent, 2014:333-334). Bromiley (1953:24, 29) argues that Zwingli's main aim was to expound the books of the Bible, and that his principle that God's Word is seen as the supreme court of appeal holistically touches on the applicational aspect of biblical hermeneutics.

Henrich Bullinger also contributed to the development of biblical hermeneutics in the Reformation era. "He worked from the exegesis of a text and characteristically in sequence, *Lectio continua*". This included a sequence and disposition of the biblical material in deriving its meaning (Dowey, 2004:43). One of the themes that informed his biblical hermeneutics was the concept of the oneness of the eternal covenant, which he used in establishing both the biblical interpretation and theological construction (Dowey, 2004:47). Bullinger's hermeneutics is rooted in exegetical techniques such as languages, historical settings, and the principles of faith and love (Dowey, 2004:52). Bullinger embraced the doctrine of the Trinity, with the Son eternally generated from the Father and the Holy Spirit proceeding from both the Father and the Son (Dowey, 2004:56). Since the main architect of the redemption story is the Godhead, Bullinger's theology of the Trinity confirms the oneness of the eternal covenant, as well as the principles of love and faith. The shared divinity of the Godhead, the uncreatedness of the Father, the generation of the Son, and the procession of the Holy Spirit follow the definition of the ecumenical creeds.

3.4.3 Trinitarian theology in the ecumenical creeds

The ecumenical councils' creedal articles provide the framework for developing the Trinitarian theology in the Reformation period. Based on the ancient church's promulgations, Calvin in the *Institutes* (IV, IV, xiii) suggests three ways that can be used to determine the rightness of the doctrine, perhaps because the interpretation of the doctrines in the future is likely to bring a theological heresy. The first is to evaluate the continuing debates against the scripture. Secondly, to define the doctrinal discussion through the perspective of the council of true bishops to determine the doctrine and how

it is to be taught, to avoid interpretational confusion, and thirdly, “all churches together are to take common cognizance”. Thus, the ecumenical councils and creeds provide the Reformed tradition, including the Reformed Confessions concerning the place of Christ in Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community. The task in this subtopic is to evaluate how the ecumenical creeds provide the theological basis for developing the Trinitarian ecclesiology, the missional community and the place of Christ.

Calvin in the *Institutes* (I, XII, xii & xiv) maintains the Nicaean Trinitarian theology because of the equal divinity of the Godhead. He argues that the Son and the Spirit are divine, such that in the scripture wisdom dwells with God, and the ancient prophets spoke in the Spirit of Christ who is the Word begotten of the Father before all ages. In creation, Calvin witnesses the Spirit of God at work reshaping the shapeless world and thus equates him with the Father. The same Spirit in Isaiah 48:16 is considered to share the sovereign power with God in sending the prophets. This viewpoint reflects the Constantinopolitan Creed, which affirms Trinitarian doctrine.

In the second Helvetic Confession (Chapter 3) the Trinitarian theology of the creeds is explicitly stated. It deals with God and his unity that gives the background of the Trinity. The Confession asserts the oneness of God, in essence, nature subsisting in himself, eternal and omnipresent. This parallels the descriptive singularity of the Apostles’ and the Nicene Creeds. In the Athanasian Creed, God’s oneness is described as “one God in Trinity and Trinity in unity” (verse 3). The Second Helvetic Confession (1566) emphasizes the oneness of God. This is evidenced in various phrases like “one in essence or nature, subsisting in himself, all-sufficient in himself, invisible, incorporeal, immense, eternal, Creator of all things both visible and invisible”. Additionally, the Second Helvetic Confession teaches the threeness of God:

... the same immense, one and indivisible God is in person inseparably and without confusion distinguished as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit so, as the Father has begotten the Son from eternity, the Son is begotten by an ineffable generation, and the Holy Spirit truly proceeds from them both, and the same from eternity and is to be worshipped with both. There are not three Gods, but three persons, consubstantial, coeternal, distinct with respect to hypostases and with respect to order, the one proceeding the other yet without any inequality (Bratcher, 2018).

The Second Helvetic Confession follows the Nicene Creed's affirmation in which the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, and is also worshiped as the other two. It also recognizes the Chalcedonian definition by using characteristics like "unconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisible, and inseparable", which have the same undertones as "without confusion". The Athanasian Creed's language, especially verse 24, emphasizes three persons in one. Since the Second Helvetic Confession is rooted in the definitions of the ecumenical creeds, it is an important theological tool towards formulating the theological principles for developing the Trinitarian theology for the ADC in the next chapter.

In the *Belgic Confession* (Article 8) some Trinitarian elements are described in addition to the Helvetic Confession. The Trinity is such that each member is distinguished by their particular characteristics in a way to maintain the three persons as one God. Thus, the Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son. Each person is unique in relation to the other in the sense that the Father did not take the flesh, nor did the Spirit, but the Son. The Father is said to have never been without his Son or his Holy Spirit because the three are equal from eternity. The Athanasian Creed verses 4-5 states, "... neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance". For there is one person of the Father, of the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Adhinarta (2012:48) argues that the Reformed confessions affirm the divinity of the Holy Spirit by assigning to him the functions of God. This shows a sense of equality, coeternity, and consubstantiality that he shares with the Father and the Son. For example, in the Reformed baptismal confession of Matthew 28:19, the Spirit's divinity is acknowledged. Hodge's (2015:26-37) interpretation of the Westminster Confession (Chapter II, Of God, and of the Holy Trinity) reinforces the equality of the three persons, where the Holy Spirit shares in "the indivisible divine essence, all divine perfections, and prerogatives". In the Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter II, iii, Of God and the Holy Trinity (Westminster Assembly, 1994:4), the ecumenical creeds are affirmed as well in affirming the divinity of the Holy Spirit. For example, in the oneness of the Godhead, the three persons are said to be "of one substance, power, and eternity; God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding, the Son is eternally begotten of the Father, the Holy Ghost

eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son". This development follows the Athanasian Creed, verses 21-23, which emphasize the un-regeneration of the Father, the begottenness of the Son, and the procession of the Spirit.

The doctrine of the Trinity did not make any sense to some theological minds. For example, Servetus in *The Two Treatises of Servetus on the Trinity* Book I argues that "any discussion of the Trinity should start from the man. That Jesus surnamed Christ was not a hypostasis ... He and not the Word is also the miraculously born Son of God ... not a hypostasis but an actual Son...". Regarding the Holy Spirit, he argues that the Spirit as the "third separate being lands us in practical tritheism, no better than atheism even though the unity of God be insisted on. Careful interpretation of the usual proof-texts show that they teach no union of the three beings in one, but harmony between them". In his argument, the Holy Spirit as the third person of the Godhead is not known in the scripture (Serveto, 2013:3). The promulgation at the Council of Nicaea (AD 325) on Trinitarian doctrine was dismissed as the falling away of the church from the biblical mission into fallaciousness (Ozment, 1980:370-371). Servetus acknowledged in his second work, *Two dialogues on Trinity* (1532), his theological immaturity, but in response to his critics, he refused to recant his position concerning the nonsensicalness of the Trinitarian doctrine. Torrance rules out the possibility of salvation without the holding together of the doctrine of the Trinity. He argues that if there is no relation of the oneness in the being and agency between who the Father is in himself and what he is towards humanity in the grace of Jesus Christ his Son, then the kerygmatic concept of the gospel is vague in its saving content. This invalidates the apostolic tradition and the ecumenical creeds (Torrance, 1997:23-24). Servetus' view of Trinity and Christology makes his teaching unacceptable in the framework of orthodox Christianity (Dibb, 2005:2). This suggests that any attempt towards the doctrine of the Trinity that does not accord with the teachings of the creeds promotes a de-emphasis on the person of Christ. This has implications for the supposition on the need to build a Trinitarian theology in the context of the ADC in Kenya.

In this period, the eternal relationship in the Trinity, which reveals all three persons as one God in essence and equality, provides the background for establishing the place of Christ in the Trinitarian mission. Thus, the Reformed tradition, through the ecumenical creeds and the two Reformed confessions, helps to provide an answer to the question

of the theological principles that can be used in articulating the Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community in establishing the place of Christ in the ADC's Trinitarian mission.

3.4.4 The relationship between the Trinitarian community and missional community in the ecumenical creeds

This subsection deals with two suppositions that emerged from the empirical study in the previous chapter. The two suppositions are about the need to understand the Trinitarian community, and the need to establish an understanding of missional community. Since the two suppositions are interrelated, they are joined into one to establish the relationship between them. The focus is to establish how the functions of the Trinitarian community determine both the begetting and the functioning of the missional community. The aim is to link Christology to ecclesiology as the body. The definitions and affirmations of the ecumenical creeds are used as the framework in developing this relationship. The works consulted are ascertained through the theological principles derived from the ecumenical creeds. The key issues in this review are to address the question of whether the ecumenical creeds have been followed in articulating the relationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community. These theological questions will later be used to establish the principles of Chapter Four.

In Calvin's *Institutes* (IV, I, ii) the church belongs to God and her foundation is rooted in his secret election. He argues that all the elect of God are joined together in Christ, as its one head, and through the Holy Spirit of God they are held together in one faith and hope, so they participate in one God and Christ. The death of Christ necessitates the production of spiritual fruit, the church, which God preserves. In the *Institutes* (IV, I, iii) however, Calvin identifies two marks, which are not similar to the Nicene Creed's predicates of a true church, as preaching the Word and observance of the sacraments, and these form the hinge on which the Lord sets the communion of his church. In this mission, the church is the instrument of preaching and the administration of the sacraments. Calvin (IV, I, ix & x) points out the work of God towards the missional community. According to him, God maintains the power and faith of the church through preaching to nourish the church. Secondly, God consecrates the mouths and tongues of the servants in his service. Thirdly, he is the author of the preaching and the connector

of the Spirit and his promises to ensure results. In his view, the Spirit makes the church's mission effective.

Calvin answers the question of what the church is in two ways. First, the church is as it is before God. Members are adopted sons of God and are sanctified by the Spirit to become true members of Christ. They make up the saints who dwell on earth and the elect who existed from the beginning of the earth. Second, the church is a mixture of those who truly profess one God and Christ, and those who attend church for religious formalities (IV, I, vii).

In the *Institutes* (II, XII, i & ii) the themes of redemption and mediation point to the relationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community. Calvin's argument follows the affirmations of the Church Fathers. For example, he writes that to effect redemption, God through his grace had to appear as the Redeemer in the person of his begotten Son. Redemption is accomplished through the mediator of God and man, Jesus Christ, who had to be very God and very man. This results in the sons of men becoming the sons of God, and instead of heirs of hell, they are heirs of the kingdom of heaven through the son of God, whose incarnation was necessary for effecting this transfer. Calvin's perspective is that in Christ alone, God has, is, and will remain the exclusive Redeemer (Parker, 2002:58).

Calvin's (III, I, i) emphasis on the importance of the Logos incarnation helps to develop the relationship between the Trinitarian and the missional community. He argues that the incarnation of Christ links the heavenly blessings from the Father to us through the Holy Spirit. In his understanding of the heavenly blessings, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit complete the ontological Trinitarian family, which follows a composition that was formulated by the Church Fathers towards the ratification of the definitions and the affirmations of the ecumenical creeds that provide the framework of the orthodox faith. The heavenly witnesses (the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit) parallel the earthly ones, namely water, blood, and the Spirit (III, I, i). This suggests the relationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community. In the prophetic function of Christ, Calvin sees the unity between Christ and his people. In this unity, Christ is not thought of as an individual, i.e., a private person, because all that he did was for his people. His anointing to the prophetic office was to make his people become prophets. Moreover, his anointing was meant for the whole body of Christ so that the

power of the Spirit remains present in the mission of proclamation (Parker, 2002:69). The affirmation of the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed and the Athanasian Creed about humanity and the divinity of Christ is evident as a necessity for salvation.

The Second Helvetic Confession of 1566 (Chapter 17) deals with the catholicity of the holy church, and its definition of the church follows the affirmations of the ecumenical creeds about the unity of the Trinity within their distinctive economic functions. For example, first, those who make up the universal church are described as the "citizens of one commonwealth", who are "sanctified by the blood of the Son of God". Secondly, the church is "an assembly of the faithful called or gathered out of the world, a communion of all saints who rightly worship and serve the true God in Christ the Saviour, by the Word and the Holy Spirit." It further confesses an embrace of the article of the Apostles' Creed's "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints", (Richardson, 2016a) as concerning the saints mentioned in the Helvetic Confession. The oneness of the church is rooted in the confession of one God, and one mediator Jesus Christ, one shepherd of the one body of Christ, and one Spirit who leads us to salvation. The interplay of relational statements, especially of the Trinitarian community, speaks of the early church fathers' affirmations of Christ's dual nature, the divinity of all the persons, their coequality and coeternity that necessitates their salvific economy towards humanity.

The same concept of the holy catholic church appears in the Belgic Confession of 1561 (Article 27), with the church as one and universal, portrayed as anticipating her entire salvation in Jesus Christ. In its preparation for consummation, this church is constantly washed by the blood of the new covenant, through the sanctification and seal by the Holy Spirit. The marks of this church in Article 29 imply a restorative mission. For example, the church is sent to engage in pure preaching, pure administration of the sacraments as Christ instituted, and to administer church discipline. While the last two marks of the true church may concentrate on the internal church matters, the first mark responds to both the outer and the inner mission.

Bosch (1991:245) says that Calvin, compared to Luther, was explicit in his missional theology because he was one that held the believer responsible for the world. Regarding the missional aspects, Bosch (1991:256) characterizes Calvin's perspective of mission as follows. First, the mission is to continually see the exalted Christ as "pre-

eminently active". Secondly, to perceive Christ as continually reigning, thus "viewing the church as an intermediary between the exalted Christ and the secular order". Bosch argues that from this perspective emerges "the idea of mission as extending the reign of Christ". This consists of a dual dimension of the mission, namely the inward spiritual transformation of individuals as well as the transformation of the earth through the knowledge of the Lord. Bosch is dealing with two concepts of the Puritan tradition derived from Calvinism, namely the doctrine of predestination and the rule of God, to explain the mission. While the doctrine of predestination says that God elected people to faith into the kingdom, and that they form a community over which God's rule reigns, the emphasis on predestination "leads to active involvement in the mission", as a way to show participation with God in his mission. The doctrine of predestination appears to motivate missional engagement with the mind of giving a missional account to God who is the owner of mission.

The Anabaptists approached the Reformation with a radical reform "recklessly challenging the ecclesiastical and secular authorities" which inspired social unrest (Goertz, 1996:7). They radicalized Luther's concept of the universal priesthood by shifting it from a territorial and regional perspective to a boundless and limitless priesthood. For them, the entire German nation and her neighboring countries were regarded as mission fields. The Matthean and Markan versions of the Great Commission, with Psalm 24:1, laid the background of their confession; thus, they are counted among the first to perceive the commission and call to all believers (Bosch, 1991:246).

The Anabaptists were Christocentric because their life, faith, and church were rooted in the teaching of Jesus Christ in the New Testament. However, the radical extremists interpreted the scripture rationally, thus they became heretically anti-Trinitarian. Their reason was supreme above the divine revelation and scripture (Estep, 1996:22, 23). Goertz (1996:1) says that all Anabaptists were regarded as rebels in the view of the Protestant Reformers. Goertz (1996:24) observes that unity as a concept of the community was essential and it drove the Anabaptists' mission of the church. This signified their triumphant shift from selfishness to a tranquil attitude to the world and as an extension of love to other people. Kasdorf (1975:304-305) argues that Anabaptists acknowledged the Great Commission literally and embraced the indwelling power of the

Spirit as the ultimate power in their disciples, thus they would send their missionaries under the same power to wherever the gospel would be received. The mention of the Great Commission guarantees their mission as Trinitarian because the content of the Commission is rooted in the Trinity. Kasdorf (1984:124) further argues that the Great Commission defined how the Anabaptists understood the history of the world, the church, the kingdom, discipleship, and witness. The outline of the Great Commission formed their missional strategy. For example, first going out to the world, secondly, preaching the gospel to provide a chance for response, thirdly, anticipating a response to the gospel, fourthly, to baptize those who believe, and fifthly, to incorporate the new converts to the community of believers, the true Christian church. If the Great Commission is the outline of the mission of the triune God in the New Testament, it follows that its accomplishment is dependent on the economic functions of the persons of the Trinity.

The development of concepts of mission and community in the Reformed period can be summed up as follows, as perceived by Calvin. There is a movement of the Trinitarian persons towards the world to bring into being the missional community. In this understanding, the church belongs to God, the elect of God is joined to Christ's head of the body through the Holy Spirit of God. The theme of redemption is important in developing a Trinitarian and missional community. Redemption is the work of God, through the incarnate Christ as the begotten Son of God. Similarly, the Logos incarnation develops the relationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community. In it, Christ links the blessings of God to us through the Holy Spirit. The catholicity of the holy church should be used to develop the missional concept. This is because the church needs to be seen in the light of the work of Christ the Son of God continually sanctifying it. Secondly, the sanctified assembly (the saints) is to worship and serve the true God in Christ the Saviour by the Word of the Holy Spirit. The creedal statements touching on the coeternity, coequality, and divinity that explain the functions of the Trinitarian community in relation to the missional community provide a theological reference in establishing the place of Christ in the ADC's Trinitarian mission. The Trinitarian components in the Belgic and Helvetic confessions reminiscent of the ecumenical creeds' affirmation are useful conjectures for establishing the place of Christ in the Trinitarian mission.

3.4.5 The development of Christology in the ecumenical creeds

Calvin (1845) in the *Institutes* (IV, IX, i-ii) affirms his support of the ecumenical councils but he is emphatic that they should not replace the authority of Christ. He states, “I venerate them [the councils] from my heart.... But there must be some limitation, there must be nothing derogatory to Christ ... it is the right of Christ to preside over all councils, and not share the honor with man” (Calvin, 1845:621). Calvin does not mention the Apostles’ Creed as such. He starts with the Nicene Creed and then moves to the others, perhaps because the subsequent creeds and councils provide an explanation and expansion of the Apostles’ Creed. Another reason could be that the articles of faith concerning the Christological nature and the Holy Spirit in the Apostles’ Creed were strongly debated in the following centuries, which led to the promulgation of the subsequent creeds. For Calvin, the authenticity of a council is determined by the presence of Christ among the conveners (“for where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them” Matt. 18:20). Otherwise, he says there is no need for a council, which only uses human articulation that demeans Christ. He recommends that the characteristic standard of a council should be marked against the following criteria: examine the time it was held, on what occasion, the intention, those who were present, and whether the scripture formed the standard of the discussion (Calvin, 1845:623).

Calvin’s (1845:621) embrace of the ancient Council of Nicaea (IV, IX, viii) confirms his respect for the Nicene Creed’s affirmations that Christ was of the same substance with the Father, which was received as orthodox. Calvin establishes that the full revelation of God incarnate exists in Jesus Christ and him alone. He further says that this does not mean that the Godhead left heaven to be confined in Christ’s body. Although he filled all things, he dwelt corporally in the humanity of Christ. Christ is therefore God revealed in flesh (Niesel, 2002:118-119). For Calvin (1845:54), Hebrews 1:3 shows a shared essence between the Father and the Son, such that since the Father’s peculiar properties are distinguished, they are fully expressed in the Son, as a rendering of the Father’s hypostasis. This shows that Calvin agrees with the statements of the Church Fathers in the Nicene Creed regarding Jesus Christ as the eternal Son of the Father and his consubstantiality with the Father.

Calvin acknowledges the Council of Chalcedon because he says, “thus, we embrace the Council of Chalcedon, and repudiate the second of Ephesus, because the latter

sanctioned the impiety of Eutyches, and the former condemned it” (IV, IV, ix). The impiety of the Eutychians, also referred to as Monophysites, was their position that Christ had one nature. Eutyches taught the opposite heresy of the Nestorians' position by denying the full divinity and humanity of Christ. He instead proposed the absorption of the human by the divine nature that resulted in a third nature (Grudem, 1994:481). This theological heresy is addressed in the Chalcedonian definitions (AD 451) which affirmed Jesus as the Son and the Lord, both consubstantial with the Father in accordance to the Godhead, and consubstantial to humans according to manhood (Grudem, 1994:482). The Chalcedonian Creed is better approached in Calvin's commentary of John 1:14, as Rishmawy (2013: par.3) explains, “that the Speech begotten by God before all ages, and who always dwelt with the Father, was made man”. From this, two things emerge:

The first is, that two natures were so united in one person in Christ, that the same Christ is true God and true man. The second is, that the unity of person does not hinder the two natures from remaining distinct so that his Divinity retains all that is peculiar to itself, and his humanity holds separately whatever belongs to it (Rishmawy, 2013: par. 3).

This side by side confirms the second article of the Nicene Creed whose definition is “And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made”. The Chalcedonian Creed, which defines the dual nature without confusion, separation, or division, defends the hypostatic nature against Apollinarianism and Eutychianism. Parker (2002:67) argues that Calvin supports the fact that Christ is God and man, such that there is one Christ and not two. This is not by conversion of the divinity into flesh but by taking of humanity into God altogether without the confusion of substance. Since Calvin's Christology is rooted in the scripture, he argues that OT titles confirm his divinity. For example, from the attributes ascribed to God as “mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace” (Isa. 11:6) and “the Lord our righteousness” (Jer. 23:6) Calvin infers that the only begotten Son is eternal God (I, I, ix & Xiii, 1). Additionally, Calvin (I, XIII, xi) sees Christological divinity in the NT through the titles ascribed to God, for example, He is the “Lord of Hosts” (Isa. 18:4). He argues that the

glory that was shown to Isaiah (Isa. 45:23) was the glory of the Son as the evangelist John confirms (Jn. 12:41).

The deity of Christ is maintained in the Reformed confessions. For example, in the *Belgic Confession* (1561, art. 10):

We believe that Jesus Christ, according to his divine nature, is the only Son of God, eternally begotten, not made nor created, for then he would be a creature. He is one in essence with the Father; coeternal; the exact image of the person of the Father and the "reflection of his glory,"³ being in all things like him. He is the Son of God not only from the time he assumed our nature but from all eternity, as the following testimonies teach us when they are taken together (Bratcher, 2020).

This confirms the deity of Christ in the sense that, as the Son of God, he is eternally begotten, not made, nor created. His essence is of the same with the Father, coeternal, the exact image of the Father and a reflection of his glory. His incarnation is clearly expressed in Article 18:

God sent his only and eternal Son into the world. The Son took the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of a man, truly assuming a real human nature, with all weakness, except for sin. Being conceived of the Blessed Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit, without male participation. He assumed both human nature for the body and real human soul so that he might be a real human. For since the soul had been lost as well as the body, he had to assume them both to save them both together (Bratcher, 2020).

This affirms that the Son of God was sent by God into the world and took the form of a servant, was made like us by assuming real human nature except for the sin; the Virgin Mary conceived him by the power of the Holy Spirit without male participation. Equally, the *Belgic Confession* acknowledges the Apostles', the Nicene, the Athanasian, the Chalcedonian, and the Constantinopolitan creeds' affirmations of Christ's dual natures. It affirms its belief in the human and the divine nature as inseparably united, joined

³ Col. 1:15; Heb 1:3

together in such a way that there are not two sons of God nor two persons but that the two natures are united in a single person with distinctive properties (Bratcher, 2020).

In the *Second Helvetic Confession* of 1566, Chapter XI (Bratcher, 2018), Christology emerges clearly, and it supports the ecumenical councils because the definitions regarding Christ are upheld. Christ is declared as a true God, who was predestined or foreordained from eternity by the Father to be the Saviour of the world. The Son, according to this confession, was born through the Virgin Mary by the Father before all eternity in an indescribable manner. Concerning his divinity, the Son is both coequal and consubstantial with the Father, true God, and not adopted as in Adoptionism. As a man, Christ has real flesh and was made from the seed of Abraham and David not from the coitus of a man like the Ebionites claimed. The language is similar to that used in the Athanasian Creed. The Second Helvetic Confession (Chapter XI) further posits that the Christological flesh was neither imaginary nor just brought from heaven as Valentinus and the Marcionites held (Bratcher, 2018).

The Westminster Confession affirms the doctrine of Christology. Christology is derived in Chapter II, *Of God and of the Holy Trinity*, in which “the Son is eternally begotten of the Father” (Westminster Assembly, 1994:4). This brings about the idea of the Christological property of pre-existence, and the attribute of divine consubstantiality with the Father, making Christ not created like other creatures, but generated from the Father, which conforms to the Nicene Christology. Allen’s (2010:64-69) discussion about Christ reveals the language and the definitions of both the Nicene and Nicene-Constantinopolitan creeds. For example, concerning his divinity, “the Son can be considered as of the one and as of the three: as the one true God, the Son is eternal and *autotheos*; as the second person of the Trinity the Son is eternally begotten of the Father” (Allen, 2010:64). Secondly, the Reformed tradition acknowledges the eternal humanity of the Son, an argument that is built on the fact that Jesus took on the full humanity with all humans, such that all human experiences characterize the life of the incarnate Son (Allen, 2010: 67). The humanity of the Son needed inspiration in the sense of sanctification and empowerment by the Holy Spirit, thus “Anointed one”, but his divinity did not need inspiration (Allen, 2010:69). This does not suggest that he was sinful, but as Allen (2010:69) further argues, the Son was fully divine and fully human, and thus both natures existed in integrity without mixing. The possibility of the human

Son being sinful does not fit in the biblical story, which accounts for his generation from the Father. This means that since Christ is the direct representation of the Father, it exonerates him from being a mere human caused by human procreation. Since Reformed Christology is rooted in the scripture as well as derived from Calvinism and the ecumenical creedal affirmation of the position of Christ in the Trinity, it offers a theological background upon which to establish principles necessary for Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community. Such theological guidelines form the basis for building the place of Christ in the ADC Trinitarian mission.

3.4.6 Conclusion

First, the sole sufficiency of the scripture and inspiration (Calvin, I, VIII, i), Zwingli's perspicuity and the necessity of the biblical languages (Sargant, 2014:327), and the supremacy of the divine revelation (Bromiley, 1953:31) are essential in developing a missional hermeneutic. Out of all these, what appeals to the ADC are the sufficiency of scripture, inspiration, divine revelation, and perspicuity, because they are attached to the economic role of the Holy Spirit. Perspicuity, which emphasizes the indwelling of the Holy Spirit who enables the interpretation of the Bible into clear understanding, is key in the ADC. The question of biblical languages, which Zwingli seems to suggest as complimentary to perspicuity, is a new proposal for the ADC. This is because too much analysis involved in both the Hebrew and Greek languages may be received as a waste of time and a hindrance to the working of the Holy Spirit. Bullinger's *lectio continua* (Dowey, 2004:52) should be replaced by *lectio divina* since the former will hinder the ADC notion of haphazard determination by the Spirit. However, the latter applies to the ADC because the Spirit will lead them in living out the read and meditated scripture as the living Word.

Secondly, in this period, members of the Trinitarian economy are distinguished by way of their functions, yet they are one, sharing equal divinity (Calvin, I, XII, xii & xix; the Second Helvetic Confession of 1566, Chapter 3; the Belgic Confession, article 8). The arguments are essential, for they fix the "replacement" notion of the ADC, which has led to the dominance of the Holy Spirit. Thus, this work proposes a theology of "non-individual prominence" of the persons of the Godhead which brings about the theology of "complementariness" towards the ADC's Trinitarian mission in locating Christ as

active as opposed to passive. With this approach, the affirmations of the ecumenical creeds will influence the ADC's shift in Trinitarian mission.

Thirdly, the church is the outcome of the Godhead (Calvin, IV, I, ii), and an instrument of God in the *missio Dei* (Calvin, IV, I, ix & x). It is composed of those adopted as sons and sanctified, as well as those who religiously attend the church community (Calvin, IV, I, vii). This could mean that the adopted and sanctified sons are members within the body, while the nominal attendees are a community within the church organization but outside the body of Christ. There is a difference between being a member of the church as an organization and being a member of the church as the body of Christ. The research proposes that the ADC build its Trinitarian and missional community on the understanding that church attendance and doing mission to have people become ADC members is not the whole mission of God. God's mission is Trinitarian, which makes the universal church of the adopted sons beyond the denominational scope. This happens when the sanctified live out their Christ-imputed light to the nominal ones to be included as the "citizens of one commonwealth" (Second Helvetic Confession 1566, Chapter 17).

Lastly, the ecumenical creeds show the preservation of Christology. The acceptance of the Christology developed by the ecumenical councils is embedded in the centrality of Christ's presence and his authority, because anything outside or against Christ renders the Councils' deliberations and formulations irrelevant (Calvin, 1845:621). Before the ADC in developing its Christology through the creeds can embrace this assumption, this work proposes the following. First, the need to include a method to remedy the ADC's less than total involvement of Christ in mission. This is done by reconstructing its practical theology of divine healing, the notion of Spirit baptism and revelation through dreams and visions, which is relegated primarily to the Holy Spirit. This does not mean destroying the ADC's theology. Secondly, apart from Calvin's basis of accepting the ecumenical councils on Christ, a practical theology should be constructed around the ADC's theological praxis and should be rooted in the ecumenical affirmations of the coequality, coeternity, and consubstantiality of the Godhead.

3.5 THE MODERN PERIOD (17th Century TO MODERN-DAY)

3.5.1 Introduction

In this period, the review has moved to examine the roots of Pentecostalism and to compare them to the teaching of the ecumenical creeds. This approach is taken because the ADC and its theology, which is the focus of this research, is greatly influenced by the Pentecostal movement because it split from the PAOC. McGrath (2016:57) confirms that from c.1750 onwards, the modern period has experienced a movement of Christian theology from Western Europe to a global phenomenon. The underlying struggle in the modern period is not very much on the doctrinal composition, but on the application of the church fathers' affirmations as contained in the ecumenical statements. This section evaluates the development of the suppositions that emerged from the empirical analysis through the ecumenical creeds in responding to the question of the theological principles that can be articulated about the Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community that can be useful to develop the place of Christ in the ADC's Trinitarian mission.

The framework of this review is limited to the Moravian movement of the 17th century, the Wesleyan movement in the 18th century, the evangelical awakening in America in the 19th century, the Pentecostal spirituality in the 20th century, and the African Christian theology.

The Moravian church owes its beginning to the teaching of John Hus, who was burned to death on July 16, 1415 for opposing the Roman Catholic Church's doctrine of indulgencies, and transubstantiation. Hus' teaching on moral purity and forgiveness from God through Jesus Christ stirred feelings of reforms in people (Hutton, 1909: 8-12). The Moravian church also called the *Unitas Fratrum*, meaning Unity of the Brethren embraced its name in 1457, and became Hus' followers (The Moravian Church, 2018). In 1464, the Brethren church held a synod to affirm their theology. They included faith in Jesus Christ as Lord, righteousness, God's love, practiced through works of mercy in the spirit of love. The Brethren church grew in Bohemia through their "live, practice, and discipline" and not through "doctrine, theory, and opinions" (Hutton, 1909:42-44). This can be a valid evaluation background of theory and practice.

The Moravian church was established in 1467, and it expanded in 1517 through print media. Through this, they distributed Bibles to Bohemians and Moravians in their native languages (The Moravian church, 2018). However, in 1547, persecution dispersed the Brethren church to Poland. This ignited growth because in 1557 three provinces emerged which are, Bohemia, Moravia, and Poland. Persecution extended during the “Thirty Years War” (1618-1648). Nevertheless, the Bohemian Protestants emerged victorious (The Moravian church, 2018). Bishop John Amos Comenius (1627-1672) is key in the revival of the Moravian church. This is because of the concept of “hidden seed”. This was his prayer and desire about the new life, which he hoped the Brethren church would bring to the society that was in need of both moral and spiritual awakening (Hutton, 1909: 102).

In the 18th century, the Moravian church was strengthened under Count Nicolaus von Zinzendorf (1700s). With his pietist spirit, Zinzendorf endeavoured to expand the Moravian church, when he gave refuge to the families that were fleeing persecution in Bohemia and Moravia (Hutton, 1909:116-125). The founding and the establishment of the community of Herrnhut in 1722 was significant, as it became a home for the Moravian refugees. Under Zinzendorf’s leadership, the Brethren church observed discipline of the Unitas Fratrum such that in 1727 it led to a great spiritual revival. Hence, in 1732 the Moravian church sent out the first missionaries to the West Indies (The Moravian church, 2018). The Moravian influence and teaching reached America in 1735 but its attempt to establish a community in Savannah in Georgia failed.

The Moravian church arrived in London through James Hutton, a bookseller who was linked to the Moravians and Methodists, and helped to shape the evangelical revival (Hutton, 1909:185). Hutton encountered John and Charles Wesley during his visits to the University of Oxford to sell books. Since the pair had organised the group for bible study of the Greek N.T, Sunday evening meetings, regular fasting and paying hospitality to the poor, it was easy for Hutton to introduce pietism as a rival standpoint (Hutton, 1909:185-187). That explains why the Moravian and Methodist movements express similar fundamental theological emphasises, such as the teaching about being filled with the Holy Spirit, and the manifestations of post-Spirit-baptism (Podmore, 1998:48-52). Bevins (2019:22) argues that the Wesleyan movement is “the rediscovery of pure apostolic doctrines and practices of the early church”. He further maintains that

Wesley's emphasis on the reapplication and contextualization of the doctrine helped in the establishment of a disciple-making movement. This was used to equip people who were zealous for evangelisation, similar to that of the Moravians. Gill (1909: 11) argues that the "great constructive work of Wesley got many hints from the system of the Moravians". The theology of the Moravian community that may have influenced the Wesleyan movement and international evangelicalism to include the centrality of Christ in worship and theology, the centrality of the bible in worship, spiritual rebirth or awakening, and the urge to share the gospel (Engel, 2009: 19). The emphasis was on conversion experience and the strict code of conduct as the "chosen people living out God's word" (Gillespie & Beachy, 2007:5).

The Moravian movement's theology developed from the three ecumenical creeds (Padmore, 1998:48-52), and the Wesleyan emphasis on balanced spirituality is important to this work because it gives a framework for ADC's development of a balanced theology through the ecumenical creeds. The Moravian theology is thus, important to this thesis because its theology is evangelical, with elements of Pentecostalism like experience, and baptism of the Holy Spirit, which ADC embraces. Additionally, it gives an evaluative blend for ADC in terms of theoretical and practical theology that it can use to develop its theology. That is, it shows the possibility of blending academic and practiced theology together to bring a balanced theology. Wesley's (1843:6) tract *The Character of a Methodist* describes a Methodist as:

One, who has the love of God shed abroad in his heart, by the Holy Ghost given unto him: one who loves the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind, and with all his strength. God is the joy of his heart, and the desire of his soul; which is constantly crying out, "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee! My God and my all! Thou art the strength of my heart, and my portion forever!"

This gives the marks of one distinguished from the world, and points to the theology of revival that marked the modern period, which is relevant in evaluating the ADC Trinitarian theology. Given that this theological and practical shift spread widely in the world, it provided the background for the growth of Pentecostalism, whose theological roots inform the African Christian theology. The above theological reasons, which determine the limitation of the scope of the review, provide the Pentecostal basis on

which the African Divine Church is aligned. The theological relevance for evaluating modern Christianity and its theology is located through the aforementioned limits.

3.5.2 A missional hermeneutic

3.5.2.1 *In Moravian theology*

The theology held by individuals or a tradition determines the trajectory that the interpretation of the Bible takes. To some point, hermeneutics is expressed in the songs, hymns, and the content of the preaching. Jensz (2010:24-25) argues that the Moravians used the *Los* (lot) to determine the will of God and this was derived from Leviticus 16:8. In cases where the “Holy Scriptures and the teachings of the divine providence do not furnish a clear rule of action, they would turn to the *Los*”.

The Moravians’ theology does not show explicit hermeneutical principles. However, hermeneutical elements are revealed in Zinzendorf’s theology. First is Zinzendorf’s emphasis on the sufficiency of the atoning death of Christ for the salvation of humanity (Vogt, 2008:209). Secondly, the centrality of the theology of the wounds of Christ is taken as the centre of the gospel and genuine theology. This is connected to the notion that Christology is the beginning and the end of all theology in Christian doctrine (Vogt, 2008:211). Thirdly, in the concept of the wounds and the blood of Christ, related terms such as ransom and innocent death, which stand for a vicarious sacrifice for humanity, hints at Christological redemptive mission. Fourth is Zinzendorf’s view of the ascension, where he perceives both the authoritative Word of God and the scriptural testimony, which he argues, “refers principally to Christ” (Vogt, 2008:214).

From the above theology, the hermeneutic concept of typology seems to determine the missional hermeneutics of Zinzendorf. This is because the blood and wounds of Christ are central to his theology. Therefore, the Old Testament sacrifice of innocent animals could be interpreted to be a fulfilment in Christ who satisfied the justice of God. Vogt (2008:214), who argues that, for Zinzendorf, the Bible is concerned with Christ alone, such that “whatever has been said about the prophets is applied by the Holy Spirit to the suffering of Jesus and the glorious events that could follow thereafter”, confirms this argument. In Zinzendorf’s view, the God that was revealed to Abraham and Moses was Jesus Christ (Vogt, 2008:214). Jesus is the main character in the unfolding of the *missio*

Dei. This means that Jesus can be located implicitly from the OT typologically as we move towards his explicit location in the NT.

3.5.2.2 *In Wesleyan theology*

Wesley used the deuterocanonical books in his interpretation. For example, he used apocryphal texts in a systematic way side-by-side with the canonical texts (Jones, 1995:99). Wesley used reason as an instrument of interpretation. He used basic reason to define terms and to determine the distinctions to make clear the scriptures to the audience. Secondly, reason was used to examine the implication of the scripture. Wesley appealed to secular science that assisted him to interpret scripture (Jones, 1995:116).

The songs and hymns used by people express their hermeneutic orientation. Half of Charles Wesley's 9000 hymns expressed poetic interpretation of the scriptural passages (C. Wesley, 1989:443). For Charles Wesley, the hymns acted as openings in his devotional Bible study which contributed to the development of biblical hermeneutics. The poetic hermeneutics focused on Christological typology and allegory. Tyson (C. Wesley, 1989:444) further argues that Charles Wesley "paraphrased words, phrases, and images together to form a new interpretive fabric". The typology, allegory, and dialogues employed by Charles assisted in demonstrating biblical passages as Christological drama that communicated the essence of the gospel to the audience.

Lastly, Koskie (2014:60) points to another hermeneutic principle for John Wesley, which is the searching of the scriptures, and prayer, which were connected to holiness. It is reported that the Holy Spirit is key in the interpretation because he is the author of the scripture and the lives of people. Prayer enlightens the interpretation because it informs reflection about the state of the heart in the light of what is biblical information. This points to a proper application that triggers a response from the reader or the audience. Proper interpretation will derive a complete understanding of the mission of God in the Bible.

3.5.2.3 *In Pentecostal theology*

Concerning Pentecostal hermeneutics, Oliverio (2012:31-32) argues that it is based on four interpretive assumptions. The first assumption involves a dialogue between the

scriptural authority for Christian life and beliefs, and the religious and general experiences, which form one's theological understanding of the world. That is to say, from the lived experience, the interpreter develops a theological interpretation of the world, which is informed by both the scripture and life experiences. Secondly, it was the concept of restorationist beliefs of the early Pentecostal movement that perceived the salvific plan of God as being accomplished through the outpouring of the Spirit in the Latter Rain, which formed the pivotal of Pentecostalism. The third hermeneutical assumption is based on "the four/fivefold gospel" which functioned as a doctrinal basis for Pentecostal beliefs and living. The four/fivefold approach deals with reading the Bible as one story, with supernatural experience, and a perception of the Bible as a lived story, in which Jesus is its beginning, the middle, and the goal of the story (Martin, 2013:4-8). This operated as a doctrinal framework used in explaining the scriptures and the spiritual experiences. Lastly, there is "a pragmatic naïve realism, integrated with an understanding of the primacy of the supernatural", which formed the rationality of Pentecostalism. The interaction between the aforementioned habits "came to form the original classical hermeneutic" (Oliverio, 2012:33). Martin (2013:3) argues that the first Pentecostals reconstructed their hermeneutics from the perspective of the Pentecostal experience of the Holy Spirit. The notion of baptism in the Holy Spirit denoted the apocalyptic inbreaking of God which influenced their view of things.

Concerning the notion of the fivefold approach already alluded to above, Martin (2013:4-5) maintains that it provided a concrete hermeneutical methodology for the Pentecostal community and the reading of the scripture. The fivefold approach is rooted in the centrality of Jesus, who is described as the Saviour, sanctifier, Spirit baptizer, healer and the soon-coming Messiah". Martin (2013:5-8) discusses other empathic aspects that informed the trajectory of Pentecostal hermeneutics, as follows. First, reading the Bible as one single story, which informed the Pentecostal approach of intertextuality. Secondly, the view that the Pentecostals are part of the biblical narrative. Thirdly, the Pentecostal approach to the Bible with the view of supernatural experience in determining the truth, where the aspect of charisma was key in deriving the divine revelation. Fourthly, the view that the Bible is a lived story precipitated a pragmatic interpretation. Fifthly, that at the beginning and the middle of the biblical story, Jesus Christ is its goal. This triggered the reading of the OT typologically, which necessitated seeing Christ in the whole Bible. Lastly, reading and interpreting the Bible in the light of

eschatological expectation ignited world evangelization. Nel (2018:3) argues that the concern is how the experience of the Spirit that empowered the church on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2) can still shape the reading of the Bible today.

What is common in Pentecostal hermeneutics is the experiential reading, interpretation, and application of the scripture. The place of rationalism is not common. This becomes a challenge when dealing with the historical and literary contexts, which call for a combination of both faith (Spirit), and reason. This will be articulated later in Chapter Four under the theological principles towards the missional hermeneutics of the ADC.

3.5.3 The Trinitarian theology of the ecumenical creeds

3.5.3.1 *In Moravian theology*

The Moravian Trinitarian theology is problematic as the following discussions confirm. For example, what Atwood (2004:64) presents as Zinzendorf's Trinity is problematic with God as the Father, the Holy Spirit as the mother, and the Son as the product of both the Father God and the Spirit mother. The Trinitarian formula has God the Father. This is correct because it follows the distinctive description of the first person identified as God the Father. Zinzendorf's reference to the Holy Spirit as a mother is quite a new suggestion, because the creeds have the Holy Spirit as proceeding from the Father and the Son and the three having the same essence, existing coeternally, and consubstantial. Zinzendorf's explanation of Jesus Christ as begotten from the Father God and the Spirit mother presents two problems. First, both the Father and the Spirit must have existed much earlier for them to beget the Son. Secondly, it deconstructs the affirmations of the creeds, which say that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. Thirdly, this does not follow the biblical formula where the Son is the Father's generation. Engel (2009:71) argues that in Zinzendorf's sermon in Germantown Pennsylvania the kind of faith promoted was emotionally and intuitively attached to the Trinity, especially to Jesus, which is a strong basis of defence for Christ's humanity. He maintained, "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is our true Father and the Spirit of Jesus Christ is our true mother. The Son of the living God, his only born Son, is our true brother and husband". This formula excludes the concept of Christology from above, as articulated in the ecumenical creeds in terms like coeternity, and consubstantiality, the living Christ as one only born. In the Trinitarian formula that Atwood (2004:64) alluded

to, the son is considered as proceeding from the Father and the Spirit mother. In Engel's view, the idea that the Spirit of Jesus Christ is our true mother, as well as our brother and husband, confuses the development of the Trinity because again the Holy Spirit who exists with the Father to beget Christ disappears from the Trinitarian community as the mother of Christ.

Fogleman (2007:74-80) observes several theological problems in the attempt towards the Moravian Trinity. First is the alteration of the gender structure of the power within the Trinity. While they did not alter the Father's gender, they robbed him of his power to be the Creator and assigned that to Jesus Christ. It is reported that "in Zinzendorf's seven last sermons before departing for Pennsylvania in the summer of 1741, Zinzendorf referred to Jesus Christ as the creator and he even announced it in Benjamin Franklin's newspaper upon arriving in the colony". This view was supported by August Gottlieb, one of the senior leaders, and the rest of the lower-ranking Moravians believed it (Fogleman, 2007:74). The concept of God as the all-powerful God who kept himself at some distance from the people (Wheeler, 2011:98), could give an indication towards a less developed Christology by the Moravians. This is because the missing Christology from above in the Moravian theology affects the understanding of Jesus as the Father's generation. Secondly, the reorganization of the Trinity, where the Spirit was feminized to become a mother, informed the content of Zinzendorf's sermons and the Moravian hymns. Zinzendorf's approach to this was a relational model of the Trinity and human family, where the Holy Spirit was ascribed as the mother of Jesus and the rest of us. For Zinzendorf, the metaphor of the Spirit as mother seems to suggest the feminine role of the Spirit in the nurturing of Jesus Christ. However, such perspective can obscure the biblical gender and language. The Holy Spirit was assumed to be more actively involved than Mary in the preparation of the womb in the birthing of Christ (Fogleman, 2007:75-76). Thirdly, the Moravians feminized the qualities of Jesus, especially in the hymns. For example, "My king, write thy law in my heart that will delight my spirit, thy royal desire kindles in me the mellow flame, and leads me on the militant path with motherly love". The king here is Christ, whose love is described as motherly. Similarly, the Moravians assigned to Jesus erotic qualities that informed their relationship with the Saviour (Fogleman, 2007:75-80).

From the above Moravian attempts towards the Trinity, the following can be deduced. First, the theological attempts do not follow the standards of the ecumenical creeds, which are rooted in both biblical and orthodox faith. Secondly, the relational model used in deriving the Trinity is overshadowed by the humanistic emphasis which overrides the place of the mystery of the Trinity. The feminization of the entire Trinity is an estranged language even in the biblical narrative. Thirdly, the elements used in deriving this kind of Trinity are inclined towards a Christology from below, but again the feminine terminologies used endanger the composition of the orthodox Trinity. This development does not merit the threshold of the ecumenical creeds' definitions of the Trinity, because such terms that reveal the Trinity's divinity, for example, co-eternality and consubstantiality, are not evident. Next, the concept of the Spirit as proceeding from both the Father and the Son seems to be reversed by having Christ proceeding from the Father and the Holy Spirit.

3.5.3.2 *In Wesleyan theology*

Wesleyan theology shows some understanding of the Trinity in its content. Tyson (C. Wesley, 1989:445) argues that the basis of Wesley's doctrine of the scripture revolved around the Word and the Spirit of God. He defined the Bible as "the enlivened Word, because of the work of the Spirit. Hence the Spirit more often than the Bible was said to be infallible in the revelatory event". Ruth's (2005:39-40) explanation of the concept of the second blessing reveals Trinitarian theology. For example, the work of the Holy Spirit is revealed in the notion of the second blessing, also known as the second experience, whereby the convert is baptized and anointed by the Holy Spirit. The second blessing, which is the work of grace, sanctifies and bestows the believer with spiritual gifts (Turley, 1999:20, 25).

Wilson (2011:59) brings into perspective the Wesleyan Trinity through Methodism. He argues that Methodist theology is rooted in the Trinity as Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, and that the Trinity "enters into the very heart of Christianity". Wesleyanism represented by Methodism is limited in giving an exhaustive philosophical approach to the Trinity like the ecumenical creeds. It overemphasizes experientialism, especially with the notion of the second blessing that is accompanied by spiritual manifestations. Experientialism is connected to what Wilson (2011:67) calls neglect of the Trinity within the Methodist theology. This came about due to the growing interest in prosperity, which

was equated to success from individual effort. Wilson argues that such theologizing puts much emphasis on individual salvation, which “may have given mistaken credence to the view that prosperity was morally justified and God-given reward of individual faithfulness”. Wilson (2011:67) further argues that this humanistic view of God’s functions is what could have precipitated the limited embrace of the Trinitarian God in Methodism. Since Wesleyan theology was rooted in the Trinity, little attention was paid to it for the first two hundred years of Methodist history (Wilson, 2011:66).

Wesleyanism emphasized experiential and altar theology over academic theology (Dieter, 1996:17-23). Jones (2016:11) writes that “one of the reasons I love the Wesleyan approach to Christianity is that we tend to downplay the more obscure parts of the gospel and Christian doctrine focusing on what John Wesley called practical divinity”. He explores the Wesleyan functional Trinity as follows. First, God is the one who created the world and bestowed “dignity and sacred worth” to all humanity. Secondly, Jesus of Nazareth was born fully God and fully man; he died and rose on Easter day for the salvation of humankind. Thirdly, those who believe in Jesus as the Lord and Saviour are baptised into the body of Christ to become part of the church. Towne and Leonard (2017:82) argue that this baptism is when the believer is filled with the Spirit of Jesus Christ, which enables one to trust and obey God, making one attain perfection.

The above Trinitarian development is a positive attempt, except that it is centred on the functional Trinity more than on the ontological Trinity. The functional Trinity confirmed above leads to a kind of experiential Trinity, that emphasizes post-salvation Spirit manifestation. The ontological Trinity, which deals with coeternity, consubstantiality, and coequality, offers the basis for how the functional Trinity moves in the world. The ecumenical creeds’ formula shows how the Trinitarian ontology and functionality unfolds, which Wesleyan theology misses out on. The African Divine Church requires both the ontological and functional Trinity of the ecumenical creeds for it to achieve a balanced Trinitarian ecclesiology.

3.5.3.3 *In Pentecostal theology*

The Pentecostal theology is rooted in experientialism and emotional feelings in its approach to the Trinity, and these challenge its embrace of the ecumenical creeds and

their theological content. Robinson (2013:3-4) argues that the emphasis is on Spirit manifestation, e.g., prophecy, tongue speaking, and divine healing. Cox (1995:47) confirms the prominence of pneumatology, and while Hollenweger (1997:182-184) reveals the Higher Christian life and Oberlin theology as determinants of the theological development, thus casting a challenge in locating the Trinitarian theology. The Graduate School of Theology began as the Theological Department of Oberlin Collegiate Institute in 1833. Academic work began in 1835 with the arrival of rebel seminarians from Lane Theological Seminary. By the 1870s, the school had become known as the Oberlin Theological Seminary. Its name changed to the Graduate School of Theology in 1916. The purpose of the seminary throughout its 133-year history was the training of ministers in a non-sectarian, non-denominational setting. The seminary closed in 1966 and moved to Nashville where it merged with Vanderbilt University Divinity School.

In the 20th century, Parham's theology that centres on prophecy, healing, glossolalia (Wilkinson, 2009:17-18), and sanctification through separate baptism with the Holy Spirit, determines the theology. Additionally, Seymour's Azusa Street revival emphasized spiritual preaching and baptism with the Holy Spirit and the accompanying manifestations that influenced the theology of the time. Synan (1997:105) argues that the Azusa Street experience marked the inauguration of modern Pentecostalism. In PAOC, the Hebden mission reveals the emphasis of pneumatic theology (Wilkinson 2009:18-19). Although Althouse (2010:56) mentions in passing that PAOC acknowledges the historic creeds and universality of the church, he does not take time to show how PAOC tradition unfolds this. In any case, Smith underpins the fact that the Pentecostal movement is emphatic on pneumatic experience because he argues that the Pentecostal community is open to divine visitation, which lessens the discussion on Christology and Trinitarian theology at large.

Therefore, Pentecostalism and related revival movements call for an urgent continued review of Trinitarian theology that is rooted in the declarations of the historic councils and the ecumenical creeds. The following discussion offers a framework for reconstructing Pentecostal Trinitarian theology. These theological works embrace the affirmations in the Nicene and Nicene-Constantinopolitan creeds, as well as the Council of Chalcedon, which upheld the divinity of the three persons, their shared eternity, coequality, and mutual intercommunication, and these should form the basis of

Trinitarian theology in the modern period. The Athanasian Creed, which appears as an interpretation of the ecumenical articles in the rest of the creeds, is profound in articulating the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity. Any development below this is heretical and anti-orthodox. As Warfield (1968:23) argues, the doctrine of the Trinity cannot be discovered by reason, neither can it be proved by reason again.

Berkhof (1938:31), whose theology of the Trinity suggests One God who exists in three persons of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit as not subordinate to each other but as the forms in which the Divine Being exists, maintains the creedal standard above. Their order of appearance only speaks of their order of functionality and not subordination or division. In keeping with the confirmations of the Council of Chalcedon about the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, Fairbairn's (1893:393, 399) position is orthodox, because he posits that in the Trinity's mutual relations, they are distinct, but in their common relation they are united. In their mutuality, disruption and division do not ensue. He further contends that besides the Father, the Son is present, and that the Spirit proceeding from the two, coordinated with them, with the same rank and same essential being, functions as far as the outer relations are concerned. Through the Spirit as an agent, the Fatherhood through Christ is manifested. Torrance (1996:32-34) alludes to the Trinitarian indivisibility and instead sees the entire Trinity consisting of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. They are not modals of self-presentations towards the world.

In Gunton's (2003b:164-166) theology, the affirmed ecumenical creeds statements are evident. First, his theological discourse is embedded in Chalcedonian Christology. Secondly, Gunton develops the Trinity economically when he says, "the Son and the Spirit are God himself in action. That is, they mediate God the Father's action in the world, both in the creation and in redemption. The mediation of God's action in and towards the world, and consequently of our action in it also, for as we have seen the two are inextricably bound with one another". Migliore's (2004:89) Trinitarian theology, which emanates from grace and holiness, maintains the indivisibility of the three persons that is anchored in the declarations of the early church fathers. He argues that the grace and the holiness of the Triune God are inseparable. While God's grace is expressed in God's gift of life to the creation at the beginning, the same gift now of the new life is supplied to fallen humanity in God's work of salvation in Jesus Christ through

the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. This grace for Packer (2010:91) is a keyword of Christianity. He argues that the God of grace is the God of all grace; the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of grace, and the hopes of grace rest on the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. In his view, grace connects with the person and the work of the mediator, the God-man Jesus Christ.

Warfield (1968:33, 35) argues that the doctrine of the Trinity is a revealed doctrine. The Trinity is embodied in Jesus Christ and in the Holy Spirit in accomplishing redemption. Warfield adds that the doctrine of the Trinity appears fully revealed in the coming of the Son of God as the sacrifice for humanity and in the coming of the Holy Spirit to convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and judgment, such that in this, the Trinitarian persons of the Godhead are explicitly revealed. In his view, the proof of the reality of God is revealed in the Trinity itself: the incarnation Christology of God the Son, and the outpouring of God the Holy Spirit. Warfield argues that the unity of the Godhead is insisted on in the New Testament with the formula of the Father as God, the Son as God, and the Holy Spirit as God. Warfield uses the language of the Athanasian Creed, particularly the 15th verse. He does not add to it but exegetes it to explicate its meaning. Barth (1956:203) also approaches the Trinity through the revelation of the Word of God. His response to the subject of revelation is to preserve of the unity of the persons of the Trinity affirmed in the ecumenical creeds. He says that God is the revealer, he is the act of revelation, and he is the “revealed-ness”, in the doctrine of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, in their oneness and threeness, as well as threeness and oneness. Needham (2000:187) can see a functional Trinity in the statement “only those taught by the Father come to Jesus” (Jn 6:43-35). In his view, the Son is indirectly involved in the teaching the Father does, because he is the Father’s Word, by which he is teaching. The Holy Spirit of the Father and the Son is also involved in the teaching inseparably because the Trinitarian functions of the Trinity are accomplished complementarily. Needham bears witness to the incarnation of Christ, the equal divinity, essence, and the eternity of the Trinitarian persons as affirmed by the Athanasian and the Nicene-Constantinopolitan creeds.

Three dangers are involved in interpreting the doctrine of the Trinity, as Markham (2017:79-80) establishes. The first is tritheism, a belief that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are independent and separate entities. This denies monotheism. The second

is modalism, begun by Sabellius. Modalism takes two forms, namely chronological and functional. Chronological modalism uses the Trinitarian language to describe various ways in which God operates across the centuries. For example, in the Hebrew Bible, God the Father is in operation, while in the gospel, God the Son is the Saviour and the Holy Spirit who comes at Pentecost is the guider of the church. Functional modalism talks of different roles of the members of the Trinity, where the Father is the creator, sustainer, the Son is the Saviour and revealer, and the Holy Spirit is the sanctifier. The third danger is subordination, which denies the equality of the persons of the Godhead: God the Father is the one true God, followed by the two lesser divinities. This is theological sabotage against the ecumenical creeds that support the oneness of God in three persons, the eternity of the persons, and the equality of the three persons who are only distinguished by the economic roles that are accomplished interdependently. However, Dumitraşcu's (2014:446) viewpoint seems like a response to this heresy. He says that through incarnational Christology the love of God enjoyed and shared with the people is sure. He further says that the intra-divine love of the Father towards the Son to the people is intermediated by the Holy Spirit on the basis that in the Trinity there is nothing that is done separately; instead, it is accomplished in the soteriological economic framework.

Whether the discussions above assist in developing the theological principles towards Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community that can assist the African Divine Church regarding the place of Christ in Trinitarian mission, the response is affirmative for two reasons. First, the theological thoughts developed here about the Trinity are rooted in the affirmations of the early church fathers through creedal statements of faith. Secondly, the theologians show the unity of the Trinity through revelation and grace and how the three function in distinction without division or separation, thus providing means for locating the place of Christ as an equal player in the Trinitarian family.

3.5.4 Trinitarian ecclesiology and missional community

3.5.4.1 *In Moravian theology*

The Moravian evangelical revivalism is rooted in the centrality of the Spirit. Schneider (2010:21-22) argues that Pietists "confronted the dead letter by the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:6), and the external Word (of the Bible or sermon) by the inward (the inward light)." He

argues further that rebirth is not caused by external baptism but through baptism by the Holy Spirit, which necessitates the indwelling of Christ in the convert's heart to effect a daily spiritual communion. Lehmann (2010:352) contends that the Pietists believed in God sending them church leaders who did not need university theological training because the Holy Spirit would legitimize their teaching and actions. Schneider (2010:30) points out the importance of prophetic ministry among the Moravians as a means towards revival and argues that the spiritual experience was perceived as the outpouring of the Spirit reminiscent of Joel's end-time prophecy (Joel. 2:28). In his view, Moravians' experience denotes the beginning of "the new economy of the Spirit". Engel (2009:19) reveals an in-depth expression of the Moravian revivalism:

The Moravians' exuberance, flexibility, and phenomenal mobility put them at the centre of the action. Their theology embodied the main principles of evangelicalism; they emphasized Christ in their worship and theology; the Bible formed a central part of their worship cycle; they viewed spiritual rebirth or awakening as the central event in one's life, they possessed the urge to share the gospel that few could rival.

The centrality of the Holy Spirit in Pietism revival led them to place the missionaries in a secondary role behind the Holy Spirit in the process of conversion (Engel, 2009:25). Wheeler (2011:87-88) argues that Zinzendorf believed that the success of any mission depended primarily on God speaking to them through the Holy Spirit before they could go for the mission. He further argues that the Moravian mission only succeeded if the missionaries would begin with the testimony (experience) as opposed to starting with doctrinal teaching. The centrality of the Spirit in Moravian revivalism has its similarities in the practical theology of the African Divine Church, whose emphasis is on the Spirit with prophetic spiritual and experiential elements. However, the concept around the theology of the motherhood of the Holy Spirit and how Christ seems to proceed from the Father and the Spirit, including the analogy of the church as the daughter-in-law of the Father and the Spirit, cannot offer theological principles to be used in developing the Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community of the African Divine Church.

Hutton's (1895:237-238) history of the Moravians argues that the "Brethren did not mix themselves up in theological disputes", but they developed four doctrines that informed their preaching as follows. First is that Jesus is the Redeemer of the lost through his

death on the cross. Secondly, man is naturally lost and corrupt thus unable to save himself. Thirdly, Jesus was the very Son of God manifested in the flesh, and fourthly in human hearts the Holy Spirit is at work leading them to repentance and faith. In this functional Trinity, only the Son is slightly connected to his ontological coexistence with the Father, but the rest of the theology is left to the experiential Trinity. This is because in Hutton (1895:274), Christ is the axis of the Moravians' teaching, where "Jesus Christ is the beginning, the middle and end of all the preaching. In him is the grace of the Son, the love of the Father, and the communion of the Holy Ghost". Gallagher (2008:188-191) argues that the sacrifice of the Lamb (blood and wounds) is at the centre of the early Moravian mission. According to them, the mercy of God through the suffering of Christ atones for human sins. That means that Jesus paid the price through the blood of the covenant. Zinzendorf's understanding of mission unfolded as first in the love of God, and secondly, this love was mediated in the redemption of Christ that revealed universal salvation. Thirdly, the Holy Spirit preveniently worked on the hearts of the sinners enabling them to respond to the invitation. For Zinzendorf, the Holy Spirit was the only true missionary, because he prepared the hearts of the people to hear and receive the message of Christ. This theology suggests the collaboration of the functional Trinity in deriving the one holy, catholic, and apostolic church that is affirmed by the creeds. The challenge comes with the disconnection from the ontological Trinity, which is not elaborated, in the Moravian theology. A doctrine of the Trinity that can stand any theological resistance to orthodox affirmation must first establish its ontological coexistence.

In the perspective of the Moravians, the church of Christ comes in as the Son's bride, begotten or born in the Saviour's side wounds. The church was thus betrothed to Christ on the cross and married to Christ in the Holy Communion, which makes it the daughter-in-law of the Father and the Holy Spirit. Bishop Hamilton, who described it as the "danger of substituting vivid figures of speech for local ideas" (Atwood, 2004:64), refuted the concept of the Spirit's motherhood. Wheeler (2011:99) is emphatic that the Moravians' devotion to the blood and wounds of Christ is what formed their content of worship. In his view, baptism was experiential because the Moravians were "baptized in the blood of Christ, they sang of swimming in the wounds of Christ, they desired to crawl into the side hole of Christ, they were revived and sustained by drinking Christ's blood which tasted very sweet and juicy". Although this theology brings about a

functional Christology, it overemphasizes Christ's human nature over his divinity, making this Christology unfamiliar to the orthodox view affirmed in the ecumenical creeds.

3.5.4.2 *In Wesleyan theology*

The Wesleyan view of the salvation of mankind helps to trace the trajectory of the relationship between the Trinity and the missional community. For example, Outler (J. Wesley, 1980:124-125) explains that Wesley taught that a sinner is justified and made righteous by God's mercy through the merits of Christ. He argues that sin was fixed in the following formula: God sent his only Son to the world to fulfil the law through the blood of the covenant, thereby making satisfaction to the Father for our sins. Wesley observes three things in Romans 3:23-25 and 10:3-4 that actualize justification. On the part of God, there is great mercy and grace, on the part of Jesus Christ, there is the satisfaction of God's justice through the blood of the new covenant, and humanity is to live a true faith in the meritorious work of Christ. In Wigger's (1998:16) argument, glimpses of Christology are identified in the Wesleyan Arminian tradition that opposes both predestination (where God ordained some for eternal life and others for eternal damnation) and the idea of limited atonement (where Christ died only for the elect). While the two traditions, Arminian and Calvinist, differ on this, the central argument is that the developments are both rooted in the work of Christ, thus functional Christology. In the Wesleyan view of salvation, we find the Nicene concept of the functional Trinity in Christological Sonship, and the Fatherhood of God, who is responsible for mediating the human restoration through the cross of Christ.

Wesley used the analogy of the vine and branches from John 15 to develop the relationship between Jesus and the church. In his view, a church is nourished as it continues to abide in Christ the true vine. The vine exists for individuals and others through fruition. The church continues to enjoy attachment to Christ through a centrifugal responsibility into the world through the fruit of the Spirit (Chilcote, 2009:155). Chilcote (2009:156) argues that the Wesleyan mission included "partnering with God in the realization of shalom in the world. Such a task is necessarily rooted in Christ, for we cannot speak of God's reign apart from Christ, or Jesus without reign". The missional notion of centrifugality follows the ecumenical creeds' concept of the catholicity of the church.

The Wesleyans viewed the Bible as a storyline: “God in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit is reconciling the world to himself, restoring all things” (Snyder, 2011:19). This speaks of the Trinitarian economy accomplishing the salvation plan of God for mankind. The Trinitarian community is restoring humanity into an ecclesial and missional community. Snyder (2011:20) identifies the Wesleyan mission as follows: “In the Wesleyan telling, the gospel story moves from the good news of creation in God’s image to the bad news of sin and distortion to the better news of redemption and new creation through Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit”. The Wesleyan mission may be understood through the image of God, which is described as a social image. In this purview, Snyder (2011:20) argues that God as the Trinity is communal just as male and female are a community who do not find their identity in “isolated individuals” but in unity as the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are. The marred image of God in humanity is transformed through continued communion with the Triune God. This marks the process of growing in holiness. As the church continues to preach the gospel, it does so by the empowerment of the Holy Spirit and the captivation of Christlike character (Snyder, 2011:22). The response of the sinner to the gospel results in the new birth, through which one can access a new relationship with the Trinity. This then “establishes a new love relationship with the Trinity, with the Christian family, the church with the neighbours, near and far, and in fact all creation” (Snyder, 2011:26). In this development, given that the image of God is both social and relational, then salvation points to the restoration of the true community (Snyder, 2011:26).

What can be derived from the above is that the unity, the coeternity, consubstantiality, and the coequality of the ontological relationship, revealed in the ecumenical creeds, moves into the world, to impute the image of God in humanity through creation. Following the fall, the very Trinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, work out the plan to restore the image of God in the social being of humanity. The changed community becomes the missional community to display the beauty of the restored image of the triune God.

3.5.4.3 *In Pentecostal theology*

The creeds are not explicit here but they are implied through the language and doctrinal elements of faith anciently affirmed by the early fathers. The Trinitarian family of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is the bearer of the missional community. Each

member of the Trinity functions economically and interdependently towards the establishment and survival of the missional community. In this section of the review, no new creeds are underway, except that an inference is made to the ancient creeds discussed in the early and patristic periods.

Van Gelder and Zscheile (2011:25-26) argue that there was a shift in the early 20th century towards Trinitarian thinking through Karl Barth as a reaction against the Kantian Enlightenment worldview, which claimed that “the doctrine of the Trinity, taken literally, has no practical relevance at all”. Karl Barth revitalized the meaning of mission in which he restored the interrelation of God as one sending, such that as the Father, he sent the Son, and both the Father and the Son sent the Holy Spirit. Van Gelder and Zscheile, (2011:28-29) claim that between the 1950s and 1960s the understanding of mission shifted to include holistic aspects of obeying the Great Commission in the context of a larger message of the reign of God. This, however, was not embraced as fast by the evangelicals, especially dispensationalists, who held firmly to the notions of premillennialism, perceiving the kingdom of God as a future millennial reign of Christ. Newberg (2012:20-21) argues that Pentecostalism is dominated by Pentecostal values such as “the Holy Spirit, the restoration of the apostolic signs of speaking in tongues, premillennial eschatology, and imperative world evangelization”. As a missional community, they are occupied with premillennialism, dispensationalism, and belief in the imminent return of Christ. The immanency of Christ’s return, therefore, is key for the missional agenda of this community.

Barth’s three characteristics of the church, which make it unique from other communities, reveal the relationship between the Trinity and the missional community. This relationship is rooted in the unity of the triune God, declared in the statement, “I believe in the Father almighty, I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit”, contained in the Apostles’ and the Nicene Creeds. The Athanasian Creed is comprehensive in exegeting the two creeds. This declaration holds united the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. First, Barth says that God calls the church into existence through revelation and reconciliation. Secondly, as a community, the church is concerned with the relationship between God and humanity. Thirdly, the church derives its identity from Jesus Christ; and finds the expression of her life through the Holy Spirit. From these characteristics, the church is called the body of Christ, because they believe

in God's self-revealer Jesus Christ. The church in Barth's perspective is termed as a post-incarnational community, a community that responds to God's act of self-revelation in Jesus Christ (Bentley, 2010:9-10). Barth sees the church, as a missional community, as having the responsibility to witness or announce the kingdom of God, but the church is not the kingdom. The church envisioned by Barth has moved from the past historical incarnation into Christ's future to make it relevant in its contextual world, towards the Parousia in which the kingdom is consummated (Bentley, 2010:12).

The concept of Parousia is a borrowed concept from the ecumenical creeds and councils. However, looking at the concept of the responsibility to witness, Pentecostalism has laid much emphasis on functional and practical pneumatology, and this threatens the entire Trinity regarding its interactional economic functions. On this, Cox (1995:48-49) argues that the notion of the "latter rain" was dominant and so the Pentecostal community became a missional community through a revival. Themes that defined this community include holiness teaching about the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

While Karl Barth (1957:193) grounds the Trinitarian community by looking at God's presence among people in humility, he being for us, as he is in himself, as displayed in the Godhead, Jensen (1999:197) presents the church as a community under the unification of the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ. On this, Rice (2009: par 26) confirms that the Holy Spirit essentially links the Christian community. He further asserts that the Spirit working in the church resembles the Trinitarian Spirit, and he creates community within the life of God. Rice agrees with Jensen (1999:181) that the church is a founding miracle and that her communal spirit is identically the Spirit that the personal God is and has. Without having to mention the early church fathers' declarations, the promulgated faith statements are guiding principles in developing these arguments. For example, the shared divinity, coeternity, and their intercommunications are what give rise to the creedal statement of the one holy catholic and apostolic church.

The unity of the Godhead expressed in the creeds moves from the inner relation to an outward mission that makes up the universal Assembly of God's people. Moltmann (1977:53, 55) shows how God engages the world in a Trinitarian movement. In the movement, God the Father sends the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Son is sent as the Messiah and Redeemer under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. This missional relationship is rooted in the scripture. For example, Jesus' mission begins at baptism in

the presence of the Holy Spirit (Mark 1:9ff). For Matthew and Luke, the mission begins at conception (Matt. 1:8ff; Lk. 1:18ff), while for John, the sending is pre-creational. Since through redemption, a community is formed, Moltmann (1977:64-66), sees this church as very dependent on God in his movements of sending, gathering, and experience in the world. The church participates in Christ's messianic mission and the creative mission of the Spirit. In Moltmann's social reconstruction of the doctrine of the Trinity, he formulates a Trinitarian kingdom into a communal fellowship or *koinōnia*. In this fellowship, there exists a mutual indwelling among the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The creation participates in the *koinōnia*, especially humanity through an invitation. The mark of this human fellowship, Moltmann argues, is to respond to the Triune God to become his image on earth (McDougall, 2005:7).

Once the holy assembly has been founded, Newbigin (1953:68, 89) perceives it as the body of Christ that enriches the ecclesial Trinitarian discourse (Col. 3:3; Gal.2:20, Col. 3:9-10 and Rom. 7:4). His articulation of who a believer or member of the body of Christ is a pointer to the Trinitarian community. Although Bloesch (2002:104,105) approaches the Trinity's and the missional community's relationality slightly differently from Moltmann, he arrives at the same theme of the Trinity and ecclesiology. For example, pure preaching of the Word through the Spirit, the right administration of the sacraments like baptism, the Lord's Table, and *koinōnia*.

The spirit of enlightenment that dominated this period aimed to collapse the ecumenical creedal statements of faith, as Bosch (1991:267-268) observes, people dismissed God and the church as illegitimate, thus human beings were regarded as more important than God. The Enlightenment affected the practice of the Christian faith. Perhaps the central question was how God could reign sovereignly if people understood themselves as free. Can God still be the God of providence and grace? Such questions lacked response partly because of what McGrath (2016:61) cites as the spirit of Marxism that emphasized liberation over Christian theology and perceived religion as a fictional endeavour. That means religion was viewed as nothing but an imagination that enabled the adherents to tolerate their economic alienation. Such development alienates God from engaging in both spiritual and human affairs.

A growing interest in the *missio Dei*, however, brought a new shift in mission from being a church activity to being an attribute of God. This meant that to participate in a mission

was equivalent to a participation in the movement of the love of God to the world (Bosch, 1991:390). Tennent (2010:54-55, 59) confirms that mission was birthed by God such that “God’s redemptive, historical initiative on behalf of his creation ... is far more about God and who he is, than about us and what we do”. He further relates the work of the church in mission as enlivened by the triune God. Her mandate is to participate in the redemptive work of the Father, rooted in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit (Tennent, 2010:61, 64).

The kingdom question as a factor related to mission portrays elements that confirm the relationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community. Inasmuch as “the kingdom of God” does not appear in the creedal affirmations, the fact that the three persons are dominant and universally accepted infers the kingdom of God. Ladd (1973:256) confirms this when he conceives the twelve disciples of Jesus as having been called to participate in the mission through preaching and accompanying works. Ladd (1973:269-270) is explicit that the church in participating in God’s mission is an instrument of the kingdom. This resonates well with the articles of the ecumenical creeds about the one holy catholic and apostolic church that is determined by the preceding three articles about God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. For the sake of the kingdom economy, Tennent (2010:75, 76) argues that the Father owns mission as its initiator for his glory. He is the sender of the Son, and the Son is the Father’s audience. The Son too is a sender, whose audience is the disciples (the church). The Holy Spirit is the sent one and he facilitates the power of mission through the church.

Torrance (2008:164-173) views the function of the divine-human communion as missional. He explains this in three categories; *prothesis*, *mystēion*, and *koinōnia*. In *prothesis* (God’s purpose), the eternal nature of the *missio Dei* is outlined in Christ. Through *mystēion* (the mystery), he communicates the mission of Christ on earth, and through *koinōnia*, the goal of the mission which is the church is arrived at as it communes with the Triune God. This is enabled through the covenant of grace, which creates a union between the mission of the ontological Trinity (the *missio Dei*) and the Trinitarian economic mission. The union of *mystēion*, *prothesis*, and *koinōnia* is missional in the sense that in this mystery of the communion with God, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, an incarnate life is outlined in the life of Christ. This incarnation emerges in

the reconciliation of humanity to God through the work of atonement. Through Christ's Spirit, Jesus as God and man breaks out into the world to espouse a people who make up the church as one body of Christ. Seed (2016:6-7) observes that the *mystērion*, *prothesis*, and *koinōnia* in love constitute the Trinity, who economically functions in space through the Christological incarnation to restore humanity to unending communal with God. Therefore, the mystery of Christ is the result of the union of the church with Christ and the raising of the church into the communion of the Trinity.

The relationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community reviewed in this section suggests a complete unity of the three persons of the Trinity, equal in divinity, essence, and function to complete their intra-relation, from which the extra-relation that moves towards the world is birthed. The sending and the proceeding concepts do not demean the function of any of the persons but show their unique intercommunication. This understanding sets the background on which to establish the place of Christ in the Trinitarian mission of the African Divine Church of Kenya.

3.5.5 The Christology of the ecumenical creeds

3.5.5.1 *In Moravian theology*

The Historical Content

This section gives summative information on the history of the Moravian movement. The historical information lays the basis for articulating the development of Moravian theology and its emphasis. The Moravian movement began as a community called the "Unity of the Brethren" and was established in 1457 after the end of the Hussite Wars. However, the war that lasted for thirty years destroyed it through persecution (Atwood, 2004:21). Moravian history was shaped by several events. The persecution of the Brethren followers for failing to attend the Roman Catholic Church, and rejecting the Papal Bull included banning the Brethren from public and private fellowships 1461-1508 (Hutton, 1909: 47-64). The Brethren Church grew in three provinces, Bohemia, Moravia, and Poland (1548-1570), which steered a new movement in the history of reformation (Hutton, 1909:95-100).

The birth of Zinzendorf (1700-1722) was a key factor in the formation and development of the Moravian movement, thus the 18th century witnessed the renewal of the Moravian

church through his leadership (Hutton, 1909:116). The Brethren published instructions (1734-1740) for the colony; thus instructions for missionaries to the east, for all missionaries, and guidelines on the conversion of the heathen. The Moravian missionaries received training in missionary work on what to preach and how to preach the gospel. (Hutton, 197-248). The Moravians held various synods (1740-1741) to discuss, issues on administration, doctrine, the election of the elders, and the declaration of the Brethren church as “a free and independent church of Christ” (Hutton, 1909: 265).

Engel argues that the Moravians founded Bethlehem in Pennsylvania for missionary purposes in 1741 at the peak of the Great Awakening that powered revival in Britain’s American colonies following the rise of evangelicalism (Engel, 2009:1-5). Also significant are the Moravian and Methodists (1735-1743). James Hutton became influential in the revival of the Church of England. James encountered his student Samuel Wesley the elder brother to John and Charles Wesley. He also visited his former friends at Oxford University where he was introduced to both John and Charles Wesley. He introduced to them the theology of inner and external conversion, conversion experience, and societies, which they advanced in their prayer and bible group meeting that, influenced the great revival (Hutton, 1909: 283-385).

Theological Content of Christology

Zinzendorf’s teaching is fundamental in locating the theology of the Moravian movement from which Christological elements can be articulated. For example, he instructed the Moravians to follow “the instructions of Jesus to go forth to all the world and preach the gospel to all the creatures”, because they were a select family chosen by the Saviour as witnesses for him to both Christians and the heathen world, thus they affirmed the Saviour Christ as the head of the Moravian Church (Mason, 2001:6-7). Atwood (2004:43-44) argues that Moravian theology centred on Zinzendorf’s theology of the heart, the motherhood of the Holy Spirit, and the wounds of Jesus Christ. Zinzendorf argues in his theology that the heart and not doctrine or beliefs are the problem, because from the heart all the desires and will are located, thus if the heart is dead, the person is also dead. This could imply that revival begins from the heart, not from doctrine. He taught that the blood of Christ of the new covenant “blessed the entire world in an instant” in which all humanity was redeemed, which makes redemption non-

meritorious (Atwood, 2004:49). The question of the blood of the covenant, although it communicates the universal redemption, is an emphasis on human nature. The covenant blood implies the salvific economy of Christ, which was affirmed by the creeds concerning the persecution of Christ in providing salvation.

Zinzendorf's Christology is seen through the concept of the body of Christ where the doctrine of incarnation is developed. He argues that Christ was human because people saw and touched him, and unlike the Father, the Son is actual and accessible by the human heart and mind. Zinzendorf argued that the Son Jesus is the only mediator between the deity and mankind, that "Christ is God your creator, God your Redeemer, and Sanctifier". He is not an emanation of God, apart from God or a demigod, but he is God in all of God's reality (Atwood, 2004:78). The Christ portrayed here is the Christology from below, because the Christology alluded to above is established from the human perspective of his functional ministry. The Christology portrayed in the ecumenical creeds has dual perspectives, namely Christology from above and *from below. This means the divinity is less developed because how Christ is God is not demonstrated except only mentioned as being God, which makes the Christology incomplete in the Moravian perspective. The begetting of the Son by God as the Father and the Spirit as the Mother (Atwood, 2004:64) does not fit well in the ecumenical councils' affirmations as being generated from the Father. The begetting of the Son here again emphasizes his humanity.

The Moravian Christology as indicated above is primarily incarnational Christology, Christ from below. The wound theology confirms its rootedness in Christological humanity. Wheeler (2011:82) argues that the Moravians were not keen on theological disputations; instead, they embraced the blood and the wounds of Christ as the basis of human redemption. He further argues that for Moravians, "the sinners feel the blood of the Saviour in their hearts to experience Christ's saving power". The concept of incarnation Christology for Zinzendorf was the most important idea for Christianity because it provided easy access of humans to Christ. In fact, the notion of wounds and the blood of Christ was a central component in the Moravian worship (Wheeler, 2011:96). The theology of the wounds and blood shifted to experiential emotionality. For example, one Moravian by the name Johannes is reported to have exclaimed, "as cold as ice, and dead as a stone, but the blood of our blessed maker has melted me and

made me burn”, which speaks of his life before and after conversion. Jenz (2010:19-20) argues that the Moravian church “was Christ-centric in approach”. What follows in his discussion is simply an emphasis on the humanity of Christ.

What can be detected from Moravian Christology is its single construct of Christ with humanity being emphasized. However, for a balanced doctrine of Christology, the dual approach is necessary, where his humanity and divinity are discussed. The term “duality” as used here does not imply separation or enumeration of the two natures. The imbalanced Christology portrayed by the Moravian theology does not support the hypostatic nature of Christ as expressed in the ecumenical creeds. This calls for theological dialogue between the practical or public theology and the academic theology in deriving a Christology that is built on the biblically proved hypostatic approach. This study uses Kim’s (2011:3) definition of public theology as the process where “Christians engage in dialogue with those outside the church circles on various issues of common interest, with a focus on conversation. That means devolving or decentralising theology from academia or church space to the secular space. This kind of approach is what will benefit the development of the Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community of the ADC and be able to locate the place of Christ with his hypostatic nature.

The next section deals with the Wesleyan movement, for which Engel (2011:19) argues that John Wesley got the revival theme at his visit to the Moravian community at Marienborn in Germany and affirmed the following: “Here I have continually met with what I sought for, viz., living proofs of the power of the truth: persons saved from inward as well as outward sins by the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, and from all doubt by abiding witness of the Holy Ghost given them”.

3.5.5.2 *In Wesleyan theology*

Historical content

A Methodist/Wesleyan movement, with a resurgent revival that was greatly influenced by the Moravian/Pietist Spirit experiential doctrine, characterized the 18th century. Although the conversion of John Wesley in 1738 is usually considered as the date that marked the birth of the revival, it should be noted that George Whitefield (1714-70), Howell Harris (1714-73), Daniel Rowland (1713-90), and Jonathan Edwards, the key figures, had already seen its outbreak in Northampton, Massachusetts in 1734

(Turnbull, 2012:15). Knight (2010:14-15) observes that Methodism came as a challenge to the social order of nobility, lordship, and peasantry in the 18th century, which seemed to influence church administration and practices, hence the Wesleyan movement formed part of the solution in taking part in the great trans-Atlantic religious awakening, the Great Awakening in America. Knight further argues that the Great Awakening was influenced by three 17th century spiritualities, namely, High-Church Anglicanism, that emphasized sacramental piety, particularly the Lord's Supper that aimed at the recovery of the spirituality of primitive Christianity. Secondly, Puritanism, which was previously a Calvinist movement with its vibrant spirituality on matters of conversion and spiritual growth, wanted to purify both the Anglican and Roman Catholic practices. The third was Pietism, which emphasized the new birth and the concept of changed heart and life. Lyerly's (1998:12) argument is important in the sense that the three issues mentioned namely, religious freedom, war against sin, and the conversion of men and women helps to explain the pillars of Wesleyan tradition and that led to its expansion. Lyerly further argues that the movement stood against rebellion and war that existed between England and the colonies.

In Wilken's (1979:9) view, there is a debate about whether the Athanasian Creed should remain in use. He is concerned about the decline in its use, and he seems to leave the decision to be made from two approaches: either to continue using it because it appears at the beginning of the Book of Concord or to use the words of Samuel Seabury, the bishop of Connecticut in the 18th century. The assumption is that modern society is losing interest in the old creedal statements. The exclusive contradictory perspectives emerge in continuity or discontinuity in the function of the Creed. Those who call for its cessation do so for various reasons. First, its recitation is perceived as intolerant and contrary to the right spirit of public worship. Secondly, the anathemas announced are not justified by the holy writ, because it brings the perspective that it necessitates salvation. Thirdly, the recitation of the creed violates the principles set by the ecclesial authority (Stanley, 1871:89).

Bray (1984:175) attributes the clamour for a cessation to the influence of Deism and the Enlightenment spirit that aimed at deleting it from the Book of Common Prayer but without success. It is on this backdrop that the ancient and the contemporary churches neither use it nor have they heard of it. Bray continues to argue that although the Creed

is longer, and against the expectation of the modern state, it is essential because it gives a summary of the classical orthodoxy. In what seems to be a response against those who call for its cessation based on its harsh damnation, which appears as an intellectual base for salvation, Bray (1984:176) says that the purpose of the Creed is not intellectual, thus faults the cessation mentality as committing creedal misinterpretation. The Creed speaks of holding and not believing in the Catholic faith, which makes the concept not purely mental.

Theological content of Christology

From the above historical background of the Wesleyan movement, it is evident that Christology is not given a specific developmental emphasis except that it is dealt with side by side in the Wesleyan understanding of experiential conversion. This is to say, that Christ is located in the spiritual experiences as its cause through the Holy Spirit. Dieter (1996:17-18) argues that Pietism preferred experience over theology, and emphasized an individual commitment to a life of witness, hence the experiential religion and perfectionism determined the revival preaching which presented an opportunity for conversion and the second blessing. Dieter further confirms that the altar theology developed in this holiness evangelism emphasized three aspects towards experiential soul rest. They include entire sanctification, faith, and confession, in which process Christ enables the effectual sanctification (Dieter, 1996:23). The third determinant of revival that Turnbull (2012:14-16) proposes points to experiential Christology, which gives a sense of a convert coming into contact with the finished work of Christ in daily experiences. In his view, this determining mark is the “recovery of the doctrine of the Reformation, and the essential beliefs of Protestantism”. He argues further that the Reformation doctrines—more importantly, the concept of justification by faith alone—put one right with God on account of faith in Christ and his works. Knight (2010:19-21) argues that the emphasis in Wesleyan teaching is that justification or forgiveness determines sanctification (considered as the fruit of the Spirit). On the other hand, regeneration (new birth), which accompanies justification, marks the beginning of sanctification and holiness, considered as perfection in love. In her further claim, Knight points to a functional Christology contained in the awakening message, because she claims that the content of the awakening message was justification and the new birth, accessed through faith in the atonement of Jesus Christ. In her view, salvation entails

what God has done for humanity in Christ, and what God is doing in humanity through the Holy Spirit. The notion being driven here is the concept of Christ from below; the concept of Christ from above, whence come the concepts of coequality in divinity, consubstantiality and eternity—key themes as defined by the early church councils—are lost in the emphasis of Christ from below. One portion of the ecumenical creeds' Christology is emphasized, that is, humanity, thus losing the concept of the hypostatic union of Christ's nature.

The Wesleyan view of the salvation of mankind points to some Christological elements, although again emphasizing humanity. The salvation of a sinner is on account of God's mercy through Christ. In a movement of God the Father in Christ's new covenant, a remedy for sin is available, which satisfies God's demand for punishment of sin. The movement presents God as the giver of mercy and grace, while Christ accepts to become the sacrifice, and the sinner receives the privilege by faith in the person and work of Christ (as explained by Outler, 1980:124-125). Inasmuch as Wesleyan's Arminian and Calvinist traditions display some sort of disagreement concerning the theology of predestination and limited atonement, they do have a commonality in their rootedness in the development of a functional Christology (Wigger, 1998:16).

The doctrine of the second blessing as the second work of grace is common teaching in the Wesleyan movement, informing the content of Methodist revivalism and revealing a component of Christology. Ruth (2005:39-40) gives an in-depth explanation of the concept of blessing. In her view, there exist two blessings. Justification is the first blessing that transforms one's moral condition and personal relation towards God by grace. Justification is reminiscent of adoption and makes us children of God. Sanctification is the second blessing, which she argues, "comprehends the full eradication of all the carnal mind, the inbred sin, and the baptism and anointing with the Holy Spirit". In her emphatic opinion, while justification is the first blessing, and the crisis of the convert, sanctification is the second crisis, the second experience, and the second blessing. According to Turley (1999:20, 25), the second blessing is the additional work of grace that entirely sanctifies the believer by bestowing the gift of perfect love, and it is reminiscent of the experience of Spirit baptism. Carradine (2015:12) uses symbolism to explain the concept as follows:

The second blessing is based altogether on the proof found in symbolism. Just as Christ was typified in the lamb, altar, and high priest; regeneration, in the washing of the laver; the resurrection, in the waving of the first sheaf of the harvest; so, holiness, or the second blessing, the great work of Christ in the soul, is symbolized in an equally impressive manner and indeed far more frequently.

The concept of blessing is, however, argued differently by R.C. Horner (1854-1921) a Methodist clergyman, a revivalist and a holiness preacher because he argues that the Wesleyan holiness movement missed out on the baptism in the Holy Spirit. He insists that Spirit baptism was a third blessing, a work of grace succeeding salvation and sanctification, which empowers the believer for service (Robinson, 2013:14). Whether the second or third blessing, the key factor in both blessings is their proof of the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer. However, on the other hand, this process risks categorization or clustering of the converts in terms of their spirituality, which may compromise the position of the Bible about the benefits of the believer.

The concept of the second blessing is limited in providing access to the definitions of the ecumenical creeds. This same notion is foreign in the ecclesial operation of the ADC whose formula is salvation first, then deliverance from “generational curses” and daily confession. The discussion in the 18th century of the Spirit’s blessing prepared the incoming of the 19th-century evangelical awakening that emphasized functional pneumatology. This is to say, the spirit of Pentecostalism was evidenced in the process of spiritual growth in the notion of second or third blessing, and altar theology towards entire sanctification. Additionally, the previous Moravian movement under Zinzendorf that embraced the working of the Spirit laid the theological foundational framework for both the spread and embrace of experiential Pentecostalism.

3.5.5.3 *In Pentecostal theology*

This section is built on the work of the following key Pentecostal figures in articulating the continuity of the movement: William Seymour (1870-1922), Charles Parham (1873-1929), and the experiential testimony of Agnes Ozman (1870-1937). The rest will be referred to concerning how they were influenced by these key figures. First, the experiential works will be reviewed, and secondly, evaluated to locate the possibilities of

Christology. While the ecumenical creeds are not the norm, they are considered in this work as the framework for testing theological positions because they are rooted in the scripture and they can be assumed as providing theological summaries of the pillars of the orthodox faith. Thus, this section aims to evaluate Pentecostalism using the ecumenical creeds and locating theological principles that can be articulated about Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community, which can be used in the African Divine Church concerning the place of Christ in the Trinitarian mission. The Pentecostal movement is a sprout of spiritual movements that began in the 17th century and continued through the 19th century. The 19th century is characterized by several revivals and Lambert (1999:19-22) argues that the Azusa Street revival was an experiential “new birth”. Similarly, Pentecostalism is an offshoot of the earliest revival movements of the church in the 20th century (Kay, 2011:1-3). At the centre of this theology is salvation, Spirit baptism, divine healing and the immanent return of Christ (Wacker, 2001:1-7). The stress of the experiential theology of the First Great Awakening, as Coalter (1986:5-24) argues, was the emphasis on the centrality of an individual’s internal state as opposed to the external piety. This resonates with Knight’s (2010:1) argument that “each of the movements at their inception bears resemblance to others”.

Historical Content

Burgess (2011:230) argues that this period was characterized by an outstanding growth of classical Pentecostal charismatic and neo-charismatic movements. Some of the common marks that describe Pentecostalism include exuberant worship, subjective religious experiences, and spiritual gifts, claims of supernatural miracles, signs and wonders. Burgess further argues that 20th-century Pentecostalism emphasizes a language of experiential spirituality rather than theology. In Robinson’s (2013:ix) opinion, the widespread Pentecostal Christianity is pegged on the claim of the effectiveness of Pentecostal divine healing. From these arguments, the notion that comes forward is an emphasis on functional pneumatology, a common emphasis in most African Instituted Churches, including the African Divine Church.

Classical Pentecostalism in the United States of America has been attributed to a revival that began in January 1901 at Charles F. Parham’s Bethel Bible School in Topeka, Kansas, and later the Azusa Street revival in 1906-1909 in Los Angeles under William J. Seymour (Burgess, 2011:230). Wilkinson (2009:16-21) classifies 20th-century

Pentecostalism in three waves that are categorized by a common spirituality but are distinct in characteristics. The first wave is classical Pentecostalism, represented by the Pentecostal Assemblies of God in Canada (PAOC). The second is Pentecostalism in the historical churches (Roman Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, just to mention a few), also called the charismatic renewal (from the 1950s to 1960s). The third wave is the Pentecostal movement in the evangelical churches that began in the 1980s and the known examples include John Wimber and Vineyard Church and the Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship. The first wave, i.e., Classical Pentecostalism, is of interest to this review because it traces significant figures like Charles Parham and others who received experiential and spiritual visitation under Parham's theological emphasis.

According to Wilkinson (2009:17-18), the first wave is characterized by charismatic appearances, for example prophecy, healing, and glossolalia. At the Bible School in Topeka Kansas in 1901, glossolalia was witnessed under Charles Parham, an independent holiness preacher. Bartos (2015:23) argues that Parham embraced the idea of sanctification through a separate baptism of the Holy Spirit. He further maintains that in 1901 Parham laid hands on Agnes Ozman, a student at his Bible school, and she started speaking in tongues. The gift enabled her to speak in Chinese and for three days Agnes could not speak English. In Anderson's (2014:41) view, Seymour, an African American preacher, was allowed to listen to Parham's lectures, which convinced him on the baptism of the Holy Spirit, although he did not receive it there. However, when he was invited to pastor a small African American church in Los Angeles, and when he preached in tongues as a sign of baptism by the Holy Spirit, it made the church door to be locked against him, which opened an opportunity to start house meetings. Edward Lee, the host, asked Seymour to lay hands on him, after which he fell unconscious on the floor and began speaking in tongues. Seymour and seven others, including Jennie Moorse, a lady he would marry later, received the same experience, and people prayed and rejoiced continually and loudly. They decided to move to Azusa Street because the house could not contain the many people who were continually coming in. William Seymour, a holiness preacher, cannot be forgotten because of his tremendous influence in the Pentecostal revival meetings held on Azusa Street in Los Angeles (Wilkinson, 2009:17). Synan (1997:105) argues that although the experience of tongues had been experienced in the United States of America before 1906, the Azusa Street revival marked the beginning of the modern Pentecostal movement because the

revival caught the attention of the whole world and consolidated the establishment of Pentecostal denominations. In 1900, B.T. Irwin left his Fire-Baptism movement, came in contact with the Azusa Street meetings in 1906, and received a new tongue which he had sought for all along and attested as "third blessing" (Synan, 1997:127).

The Pentecostalism in Canada began independently of the Azusa Street Revival at the Hebden mission in Toronto, but to some extent, the Azusa Street mission influenced its growth in the sense that R.E. McAlister, the founder of the Pentecostal movement in Ontario, was baptized in the Holy Spirit in Los Angeles (Wilkinson, 2009:18). Secondly, Charles E. Baker, who took the Pentecostal message to Quebec, encountered the Pentecostal experience through the ministry of McAlister. Additionally, Baker's wife is said to have received divine healing through McAlister's evangelistic meetings in Ottawa (Wilkinson, 2009:19).

The historical trace of Pentecostalism in Canada puts Ellen Hebden as the first person to have experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues (Miller, 1986:5-6). Before baptism in the Spirit, Ellen Hebden felt power diminishing in prayer for the sick and she interceded for more love and faith. It was on 17th November 1906 while in prayer that she unusually sensed the Spirit. She wrote this experience to Seymour in Los Angeles, as expressed by Miller:

Suddenly the Holy Ghost fell upon me ... My whole being seemed to be filled with praise and adoration such as I had never realized before ... I said to the Lord "What does this mean?", and a very quiet, yet distinct voice said "Tongues." I said "No Lord, not Tongues." Then followed a moment of deathlike stillness, when the voice again uttered the word "Tongues." This time I felt afraid of grieving the Lord and I said "Tongues or anything that will please Thee and bring glory to Thy Name! ... Great peace filled my soul and I began to sing very quietly but to my amazement, I was singing in another language Later on, the Lord gave me twenty-two languages. ... Sometimes the Lord gives me the interpretation of what others are saying ... A month later my husband received the baptism of the Holy Ghost and spoke in tongues.

Rev. George Chambers Slager, who was a student at God's Bible school at Cincinnati, and who with others contributed to the birth of Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, became its first general superintendent. Through Hebden's mission, he was converted and he is reported to have witnessed many people converted to Christ, filled with the Spirit, with the experience of supernatural healing (Miller, 1986:5-6). On the contrary, George Chambers faulted Hebden's mission and the accompanying supernatural experiences and manifestations, but his members kept visiting Hebden's mission and they received the baptism. Later, however, Chambers started to attend Hebden's mission and apologized to Mrs. Hebden for opposing her and what he had said against the work of the Holy Spirit. Another supernatural manifestation and occurrence that marked Canadian revival was a visitation of angels who are said to have hovered over the camp, amidst "praying and singing heavenly music" in a meeting near Jordan station, where Finis Yoakom from Los Angeles was the main speaker (Miller, 1991:22).

The theological content of Christology

The prominence of the doctrine of functional and experiential pneumatology in the 20th century stems from similar cases evidenced in the previous centuries, as noted above. Thus, in the subsequent review, the Christology evidenced is that from below as argued in the following, which produces an imbalanced or even less acknowledgment of the ecumenical creeds. Wilkinson (2009:18) considers Charles Parham's second event in Topeka as significant and points to the theology of Pentecostalism because it became the "cornerstone of classical Pentecostalism". For example, glossolalia was taken as normative to certify the initial sign of the Spirit baptism, a second experience different from and subsequent to conversion. Cox (1995:48) argues that in April 1906 in Los Angeles the spiritual experiences and manifestations were described by people as the beginning of the "latter rain" which was seen as a beginning of the fulfilment of the revival they had long waited for. The "latter rain" was termed as "revival living evidence" and the inauguration of the long-awaited visitation. Bartos (2015:26-27) argues that at the beginning of Pentecostalism, the experience was more preferred to education. Prophecies were emphasized more than reading the Bible in the meetings. Bartos further maintains that speaking in tongues and public testimonies of those who had received the gift of tongues were popular. In his view, "these testimonies rarely included

references to forgiveness and the relationship with Jesus Christ” but baptism in the Holy Spirit was a normative confirmation of the divine reality.

Cox (1995:49) argues that holiness theology, which also influenced Pentecostalism, perceived speaking in tongues as a sign of the imminent breaking-in of the Last Days and the incoming of the heavenly city that was foreseen in the Johannine Revelation. According to Cox (1995:57), one of the common sayings among the Pentecostals is “the man with an experience is never at the mercy of the man with a doctrine”. Miller and Yamamori’s (2007:3) argument confirms a less developed Trinity and hence Christology in the Pentecostal theology because they find a challenge with how Pentecostals refer to God the Holy Spirit and the divinity of Jesus Christ. They further argue that in the understanding of the people they interviewed, Pentecostals see the Spirit present in worship, prayer life, and in their daily experiences.

The Azusa Street revival shows elements similar to those experienced by Parham. Cox (1995:57) identifies what he calls “remarkable things” in the Azusa revival, which reveals the theological content. For example, songs and testimonies, spontaneous sermons and exhortations, joyous shouts, prayer with sobs and tears, and intercession for the sick are signs of the influence of the Holy Spirit. The Azusa Street revival emphasizes “eschatological speculations” for example, the severe earthquake that befell San Francisco with fire that destroyed the city aroused apocalyptic discussion touching on the end of the world (Cox, 1995:59-60).

The theological tenets of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC) are not any different from those discussed above because the key contents of their emphasis are similar. For instance, the mission work characterized by spiritual experience like, baptism of the Holy Spirit, re-filling of the Holy Spirit for those that power seemed to diminish, divine healing and speaking in tongues (Miller, 1985:6). However, Kydd (1973:12) argues that the history of PAOC between 1920-1940 presents a confusing scenario regarding education as contained in the first General Conference of the PAOC in 1919, which touches on Trinity:

...whereas much contention and confusion have been caused over the issue of one God and Trinitarian views, also the Baptism formula, be it resolved that we as a body go on record as disapproving not only the above issue but of all other

issues that divide and confuse God's people to no profit and that aggressive evangelism be our motto. Whereas we recognize the three-fold relationship of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit is taught in the NT, be it resolved that we express ourselves in harmony with this truth as expressed in the Word of God.

In this resolve, the crucial discussion on how the three Trinitarian persons relate in their consubstantiality, equality, and their economic dependability, which constitute the key elements of the definitions of the ecumenical councils, is not very clear, especially the place of Christ. Although Althouse (2010:56) attempts to state the doctrinal position of PAOC, which he argues acknowledges the historic creeds of the universal church, the practical and public theology⁴ seems to emphasize pneumatology. Althouse gives PAOC doctrinal teaching as follows. First, PAOC believes in the basic doctrines and teaching contained in the "ancient creeds of the early church known as the Apostles, the Nicene, and the Athanasian." Secondly, PAOC subscribes to the confessions of the Reformation fathers especially by the Reformed churches of the 16th and 17th centuries, thus PAOC is an orthodox spiritual church that embraces the creeds and Protestant confessions and it is not in any conflict with the catholicity of the church. Smith (2010:38), who is both a Pentecostal and a philosopher, confirms the Pentecostal pneumatic emphasis, which is a pointer to less-developed Christology. He argues that the Pentecostal community is radically open to divine visitation, thus this openness to God emphasizes Pentecostal continued ministry of the Holy Spirit, which includes continued revelation, prophecy, and the centrality of charismatic giftings in the church. Smith maintains that Pentecostal spirituality perceives the book of Acts as a "picture of normal and normative Christianity." An extended theological emphasis on Pneumatology is evident in Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada because Wilkinson (2009:103) argues that there was a division among the leaders regarding whether there is a need for the training of ministers. Those who opposed training argued that the Holy Spirit would provide leaders because it is God who makes preachers. To some, education was a human innovation that could hinder the working of the Holy Spirit.

⁴ Kim, 2011:3 a process whereby Christians take part in the conversation with those who are outside the church on issues commonly affecting people.

Benne, 1995:4 identifies the areas needing conversational engagement on as economic, political and cultural.

From the field findings in Chapter Two, most of the interviewees confirmed that the emphasis that the ADC gives to the doctrine of the baptism with the Spirit and the accompanying manifestations was a continuation of the PAOC, given that the ADC has a historical connection with the PAOC. Some of the Spirit's manifestations, e.g., sensing of the Spirit's touch, speaking in tongues, and the healing and prophecy, loud singing, and the kinds of prayer that Ellen Hebden experienced, which later informed the entire emphasis of the Hebden mission, are reminiscent of the operations of the Spirit in the ADC's ecclesiology. The only exceptional dynamic in worship that is an interpretation issue is the foot hitting/stamping on the floor while praying, which the ADC claims is a norm derived from Ezekiel 6:11, implying sanctification of the believer at the moment of praying.

What is deduced from the above is that Pentecostal theology does not have detailed theological explanations; instead, what it displays are dominantly theological experiences. Theological explanations, which include the philosophical development of the ecumenical creeds, are the work of academic theology. Systematic theology, which is more academic, is less common in the Pentecostal tradition. Pentecostal theology is rooted in the experience and manifestations of the work of the Holy Spirit. Thus, Christology is less developed or at most not mentioned or defined. Although pneumatology is at the centre of Pentecostal theology, much functional and experiential pneumatology is not sufficient to derive the essence of the Spirit, his divinity, or his consubstantiality with the Father and the Son. A. G. Kwabena (2020), Professor of African Christianity and Pentecostal theology, in responding to whether ecumenical creeds have a place in Pentecostal practices, argues that Pentecostals do not recite the ecumenical creeds, not because they do not believe in them, but usually they try to stay away from things that are too routine, like the creeds and the Lord's Prayer. Anderson (2014:243) reveals the possibilities of tension between academic integrity and spirituality more so when education does not seem to enhance spirituality. This, he says, has necessitated a weak relationship with theological education, thus Pentecostal leaders have dismissed "a dead intellectualism that sometimes stifles the Spirit life". The recent research by Adeshugba (2019:par.1) among the African Independent Pentecostal Churches within the London metropolis reveals reasons for the rarity of preaching the Trinity. His findings revealed the presence of an African mystical approach to the doctrine and the role of the Trinity, which emerged in the society as the

basis of what determines the relationship between African traditional religion and Christianity. Moreover, the influence of Emmanuel Kant's view that the doctrine of the Trinity is of no value, and Adeshugba's personal view of the complexity of the doctrine, makes it become "an enigma to the church". This finding could be influenced by contextual worldviews on which Adeshugba conducted his research; thus, the conclusion could be informed by a dual African and European context. The reality appears to be an imbalanced approach to the Trinity and not total abandonment. What is seen in AICs' attempt towards the doctrine of the Trinity is either a de-emphasis on the Trinity, or a view characterized by the passivity of Christ and the prominence of the economy of the Holy Spirit in the Trinitarian mission; this is influenced by African traditional religion but is not a total abandonment of the doctrine as Adeshugba alleges.

The misconceptions above on Christology and the de-emphasis of the ecumenical creeds can be corrected in the following review. To start with, the revelation of God provides the development of Christological incarnation. The argument follows that since God does not have a human body that of Christ must present a mediation of the divine revelation. Since he was God, he is the complete revelation of God (Erickson, 1992:57). The defence for the Christological doctrine of the incarnation is argued by Markham (2017:120-121) who gives three reasons which insist on the importance of Christ as being equal and the same as the Father. First, he says, "For an adequate response to theodicy, we need God to be in Jesus – in a distinctive and unique way". Secondly, the incarnation is central to understanding revelation, since God's Word is Jesus himself. The third reason is soteriological, which expresses how God has accomplished humanity's forgiveness through Christ. Griffin (2004:63) explains Augustine's perspective concerning theodicy as returning good to sinful creatures through divine mercy. This divine mercy could be identified as Jesus Christ incarnate. Through Fairbairn (1893:361), Christology is revealed through the importance of the names. For example, Christ means the Messiah reigning over the Messianic kingdom. The name Son of God denotes the Messiah, theocratic king.

In Berkhof (1938:71-72) the name Son of Man denotes Christological humanity while in its historical sense it brings to the fore his supernatural character together with his future coming in majesty and glory. In the Son of God, the second person of the Trinity is denoted as being God himself as well as the appointed Messiah. The two natures of

Christ are united in one person, thus the “person of the Mediator is the unchangeable Son of God”. In his incarnational Christology, Berkhof sees a non-independent personality, because both the human and the divine consist in the person of the Son of God. In Barth’s theology of the triumph of grace, Christology is envisaged in his argument regarding the article, “I believe in God, the Father Almighty”: God is revealed to us only in Christ as the Father, that is to say, exclusively in Christ do we see who God is, the Lord of life and death. In the incarnational humiliation of Christ, we encounter an action of God (Berkouwer, 1956:124,127). This development is established on the background of the affirmations of the three ecumenical creeds, including the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, which safeguarded the dual consubstantiality of Christ as well his coeternity and coequality with the Father.

We can use the incarnational Christology developed in this period to respond to the question about the theological principles concerning the Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community in attempting to establish the place of Christ in Trinitarian mission. This is done by maintaining the affirmations of the early church fathers on Christology.

3.5.6 The relationship between African Christian theology and the ecumenical creeds

Introduction

African Christian theology has been growing in its Trinitarian theology. However, Kombo (2007:233) takes note of the ongoing criticism of Christianization by both African and Western scholars. While African scholars think of the Christianization of the African God-language as amounting to “intellectual smuggling”,⁵ some Western scholars see it as a paganization of the Christian concepts, which cannot express the Christian truth. Ngong (2010:19) observes that the African spiritualized cosmology was dismissed as superstitious. Two questions are important. The first question is, Who is God, who is Jesus Christ, and who is the Holy Spirit in African theology? The second is, Is God the same God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, of the same substance, eternity, divinity, and interpenetrated in each other, as revealed by the early church fathers in the creedal affirmations? In the empirical study in Chapter Two, both the

⁵ O. P’Bitek (1971:88), the term connotes losing the African cosmological heritage to Christianity because the African originality risks the likelihood of forfeiting its core meaning.

interviewees and the respondents expressed varying opinions regarding the understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity. While all of them acknowledged the presence of the Trinity in the ADC, functional pneumatology was highly emphasized, and the influence of the ancestral spirits occupied part of the ADC spirituality to a certain extent. This points to the supposition that emerged from the study that called for the urgent need to rework a Christology that will necessitate the preservation of the place of Christ in the ADC Trinitarian mission.

The relationship between African Christian theology and the ecumenical creeds

To arrive at a true concept of one God in African Christianity, Kombo (2007:235) proposes a careful Christianization of the African concepts of God that must first accept that the God we are dealing with is one. Africans have no problem with this. The hard issue, argues Kombo, is no longer monotheism but the concept of God as Trinity, which is quite a new philosophy. Kombo (2007:234) studies the Sotho-Tswana God called *Modimo*, *Leza* or *Nyambe*, who as an incomparable being occupies the first category. However, it becomes problematic when Sotho-Tswanas are introduced to *Modimo* who has a Son to whom worship is also ascribed in the Spirit; based on the Sotho-Tswana metaphysics, this confines the Son to the second category. Their metaphysics can be tabulated as follows:

Table 3.2

CATEGORY1 Only God (<i>Modimo</i>, <i>Leza Nyambe</i>, etc.) is in this category. The ultimate explanation of the origin and substance of both men and all things.
CATEGORY 2 This category includes the Divinities/spirits/Holy Spirit. It is made up of superhuman beings and ancestors (Christ being one of them) and the spirits of men who died a long time ago.
CATEGORY 3 Here we find man, the human beings who are alive and those who are about to be born.

(Adapted from Kombo, 2007:234)

The position proposed in the tabulation brings to question the biblical Trinity and the early church fathers' affirmations compared with the understanding of the African

Christians. Kombo (2007:234) says the tabulated theology is a “disturbing revelation” because the two persons of the Trinity are counted parallel with other divinities of the African cosmology, and Christ cannot be said to be God and to be known by the names of Nyame, Leza or Nyambe in this arrangement. Kombo’s (2007:234) argument is that the God of the Trinity cannot be counted together with the spirits, ancestors, or divinities and participate in one life since God is God and spirits are spirits and ancestors are just ancestors. This brings us to the theological development of Ancestor-Christology. While the ecumenical creeds present a God in a community of the Godhead, the ontological Trinity, the cosmology tabulated above robs the God of this community and leaves a God who is functioning alone. The ancestral framework poses a theological problem in African theology, which limits the recognition of the creeds that are key in guarding the development of the Trinity, specifically the place of Christ. Kombo’s (2007:76-77) argument regarding the creeds as a Christian heritage is important to the African Church, and to the ADC in particular. WE do not need to reformulate the Trinity afresh nor ignore or embrace the ecumenical creeds by mere recitation in church assemblies. However, what is helpful is to reinterpret them for the African context. The formulation could be a futile process because a historical heritage cannot be destroyed. That is why this work agrees with Kombo’s reinterpretation approach, which can help maintain the philosophical trend of the creeds as well as preserve the contextual platform of the ADC’s experiential and practical theology. The preservation of the experiential and practical components can well fit within Wepener and Nyawuza’s (2017:183) proposal of “Pneumapraxis”. This brings the concept of a “practical theology of the Spirit” engrained in the economy of the Spirit of God and epistemology. Once this is rooted in the manifestations of the Spirit, faith is lived practically.

Nyamiti (1991:3-19) argues that Christology is the most developed concept today in African theology. Clarke (2005:288), writing from the Akan context in Ghana, acknowledges the Council of Nicaea (AD 325) that declared Christ and the Father as *homoousios*, and the Chalcedon Council (AD 451) that defended the Christological dual natures without division or separation, but argues that it is a non-African approach to theology. Clarke (2005:289) argues that Christology in Africa is coming of age, because African Christology “itself is being critiqued from within”. One critique is its failure to free itself from the “umbilical cord of the western Christian mission” and to make the African Christologies adequately related to Africans and their responsibility in the African

church. Another is that African Christologies have remained simply as a “systematic academic reflection on the mystery of Christ” hence, it does not affect the African realities.

Clarke recommends a complementarity of African realities with Christologies that can function in African life. Clarke is right in saying so because there exists a disconnection between academic Christology (private Christology in seminaries) and lived Christology (public Christology). This comes out especially when Christology from below supersedes that from above, which threatens to result in ancestorology. This indicates an incomplete development of African Christology because even Maina (2009:86), a professor of philosophy and theological studies writing from the Roman Catholic perspective, says that the task that Africa Christian theology still has is to establish a firm foundation on the person and ministry of Christ. He further argues that African Christian theology is still defining its identity, goals, and scope. Clarke’s (2005:289) position postulates a greater need for a dialogue between the African academic Christologies and the Christologies that are lived out among African Christians. Daneel (2001:204), writing from the perspective of AICs in Zimbabwe, says that African academic and systematic reflection on the Christological mystery, amidst African realities, needs complementation with functional Christologies in the life of African people.

According to Maina (2009:84), the issue at the centre of African Christian theology is to develop an understanding of the gospel and the person of Christ, since after Vatican II Jesus has been viewed as a member of the African community. This is what Kombo (2007:250) terms “Christology from below”, in which Christ is understood from the African titles, like a friend, elder brother king, or chief healer. He says, “these Christologies seek to establish a relationship between the historical Jesus, the impression his followers had of him, and the implications of such impressions on the socio-cultural and political history of modern Africa”. Maina (2009:87) believes that to claim Jesus as an ancestor raises concern on how to harmonize who Jesus Christ is as a historical person. Understood in the perspective of the early church fathers’ affirmations of Jesus Christ as both God and Lord, the African theology’s claim of Jesus as the African Ancestor *par excellence* raises queries on how to understand the incarnation. To interpret a mystery in one concept with another mystery, as Maina

(2009:104) argues, is impossible because the mystery of the incarnation of Christ who is both God and man is a mystery that cannot be interpreted by another mystery of African ancestor beliefs.

The issue of mediation is important in underscoring the African theology of salvation. Adams argues that the traditional role of the Asantehene as the *Okamayo* (a mediator, one who speaks on our behalf), is frequently used in the church in Ghana (Adams, 2010:190). In Asante's cosmology, they sing songs and make prayers to Jesus whom they call *Duyefoo*, the traditional doctor, who brings holistic healing, forgiveness, and reconciliation. In Adams' (2010:196, 207) study of the Asante Odwira, the tasks performed by traditional priests reveal some mediatorial roles. For example, priests assist the Asantehene to perform purification rites and libation while making intercession for the state and society, and communicating with the ancestors. The Asante concept of Christology, informed by this background, results in a Christ known through functions like healing. To confine Christ in this cosmology does not elevate him to the Christ an African knows. Christ as the Son originating from the Father possesses all the properties bestowed by the Father. Similarly, he shares the same nature with the Father, thus he abides in the Father as God (Kombo, 2007:243). Since the Asante leaves out the part of the Holy Spirit, Kombo (2007:243) speaks about the Holy Spirit as proceeding from both the Father and the Son, thus he is called the Spirit of the Father and the Son. In totality, therefore, the entire Godhead is God distinguished as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. What Kombo is presenting confirms the elements that express the Chalcedonian content about the unity, sameness, and oneness of the Godhead. That means the three persons share the same divinity, equality, and consubstantiality. The affirmation statement of the three persons all being God follows the Athanasian terminology. This suggests that for the Christological mediation to be accomplished, the three persons of the Trinity have to mutually interpenetrate each other.

African Christianity needs to work on its Trinitarian theology by initiating the dialogue between the academic and lived theology. African Christian theology has to organize its Trinitarian theology alongside the framework established in the ecumenical creeds. One major challenge in African Christian theology is the person of Christ, which has been challenged by African ancestral spirituality.

3.5.7 The relationship between AIC theology and the ecumenical creeds

3.5.7.1 AICs in Africa

Ancestorology in locating Christ in Trinitarian ecclesiology and missional community

The argument presented above concerning the development of incomplete Christology in African Christianity has implications for the practical theology of the AICs. It endangers the concept of the biblical Trinity as established by the early church fathers in the ecumenical creeds. Makhubu (1988:59-63), a senior representative and leader of AICs, confirms the place of ancestral spirits evident in AIC worship. He argues that it is problematic for an African to conceive the Father having a Son without a wife. The Fatherhood of God and the sonship of Christ is seen as an idea of the white man's God, a foreign concept to the African mind. Joseph as the father of Jesus is consonant with the African understanding, but Christ as the Son of God and incarnate Logos is a problem in the African traditional worldview. Makhubu seems to confirm the gap between practical and academic theology. While the practical theology of AICs shows elements of ancestral inclination in operation, the academic discussions in which the ecumenical creeds appear are loosely in touch with the public theological enterprise.

In traditional AICs some leaders show tendencies towards usurping the place of Christ that is secured by the ecumenical creeds in their claim for divine healing. Hayashinda (1999:84), for example, argues that ancestor mediation, especially in dreams, is practiced in Christian churches. In the Ethiopian-type churches, for example, the ancestral spirits are said to convey the message from God through dreams. Samuel Mutendi, a departed leader of Zion Christian Church in Southern Shondaland, is said to appear to his people in dreams and to heal the sick whenever they see him. Mutendi is given divine ascription to defend his position; for example, his appearance is radiantly white and he touches the dreamer with his holy staff. However, how Mutendi's deification is arrived at remains mysterious, thus the two mysteries that of the Trinity as contained in the ecumenical creeds and the one represented by Mutendi are a challenge to reconcile. The information of Bond *et al.* (1979:23-34) is not different from the rest concerning the centrality of the ancestors, because they argue that the Harrist churches practice land purification for the sake of the ancestors who reside in it. Special

shrines are set apart by each prophet or prophetess where prayer and healing and other activities are done through ecstatic shouts and songs. One common thing in the above argument is that in both ancestral and ecumenical mysteries about the Trinity faith is applied. However, while the notion of ancestral inclination is driven by extreme emotional appeal, the ecumenical creedal formula brings both faith and reason in dialogue.

Makanda's (2011:81) thesis poses a challenge that aims at investigating the concept of ancestral Christology. He writes, "In many African cultures God is perceived as transcendent and unapproachable. This has led many black Africans to rely on their ancestors for mediation to God". Mbiti (1969:75) confirms this and shows how densely populated the spiritual world of African peoples is with spiritual beings, spirits, and the living dead. Nyende (2008:44) supposes the same, and speaks of Africa as the world of spirits, "an enchanted world", referring to a worldview, which expresses belief in the benevolence of the spirits and their ability to provide remedies for African realities. Such a worldview formalises belief in the benevolence of spirits that prescribes remedies to African causalities, a context from which African Christianity emerges. Such divinities influence the development of the AICs' ecclesiology. This means other intermediaries are useful alternatives to mediatorial Christology. This kind of notion affects the development of a reliable Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community that follows the formula affirmed by the ecumenical creeds. Agyarko's (2009:69) thesis argues against the sufficiency of ancestral Christology from the Akan context and Africa in general in that it does not express adequately the Nicene affirmation of the person of Christ's dual natures. Similarly, the ancestor image insufficiently expresses the atoning work of Christ. Bediako (1995:217-218) concurs with Agyarko that African ancestors cannot rival Christ, because of the existence of a qualitative distinction between Christ as an ancestor and the natural ancestors. Daneel's (1996:132-144) study of Good News Church, an AIC affiliate, demonstrates an incomplete Trinitarian theology in that post-salvific manifestations of the Spirit, like healing and prophecies, tend to usurp the place of Christ in the process of the preaching of the gospel. Molobi's (2020:327-329) most recent study reveals the value ascribed to the ancestors; an interviewee confirmed an "ancestor mountain" in the North West Province in South Africa. Powerful traditional healers and powerful prophets can only access this mountain. Worship and prayer are conveyed to God through the ancestors, and in response God is expected to pass the

message to the living through the ancestors. Magezi and Potgieter's (2016) work, "A critical assessment of Bediako's incarnational Christological model as a response to the foreignness of Christ in African Christianity" is a positive critique of the ancestral Christology framework, which uncovers the undeveloped Christology in African theology. Bediako's deforeignization and Africanization of Christology (Magezi & Potgieter, 2016:2-7) shows undeveloped Christology as opposed to Nyamiti's developed Christology. Similarly, Bediako's suggestion to Africanize Christology is a rich argument for supporting continued African traditional aspects like involving the ancestral spirit world in developing Christology, which undermines the biblical-theological framework. The African spiritual insecurity, which Bediako assumes to be addressed through the ancestor Christology (Magezi & Potgieter, 2016:4-7), is not in itself a solution but a complex theological problem involving syncretism. Thus, this research concurs with Magezi and Potgieter, who suggest the need for an alternative biblical-theological model apart from the ancestral one (2016:7). This work suggests the use of ecumenical creeds as a framework both in safeguarding and in developing a Christology that is free from the ancestral Christology framework for African theology, AICs and the ADC in particular.

What can be inferred from this is that in some AICs the veneration of founding leaders informs the missional community and the content of its message. Veneration is a heretical notion far from the theology of the Trinity in which Jesus is located. To claim that AICs are rooted in the doctrine of Pneumatology requires an in-depth dialogue between the academic Pneumatology and the practical one to make a distinction between the Trinitarian Pneumatology and the ancestral factors. The dialogue should follow the orthodox statements of faith affirmed and contained in the ecumenical creeds.

Dreams in locating Christ in Trinitarian ecclesiology and missional community

Bulkeley (2008:271), an American professor of psychological religion majoring in dreams, is essential here before we review AICs because he gives the history of dreams and the different kinds of dreams, which are relevant in investigating their scope in AICs. He argues that the notion of the usefulness of dreams and visions gained entry when the "European settlers began arriving and pushing their spheres of control farther and farther westward to the indigenous people" who turned to dreams and visions as a means to help defend their lands and cultural traditions. This resonates with the use of

dreams as a vehicle of revelation in colonial Kenya as expressed below in the history of one of the African traditional and religious leader prophet Elijah Masinde wa Nameme:

While in jail, Masinde claimed to have had a vision. In the vision, *Wele Khakaba* (God the Provider) instructed him to tell the Whiteman to quit Kenya for it is not his country, and proclaimed that a Blackman is going to rule Kenya in the future. That white men are sheep of God now turned into wolves that were feasting on children of *Wele* (God). When he was released, he revived *Musambwa* (Luhya word meaning the Spirit of a people) and gained huge followings in western Kenya, Uganda, Pokot, Turkana, and even Baringo District (Nyakale, 1987: para 5).

Hayashinda (1999:76) also argues that dreams are vehicles of revelation in AICs. He argues further that the nature of the independent churches cannot be fully defined without referring to dreams. A dream is not just a dream for the sake of it. Bulkeley (2008:274) argues that dreams could be first gravitational dreams which include unfriendly experiences like calamity or misfortunes and images of destruction, and secondly, mystical dreams which entail “human capacity to envision a transcendental freedom from the oppressive limitation of gravity” which includes flying dreams that insinuate hope for the dreamer. Thirdly, prototypical dreams deal with the sleeping conditions of the body, which different religious traditions believe, frees the spirit in the dreamer to journey in other worlds to get information. Also important in underscoring the notion of dreams in AICs is what Bulkeley (2008:277-278) calls “dream incubation and dream interpretation”. Dream incubation is the initial “pre-sleep rituals and prayers” that aim at creating an atmosphere for receiving a clear version of dreams. It includes places to sleep, clothes to wear, foods to eat, and what not to eat, and the body posture when sleeping. Interpretation of dreams takes more of a literal approach. For example, the dream is taken to mean a direct reminiscence of what is happening. Metaphorical dreams are perceived as indirect, therefore needing an explanation. The paradoxical dreams on the other hand involve a direct reversal, which means that the opposite of the dream will happen. These elements form the content of the message of the missional aspects of the AIC as a community influenced by dreams. The difference that emerges here is evident: while the AICs' mission is embedded in dreams, the early

church fathers' ecumenical creeds were derived from biblical and philosophical inspiration in arriving at the affirmations.

Hayashinda (1999:76-88) argues that the Zionist Churches in South Africa (ZCSA) and the Independent Churches of Zimbabwe (ICOZ) began as a revelation from dreams. For example, Isaiah Shembe is said to have used a series of dreams to solidify his calling as a spiritual leader. In 1911, he began the ama-Nazaretha, the Nazarite Church. Dreams go hand in hand with calling, for example, a case in point of a prophet who put a value on the dreams of his "neophytes". It is said that after they confessed their sins, they were to stay home for three days, after which they would go and reveal their dreams to the prophet. The dream they "long-awaited for was the revelation of Jehovah or Jesus or the Angel always coming in shining white robes". The work of Jehovah in the dream is to instruct them when to leave one church and join another. Sundkler (1980:98) whose argument confirms Hayashinda's opinion also emphasizes the centrality of dreams. He argues that about 3000 AICs in Southern Africa were founded on dreams and that people joined those churches after receiving conviction from dreams. According to Sundkler, people who serve in AICs are called to service through the inspiration of dreams. These findings confirm the centrality of the Spirit's economy in AICs and its affiliates like the ADC. This framework informs the de-emphasis on Christ's economy in the practical life of its adherents. At the same time, it provides a theological task for reconstructing the ADC's concept of the Trinity to address the equality, coeternity, and consubstantiality of the Godhead. What Oduro *et al.* (2008:113-114) present is a further gap that calls for a reconstruction of AICs' and the ADC's economic Trinity. They show how AICs emphasize the Spirit's economy in the sense of conveying revelation and prophecy through the dreams, visions, and special words of knowledge. One becomes filled when occasionally visited by the Spirit of God for a special mission. For the Zionists, the power of dreaming is under suppression in mission churches, but in the Zionist churches, the floodgates of dreaming are wide open. If the AICs represented by the two huge AIC movements in South Africa and Zimbabwe are anything to go by, then it is valid to argue that the missional community of AICs is rooted in functional Pneumatology, if other factors related to mysticism are held constant. The notion of dreams then does not offer a balanced approach towards attempting AIC Christology. The Holy Spirit, who is claimed to mediate dreams, does not fit the category of the Trinitarian community because the Holy Spirit in the Trinity is coeternal, divine, coequal

with the Father and the Son from whom he proceeds. To limit the Holy Spirit to dreams only is to curtail his freedom in working to accomplish the mission of God.

Locating Christ in Trinitarian ecclesiology and missional community in healing in AICs

The study of Haar (2009:1, 4-5) in Zambia on Emanuel Milingo's spiritual experience brings an incomplete sense to the Trinitarian doctrine. According to Haar, Milingo has high regard for the work of the Holy Spirit in healing, which he says he missed in the Roman Catholic Church that made him forfeit his membership. Milingo is said to clamour for comprehensive healing ministry in Africa. Haar (2009:29, 38) shows his interaction with a member of the Zionist Christian Church (ZCC), one of the largest AICs in South Africa. In his finding, these members moved from the Anglican Church to ZCC because of healing, forgiveness, and the promise of eternal life, which was missed in the Anglican Church. This study comes as a challenge to mission churches to rethink their conservative theology. This is because the finding reveals that the AICs are public, whether positively or negatively. There is a need for a theology that will address the wholesome issues of people and the community without compromising on the subject of a balanced Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community. This study is important because it shows how Christ is hardly mentioned in the healing perpetuated in Milingo's experience, and this calls for a reworking of Christology in AICs. The driving force is Spirit healing which is at the centre of the missional community in Milingo's opinion.

Kālu (2000:105) who maintains that AICs are creative in their Pneumatic emphasis and the use of the Bible, ideology, African religion, and culture addresses incomplete Trinitarian ecclesiology. An explicit deficiency of Trinitarian ecclesiology regarding the place of Christ is evidenced in African theology, which Pobee and Ositetu (1998:ix, 65) argue consists in stories, dance, songs, and healing instead of developed doctrinal concepts.

In Zimbabwe, Daneel (2001:297-300) presents a study of Zvinkmborero Apostolic Faith Church (ZAFC), which mixes Christianity and traditional cosmology. The mention of a mixture of Christianity and traditional cosmology is an indication of syncretism, a notion that is anti-Trinitarian. Daneel says that prophetess Mrs. Majeche uses the mysterious

powers from both the Christian faith and the Shona traditional religion to attract many people to her spiritual service. The people around prophetess Majeche is possibly a community belonging to her on behalf of the ancestors, and not necessarily a community gathered in whose midst is Christ the Son of God.

Several theses confirm the need for further development of Christology in African Christianity and AICs in particular. Sibeko's (1997: v, 1, 16, 17) work shows an intense emphasis on the person of the Spirit. He mentions one God but then reverts to the African cosmology, e.g., divinities, spirits, ancestral veneration, and the practice of mediation. According to Sibeko, the work of the Holy Spirit is mixed with cosmological operations. From South Africa, Thomas' (2010:59) research on healing in the Group Assembly of God (GAG) in Kwazulu Natal, also highlights the missing Christology in AICs, for example, the person of the Holy Spirit is functional with less mention of Christ. The iconic elements communicate its theology, for example, the red colour, the use of oil, the sign of a dove, non-lingual flames, and the lingual message comprise the symbol of the Holy Spirit, which is similar to that of ADCs. First of all, Sibeko and Thomas present an incomplete Trinitarian community because it is without Christ. Secondly, such an incomplete Trinitarian community fails to constitute a balanced ecclesial missional community, because the mission of the church is centred on a person's prophecy and healing.

Kgatla and Park's (2015:8) work concentrates on healing in Herero culture and AICs in Namibia, and in its concluding remarks defends the church in principle from any relationship with traditional healers, diviners, and other traditional practices. This, however, does not constitute sufficient evidence to prove a developed Trinitarian ecclesiology and missional community and the place of Christ. This is because he only argues that the church uses biblical scriptures in performing any traditional related practices. The call to rework AICs' Christology is observed by Manda (2013:93, 99) who argues that AICs' beliefs and practices are rooted in the Holy Spirit. Conversely, he maintains that AICs have a strong belief in the person of Jesus Christ, but they "appear to rely more on the Holy Spirit, especially because Christ has ascended into heaven". He emphasizes the centrality of the Holy Spirit and argues that women are used by the Holy Spirit because they are instrumental in healthcare in African Indigenous Churches. He maintains that women are commonly involved in healthcare services because they

easily connect with the “metaphysical realm”. The mystery behind the metaphysical realm obstructs the development of the Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community that follows the definitions and affirmations of the ecumenical creeds. The ability to access the unseen world, to communicate with the spiritual and metaphysical space is what qualifies women to the office of the prophetesses in AICs. Their role is to provide healing, especially for the Zionists in Malawi, where women’s gifts of healing and prophecy are prominent. What is apparent in Manda’s argument is the possibility of the prophetesses transcending into the spiritual realms with the help of the African traditional and cultural spirits. This presents the possibility of opting towards spiritism, a notion that debunks the ecumenical creeds’ formula for developing a Trinitarian Christology.

The theology of healing is a theology that AICs inherited from charismatic Pentecostalism. Manda (2013:102) observes a “strong conviction” of the centrality of spiritual healing powers of the Holy Spirit among AICs. This theology is complemented with the theology of wellness, wealth, and prosperity in which the Holy Spirit is at the centre of this mission. This is a new development among the AICs because initially, they embraced poverty and suffering. That is to say, many of the first leaders of AICs associated spirituality with poverty, and for them, poverty meant godliness, and material wellness was perceived as worldly. Ositelu (2002: 50) argues, “AICs are supposed to be led by non-literate leaders and that the clientele of AICs are the non-literate, the uneducated and the poor. How the Western writers and some mission churches expect a non-literate, unschooled African villager to appreciate the language of the Apostles’ Creed and the Nicene Creed is beyond me”. This shows the then and sometimes the now state of the AICs, including the struggle in articulating the ecumenical creeds, which is the attempt of this study, and so confirms its relevancy. This concurs with Padwick’s (2003:3-4) view that about 70-80 years ago, AICs’ African leaders challenged the concept of development and regarded it as a colonial notion. However, in the contemporary setting, AIC’s emphasis on healing and prosperity is linked to the Western colonial concept of development that implies a holistic balance. In this study, holistic balance refers to a state of holistic spiritual life characterized by a balanced wellbeing of the body, mind (intellect that points to academic theories and knowledge) and the spirit (supernatural and spiritual experience) that can be attained through an interaction of theory and practice. Thus, the birth of these theologies in the circles of

AICs has emphasized the belief that salvation is manifested by the presence of healing, wealth, and prosperity. Anything below this calls for one's repentance or the assumption that some generational curses have to be broken.

3.5.7.2 AICs in Kenya

Githieya's (1997:152-174) work discusses the ecclesiology of the two historical AICs in the central region of Kenya, which include the African Orthodox Church (AOC) and Arathi (Agikuyu Spiritual Church). Githieya establishes that the AOC believes in the apostolic church's foundation (Eph. 2:20-21) and derives its apostolicity from the historical episcopate of Archbishop Alexander through whom all AOCs link with other Christian churches beyond Africa. The Archbishop is the high priest, teacher, and shepherd representing Jesus. The AOCs perceive themselves as the new people of God called and delivered from the oppression of the colonial rule and mission churches. Here the Nicene-Constantinopolitan and the Chalcedonian Christology are threatened by the Archbishop's vicar-ship (Githieya, 1997:152-174) because the vicar's role usurps the place of Christ.

Barrett (1970:258-259) discusses the Trinitarian ecclesiology of the Church of Christ in Africa (CCA) in Luo Nyanza under bishop Ajuoga. Barrett argues that the CCA believes in Christ as the mediator between God and man, which could be explained in the sign of the cross of Christ with the letter H for Hera (love). According to Barrett, CCA was formed because the members felt a lack of the same love in the Anglican Church. Oosthuizen (1968:48) does not handle the doctrinal issues and how the AICs developed in Kenya, instead he discusses the history of the *Roho* (Spirit) movements in Western Kenya, which began upon the initial appearance and experience of the Holy Spirit in Ruwe sub-location. Churches like the Musanda Holy Ghost Church of East Africa (MHGCEA), the Cross Church of East Africa (CCEA), and the Ruwe Holy Ghost Church of East Africa (RHGCEA) emerged (Oosthuizen, 1968:315). One characteristic of these churches is their belief that they are the custodians of the Holy Spirit. This claim for the custodianship of the Holy Spirit seems to summarize the theology of these AIC churches. If this is the case, it confirms the necessity for the present research, which asks what theological principles that can be articulated about the Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community that can assist the African Divine Church of Kenya regarding the place of Christ in Trinitarian missions.

Padwick's (2003) thesis reveals the emphasis on the Holy Spirit. However, he does not go into how the Trinitarian theology in these churches emerges. The *Roho* churches in Vihiga are said to have been founded upon the coming of the Holy Spirit in 1926 and 1927 through Chilson's preaching that emphasized the working of the Holy Spirit. Padwick reports many occasions when congregations would receive the Holy Spirit and express diverse manifestations like prophecy and healing. The central theme in the *Roho* churches was repentance. Padwick argues that it was through repeated repentance in 1926/27 that Chilson and his assistants taught Christians how to receive the Holy Spirit that would make them live with a clean heart. In Padwick's findings, Chilson's teaching on repentance and receiving of the Holy Spirit has been seen as the foundation of the *Roho* churches. In the study, the *Roho* churches still have space for the spirits of the dead, since they have close contact with them through dreams and visions. However, in a Christianized process, the spirits of the departed have been demonized. Among the *Roho* churches, the spirit of the dead person remains part of the community for forty days, after which it is sent away through the services commonly known as memorial services, or remembrance (Padwick, 2003:66,112-134). Due to their intense emphasis on the Holy Spirit, Padwick (2018:17) says that the Holy Spirit Church of East Africa understood the three years of oppression from the colonial structure and the missionary leadership as "the cultivation of the Spirit" (Swahili-kupalilia Roho).

From the studies done in AICs in Africa and Kenya, the developments so far are commendable. However, there is a need for a balanced development of the doctrine of the Trinity in general, and Christology in particular, that will function properly with the affirmations and definitions of the early church creeds. Now, at the centre of AICs is the tension between African cosmology and the Christian faith. Since we are dealing with an African context where everything and any happening has a spiritual cause or attachment, the danger is to bend towards the spirit world, in interpreting the theological articulations.

3.5.8 Conclusion

The hermeneutic of this period centred on the following. First, on Zinzendorf's theology of the sufficiency of the atoning death of Christ, the centrality of Christ's wounds (Vogt, 2008:209, 211), and the view of the Bible as concerned with Christ alone. Secondly, on Wesley's use of reason in determining the meaning and the clarity of the scripture

(Jones, 1995:116). Thirdly, the threefold Pentecostal view on hermeneutics, which highlighted the dialogue of scriptural authority with the practical Christian living, restorationism, which views the salvation plan as accomplished in the outpouring of the Spirit (the Latter Rain), and the four/fivefold gospel (Oliverio, 2012:31-32). The ADC uses all of the principles listed except the centrality of the wounds of Christ to some extent, and rationalism, which is viewed as hindering the movement of the Holy Spirit. What is missing in the stated hermeneutic, which is also necessary for the ADC, is the historicity and the literality of the scriptural passages, which help in linking the entire biblical story as one, and in getting the original purpose of the author. The two terms are important in the interpretation of the bible. Historicity deals with the relationality of the bible to the historical background of the scripture. Literalism is concerned with the historical-grammatical methods in the process of exegesis. This helps avoid the danger of pretext because any text read outside its context is a pretext (Dorani, 1996:29). Pretext results in a misinterpretation of the intended meaning. Misinterpretation cannot hinder conversion to the faith, instead, it will weaken the spirituality of the convert. This is because misinterpretation of the scripture can lead to a misconception of the doctrines. Sound doctrines are built on the correct interpretation of the scripture.

Concerning the Trinitarian theology, the Moravian Trinity is rooted in Zinzendorf's theology of God as the Father, the Holy Spirit as the mother, and the Son as the outcome of both Father and the Spirit mother (Atwood, 2004:64). God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is the true Father, and the Spirit of Jesus is the true mother of the believers (Engel, 2011:71). Secondly, the second blessing theology (Ruth, 2005:39-40), a humanistic view of God's function, seems to have precipitated the weak embrace of the Trinitarian God in Methodism (Wilson, 2011:67), as well as an emphasis on the experiential altar theology (Dieter, 1996:17-23). Thirdly, the Pentecostal Trinity is embedded in experientialism and Spirit manifestations (Robinson, 2013:3-4), prominence of Pneumatology (Cox, 1995:47), and Higher Life (Hollenweger, 1997:182-183). This theology is centred on prophecy, healing, and glossolalia (Wilkinson, 2009:17-18). From the three perspectives, the Moravian Trinitarian theology deviates from the biblical Trinitarian gender thus, is not fit for the ADC. Instead, the correct male gender is to be upheld. The Wesleyan second blessing to some extent could resemble the ADC's notion of deliverance from generational curses, which follow conversion. Developing a balanced Trinitarian theology for the ADC requires a definition of both

theological and doctrinal terms related to conversion to ensure the three persons are complementarily identified and incorporated in the conversion mission.

Lastly, in the relationship between the African theology and the ecumenical creeds, the Triune God cannot be counted together with spirits, ancestors, or divinities. They cannot participate in one life because God remains sovereign and the spirits and ancestors are created (Kombo, 2007:234). To argue that Christology is the most developed concept in the African theology (Nyamiti, 1991: 3-19) because African Christology is coming of age (Clarke, 2005:289), is to assume that both the African cosmology and its enchanted world notion (Nyende: 2008:44) has been dealt with, which is not the case. This is because the African Christian theology needs to establish a firm foundation on the person of Christ and his ministry. At the same time, African Christian theology is still at the definition stage of its identity, goal, and scope (Maina, 2005:289). The African traditional religion and spirituality exist together through the conduit of listening either to God or to the living dead. Thus, the Africans develop the tendency to use intermediaries, commonly the ancestors, during worship and prayer (Knoetze, 2019:1-4). This leaves the ADC with a gap to bridge by dissociating the mystery of the Christological dual nature from the ancestor concept that has one nature, that is, humanity. To some extent, the African Christian theology is influenced by the religious tenets of African Traditional Religion. Such influence is prominent in the theologies of AICs. Thus, this work proposes an academic and practical theology, through the thematic biblical concepts that maintain Christ, as incomparable with the natural ancestors.

3.5.9 The Conclusion of Chapter Summary

The typology of the early church, as well as its historical and literary contexts, are essential for the ADC's process towards a missional hermeneutic. The three approaches are essential in expressing Christ in both Old and New Testaments, as the creedal statements reveal. The foundations laid down by the early Church Fathers as the basis for ecumenical creeds regarding both the ontological and economic Trinity are important for the ADC towards developing a balanced Trinitarian theology. The dialogue of the three aspects, namely orthodoxy, orthopraxis and orthopathy, as previously explained, are essential for the ADC's reconstruction of its Trinitarian and missional community. They allow a dialogical compromise by embracing the African reality of

experientialism, which roots the emotional aspects in the ecumenical creedal framework. The ADC can draw its Christology from the continuous relationship of Christ with the Holy Spirit. This helps to fix the problematic notion of the passivity of the person of Christ, which is usurped by the dispensational function of the Holy Spirit.

Since the African reality of experientialism is undeniable in the ADC's practical theology, the modern period suggests the means to deal with the passiveness of Christ. This includes rooting the ADC's practical theology in the creedal terms of "coeternity," "divinity", and the "coequality" of the Godhead. This will produce a concept of Christ who is equal in majesty and glory like the rest of the Godhead, thus providing an equal place of Christ in the ADC's Trinitarian mission. The universality of the mission of God that is rooted in the economic distinction of the Godhead is to determine the shift in the ADC's mission from being a place to being a movement of God on earth. To fix the problem of the deemphasized place of Christ in the ADC, this work recommends a functional Christology that is based on Christ's qualities of coeternity, coequality, and consubstantiality. This places Christ in equal majesty and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

The ADC can use the Reformation hermeneutic principles such as the sole sufficiency of the scripture, inspiration, perspicuity, and the biblical language in an effort towards its missional hermeneutic. This means academic interpretational aspects can enrich practical theology. The ADC's Trinitarian theology, which is embedded in the replacement of Christ by the Spirit's economy, can be developed using the Trinitarian economy preserved in the creedal affirmations. The economic distinctions serve to establish a non-replacement approach by establishing a collaborative economy and not a personal replacement. Distinguishing the economic functionalities does not mean the replacement of persons and roles. The ADC's Trinitarian and missional community can be built on the principle that the Trinity produces the church and the church participates in the mission as it is enabled by the economy of the Triune God. This serves to establish a Trinitarian mission that is rooted in the interrelationship between the Godhead, which establishes its movement in the earth through the church. The Christology of the ADC can be reconstructed through the creedal framework, which this work acknowledges as essential in establishing a non-replacement of the Christ concept. This can be worked out using the design of the eternal authority of Christ. The

suggestive model is to let the ADC's practical theology be rooted in the creedal framework built around such terms as "coeternity", "coequality", and "consubstantiality" of the Godhead. This drives the sense of the permanency of Christ's presence in both salvation and other related divine providence towards human liberation.

In the modern period's hermeneutical principles, the ADC shows similar elements in its liturgy as shown early in the discussion. However, since they are inadequate in reconstructing the ADC's missional hermeneutic, the principles of historical and literary backgrounds are recommended. This is because they can assist in locating the originality of the intended meaning, which is usually about how God is fulfilling his salvific plan through Christ. The ADC's theological process towards a balanced Trinitarian theology needs a redefinition of both theological and doctrinal terminologies. These terms reveal both the ontological relationality and economic functions of the Godhead, which serve to establish the ADC's Trinitarian theology that can result in the coequal place of Christ in the Trinitarian mission. Christological imbalance in the ADC through emerging de-emphasis of Christ is a pointer to an incomplete Christology in AICs and ACT in general. The concept of ancestorology shows significant insufficiency as a sourcing methodology in constructing African Christology. The ADC as an African theological process towards a balanced Christology needs to root its development in the creedal affirmations because they serve to preserve the hypostatic nature of Christ that provides content for developing orthodox Christology.

CHAPTER 4:

GUIDELINES FOR A PARADIGM SHIFT TOWARDS AN UNDERSTANDING OF JESUS CHRIST’S ROLE IN THE TRINITARIAN MISSION OF THE AFRICAN DIVINE CHURCH OF KENYA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Four aims to provide an attempt towards the construction of guidelines for a paradigm shift towards an understanding of Jesus Christ’s role in the Trinitarian mission of the African Divine Church of Kenya. Various definitions are used to explain the term “paradigm shift”. For example, Bosch (1991:185) defines it as “a fundamental break with the previous theories,” and Hiebert (1999:2) considers it as a replacement of a worldview. Amanze (2009: 124-125) views paradigm shift as a “change course” in discussing the relevance of a shift in theological education in southern and central Africa, while Bochner and Scott-Hoy (2014:156) bring in the concept of “a new idea or displacement of an entrenched habit”. In all the definitions, a common idea that emerges is a reconstruction or amendment of the previous concept, by either completely doing away with the previous assumptions to adopt new ones, or improving them to suit the new context. This chapter takes the latter perspective in developing the shifts that need to be articulated towards establishing the role of Jesus Christ in the Trinitarian mission of the ADC.

This chapter uses the suppositions that emerged from the empirical study in Chapter Two in suggesting guidelines to inform the shifts in the understanding of the role of Christ in the Trinitarian mission in the ADC. In the discussion, the suppositions will follow the order in which they are presented in the empirical study in Chapter Two. They include first, the need to establish an urgent biblical missional hermeneutic that will preserve the Bible as one story, that will help in locating the equal involvement of the Trinity in mission. Second, the need to establish a Trinitarian theology of mission, which calls for cohesive meaning and symbolism in the use of the ADC’s three colours that are iconic in understanding the salvific involvement of the triune God in mission. Third, the necessity to establish an understanding of a Trinitarian community, because, throughout the findings, both the interviewees and respondents showed a low level of understanding of the Trinity. Fourth, the need to establish an ecclesial mission that has

a centrifugal perspective as opposed to centripetal. Fifth, the need to establish a concrete theology of Christ to insulate it from the African traditional and ancestral worldview, towards reconstructing a balanced Trinitarian mission of the ADC. Since the third and the fourth suppositions are complementary, they will be discussed together.

The previous review in Chapter Three traced the historical development of missional hermeneutics, Trinitarian theology, and creedal Christology across the four periods in order to provide a theological foundation for the development of the guidelines towards a paradigm shift in the ADC. It showed particularly how the experiential theologies of the modern period leading to Pentecostalism (and the subsequent founding of the ADC out of Pentecostalism) deemphasized the Christology of the ecumenical creeds in favour of the Holy Spirit manifested through experiential heart salvation, baptism of the Holy Spirit, divine healing, and speaking in tongues. The suppositions were developed through the ecumenical creeds and suggested a solution to the deemphasized place of Christ in the ADC's concept of the Trinity.

It is against this background that Chapter Four seeks to develop guidelines for a paradigm shift in arriving at an understanding of the role of Jesus Christ in the Trinitarian mission of the ADC. The guidelines are developed through Christology, Trinitarian theology, the relationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community, as well as through a missional hermeneutic. The framework for this establishment involves a discussion of the Reformed position on the place of Christ in Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community revealed in the study above, alongside some of the arguments and positions that emerged in the field study. This chapter is therefore a development of guidelines that responds to some of the misconceptions and questions that stood out in the field regarding the place of Christ in the Trinitarian mission.

4.2 A MISSIONAL HERMENEUTIC OF THE BIBLE IN THE EARLY PERIOD (AD 100-470)

4.2.1 Introduction

This section deals with the first supposition, which proposes the need for a missional hermeneutics of the Bible. Based on the empirical study, a missional hermeneutic

framework for reading the Bible is urgently needed to assist in the reconstruction of the ADC's understanding of the biblical mission of God. The empirical study showed that there is limited understanding of the biblical mission as a single redemptive story of God as it unfolds through the redemptive history. As a result, it prompted the need to establish an urgent missional interpretation of the Bible, to restore a uniform reading and interpretation of the grand narrative as it develops from the Old Testament to the New Testament. This is urgent because of the diverse effects related to misinterpretation. Therefore, developing guiding principles will help to deconstruct the already existing misconceptions before they are embraced as norms.

The section derives the missional hermeneutic principles of the four church periods from the literature reviewed in Chapter Three. The ecumenical creeds across the four periods give the framework for articulating the principles for constructing the ADC's missional hermeneutic.

The notion of dispensational reading of the Bible dichotomizes the single story, with the emphasis put on the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament, thereby lessening the reference to the Old Testament because the manifestation of the Holy Spirit is deemed less there or mislocated (Interviewees S05, S06 & S13). Through the three tools used for the data collection, namely, interviews, questionnaires, and observation, those interviewed and the respondents to the questionnaires stated that the Spirit guides the ADC, thus, the ADC is a *Roho* (Spirit) church. The *Roho* notion implies the view that the inner emotive feelings and excitement are proof of the leading of the Holy Spirit. In such an ecstatic context, the Holy Spirit can reveal the scripture and provide its meaning, through sanctified imagination. Based on this assumption, the tendency towards letting the scripture say what they feel it should mean hinders the intended missional interpretation of the scripture. They attribute the inner strong feeling towards a certain scripture as the leading of the Spirit. However, what remains a challenge is how to prove that such feelings are under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, or just circumstantially motivated. Some of the misinterpreted scriptures in the context of the mission include 1 Samuel 18:6 and 1 Chronicles 16:42, where the interviewees agreed that drumming creates an atmosphere to bring down the Holy Spirit to initiate repentance. Some said drum beating helps to maintain the unity of the Spirit, which accompanies miracles and divine healing, which attract outsiders to join the ADC. Also

misinterpreted is John 15:1-17, where the ADC as a denomination is a branch of the vine, thus the ADC is likened to a tree planted near water sources. John is not speaking about a denomination as alleged, instead, he is referring to the followers or body of Christ. The call of Noah to construct the Ark (Gen. 6:7ff), Abraham's call to go to the alien land (Gen. 12:1-4), and the changing of Jacob's name to Israel (Gen. 32:26-29) were perceived as the work of the Holy Spirit. In all the interpretations, not all the three persons of the Trinity are involved in the mission. This kind of hermeneutics empties the biblical hermeneutics of the agents of the *missio Dei*. In the single story of the Bible, the three persons coexist and work together in realizing the historical plan of redemption from Genesis to Revelation.

4.2.2 Principles towards right missional hermeneutics in the ecumenical creeds in the early church

The above hermeneutical issues can be addressed through the following principles arising from the literature review. The previous chapter showed that the missional hermeneutics of the early church period (AD 100-476) is rooted in the unity and the divinity of the Trinitarian persons as expressed in the ecumenical creeds. This means that to develop any missional hermeneutics of the Bible, the framework should be based on concepts such as consubstantiality, coeternity, coequality, and perichoretic cooperation within the Trinitarian movement in fulfilling the redemptive plan of God. The divisibility in the Godhead that seems to be expressed in the ADC in the empirical study, calls for a shift towards embracing the concept of Trinitarian indivisibility, inseparability, and functional distinction against individualism. All these concepts are contained in the phrases formulated in the historical ecumenical councils from which the three creeds are derived. Proper articulation of them in the development of the ADC missional hermeneutics means that the ADC will need to embrace and acknowledge the doctrine of the Trinity as expressed in the ecumenical creeds in their lived and written theology.

Origen's hermeneutical methodology of historical typology and allegory (Rogers & McKim, 1999:3-4) is not helpful for ADC hermeneutical principles. This is because what this work suggests for the ADC is attention to both historical and literary contexts. As it stands, Origen's approach lacks these two components, which can lead to "a pretext" (Dorani, 1996:29). Contexts provide components leading to the identification of the intended meaning of the text. While the two backgrounds are important to the ADC, a

precaution when developing the hermeneutics is to avoid elevating the Holy Spirit beyond the other Godhead persons, especially Christ. To deactivate the place of Christ in favour of the Holy Spirit in any hermeneutical process collapses the centrality of Christ in the redemptive story of the Bible. This makes for dis-connectional gaps in the biblical narrative experience. Hence, any typologies that link to Christological fulfilment are omitted. The creedal definitions safeguard the unity, divinity, coequality, and consubstantiality of the Godhead, but these affirmations are sidelined when typology that reveals Christ is ignored. The Epistle of Barnabas emphasizes the use of typologies in interpreting the Bible; for example in Chapters VII-VIII the Christological and salvific missional typologies are evident in the analogy of fasting and sending away the goat and the red heifer (Justin, 1885:380-382).

Origen (1936:2-3) in *On first principles*, Book I, section 4, suggests hermeneutical principles that could be useful in constructing a missional hermeneutic for the African Divine Church. This includes, first, maintaining the pre-existence of the One God as the Creator, and the foundation of the world, the sender of Jesus who calls the Gentiles to him after disobedient Israel. This God is the Father of Jesus Christ and is the giver of the law, the prophets, the Old Testament, and the New Testament. This brings God the Father into the ADC interpretation of the OT, to correct the notion that the Spirit instructed the calling of the three OT persons mentioned above. Second, to preserve the pre-existence of the only begotten and incarnate Christ, who does not lose his original equality with God in the incarnation. The pre-existence is a factor that helps to begin prefiguring Christ in the OT through typologies as they are fully identified in the NT. Third, to embrace the Holy Spirit in the unity of the Father and the Son, a concept that makes him work not as a single person but in a community. Origen's allegorical treatment of the scripture (Rogers & McKim, 1999:12), is not a positive hermeneutical method in unfolding the biblical narrative, thus not beneficial to the ADC. This is because it supposes various levels of meaning, including spiritualization of the scripture apart from the author's original intended meaning.

At the centre of the above understanding is the suggestion that the construction of the ADC's missional hermeneutic of the Bible should be rooted in the perichoretic and economic role that maintains the ontological existence of the Trinity as a community, in which, when moving towards the world, each distinctively accomplishes their *oikonomia*

in collaboration with the other. To separate the concept of otherness from the Trinitarian operations in the storyline of salvation is to dismantle the arrangement that holds the Bible together. The kind of approach in which one person of the Godhead seems to usurp the other members of the Trinity is to deny the Bible's main characters.

4.2.3 Missional hermeneutic principles of the Bible in the ecumenical creeds in the medieval period (AD 476-1453)

The theological developments in the medieval period, formulated around the definitions of the ecumenical creeds, offer helpful background as the basis for constructing the ADC's missional hermeneutics. The first principle is to read the Bible as a single story of salvation (Mayeski, 2009:87, 89). However, on interpretation, Gregory the Great's allegory, anagogy, and tropology methodology (Mayeski, 2009:96) needs to be re-examined with caution to avoid the problem of eisegesis. Imbalanced allegoric and anagogic approaches by the exegete have a tendency that favour a mystical view of the scripture. Mystical approach is rooted in experience, informs the derivation of meaning from the passage. However, not every scripture needs a mystical approach. This principle can be actualized by perceiving the three persons as equal divine beings, coeternal, and with distinctive salvific roles towards humanity. The three persons play in the salvific drama as equal main characters, without having to emphasize or deemphasize the other. Mayeski, (2009:87, 89) also insists on the importance of the historical and the literary contexts of the scripture in this period. The history she alludes to is salvation history. This could mean that the Bible as a redemptive story begins with creation as the onset of the mission. The redemptive narrative begins to be disclosed after the fall, in which several salvific events and figures expand the salvation story by establishing typologies in which the persons of the Trinity are identified. The setting of each salvific event is supposed to bring to the fore how each person cooperatively enjoys the others' mutuality in accomplishing the assignment. To assume that as we experience the salvific story the manifestations of the Holy Spirit have to evidentially appear is to suggest that humanity manipulates the outcome of the biblical story, and this leads to the notion of selective reading of the Bible that results in a selective interpretation and understanding of the scripture. The reconstruction of the misinterpretation about the Noahic and Abrahamic missional call evidenced above requires the African Divine Church to recognize the concept of the progressive

revelation of God's salvation plan through the said figures, in the light of the ultimate fulfilment in Jesus Christ. This approach maintains the oneness of the missional and biblical story.

In Chapter Three it was noted that Augustine's hermeneutics in his work *On Christian Teaching*, Book 1, Chapter 1, are influenced by the statements of the ecumenical creeds. He argues that interpretation should be based on ascertaining proper meaning as well as making the ascertained meaning known. In Chapter 5, Augustine proposes that the scripture should only be read and enjoyed in the light of the subjects of the enjoyment, who in this case are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. In the process of interpretation, the order should be maintained, such that the Father should remain Father, the Son as the Son, and the Holy Spirit as the Holy Spirit. In missional hermeneutics, reading the Bible in the light of the harmony of the Godhead is important. Unity is connected to the Father, the Son signifies equality and the Holy Spirit is the expression of the unity that points to their equality (Augustine, 1997:5-7). The Trinitarian attributes expressed in Augustine's theological discourse confirm that any balanced interpretation of the scripture entails working out a framework that will ensure equal involvement of the three persons of the Trinity in the progressive unfolding of the redemptive story. His concept of each person leading others in specific economic functions, while the rest support from behind, is essential as it preserves the involvement of the three and their role in the mission's accomplishments. This approach is applicable in developing the ADC hermeneutics with all three equally located. However, this work proposes that for the ADC, when it is the turn for a particular person to accomplish an assigned economic role, the one accomplishing it is not superior or has not replaced the other. This approach provides an equal place for the three persons. For example, Christ, and not the Father or the Holy Spirit, was crucified, died, resurrected, and ascended to heaven. In all these activities, the Father and the Holy Spirit were present with Christ. This economic arrangement still preserves the nature of the Triune God. The rootedness of Augustine's hermeneutics in the teaching of Jesus and in the epistles, which he related to the Hebrew Bible, (Vessey, 2015:3) is important for the ADC's hermeneutics in two ways. First, the Bible is perceived as one story. Secondly, the place of Jesus Christ is located in the OT through typology, and in the gospels through his teaching and ministry, and in the epistles in developing mission that is rooted in the balanced biblical doctrines. This research proposes three characters or

players in the biblical narrative in developing the missional hermeneutics for the ADC: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, whose concurrent or simultaneous cooperation enables the accomplishment of their economic role in the world.

The strands constituting the ecumenical councils and creeds have been used to suggest principles towards developing a missional hermeneutic for the ADC, thereby seeing the possibilities of initiating the Pentecostal orientation of the ADC to begin rethinking ecumenical creeds in its public and academic theological formulations. For example, the relational equality in the Trinity in the sense of consubstantiality, distinctive economic functions, and coeternity of the Godhead. These concepts are important in dictating a hermeneutic that will ensure acknowledgement of the non-separability and independence of the Trinitarian members.

4.2.4 Missional hermeneutic principles of the Bible in the ecumenical creeds in the Reformation period (1500-1750)

In the Reformation period, various theological principles were developed that later influenced the development of missional hermeneutics as an aspect of biblical theology. This section looks at the centrality and influence of some of these theological principles in developing a missional hermeneutic for the African Divine Church of Kenya. In the Reformation period, this can be seen in the theology and exegetical methods of the various theologians.

First, Calvin's (*Institutes*, I, VIII, i) principle of the sufficiency and inspiration of scripture allows for the development of the concept of the Logos Christology of the Bible as one story from Genesis to Revelation. Since the Logos Christology is an orthodox tradition developed through the ecumenical creeds, the concept of inspiration incorporates the Holy Spirit in making the Word of God available. Calvin's position of the Holy Spirit sealing the doctrine and the gospel in the minds of the people (*Institutes*, I, IX, i) suggests that any missional interpretation of the Bible needs to be guided by the Holy Spirit. The concept of the incarnate Word as developed here confirms the creedal definitions of Christ. For example, it acknowledges the Apostles' Creed's defence of his humanity as follows: "who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary". Secondly, it embraces the Nicene Creed's statement of "he came down from heaven,

and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and made man..." and finally the Athanasian Creed preserves the human nature as "the Son is of the Father alone, not made nor created, but begotten". However, for this principle to apply to the ADC, the research proposes that the notion of the ADC as a *Roho* (Spirit) church, which emphasizes the Spirit rather than Christ, be rooted in the Spirit Christology, which the creeds affirm. This helps to ensure the balanced functions and location of the two persons. Based on this principle, the Bible should be read and understood from the perspective of its sufficiency and inspiration in bringing its salvific message. The message is built on the sole sufficiency and inspiration of the scripture in which the three persons of the Trinity work together as equals in accomplishing the mission. The idea of economic collaboration is a concept that the ecumenical councils defined in the creedal statements. Both the Apostles' and the Nicene creeds acknowledge the Father as the creator of all things. The Son is the mediator who procures salvation for sinful humanity, and the Holy Spirit is involved in the conception of Jesus Christ, at the same time he is "the Lord and Giver of life" who together is worshipped and glorified as one God. The biblical mission is dependent on the coeternity, coequality, and consubstantiality of the divine persons of the Trinity. These terms are taken from the creedal language that shows their central importance for formulating the ADC hermeneutics of mission.

Second, Zwingli's theology aids the development of a hermeneutic principle. His concepts of the perspicuity of the scripture and the biblical languages are important (Sargent, 2014:327). Concerning perspicuity, Zwingli opposes reason as insufficient for interpreting the Bible and argues that the Holy Spirit alone is the agent of interpretation, a position that the ADC acknowledges. Zwingli's thought of basing faithful interpretation of the Bible on the Holy Spirit's revealing the meaning to the reader and not on the words themselves (Sargent, 2014:328) is important. However, if left at that, the historical and literary contexts as well as the biblical languages of the scripture, which require reason and are likely to affect the intended meaning of the text, may be neglected. Since the two biblical contexts give hints to the intended meaning of the Bible, this research suggests that the ADC's hermeneutics should be rooted in the centrality of the Holy Spirit's function in revealing the meaning, the use of reason in ascertaining the biblical contexts, and the biblical languages. This principle provides a

wider scope in understating the text. Nevertheless, human reason should not replace the Holy Spirit in the interpretation process.

The third hermeneutical principle in this period that is useful for the ADC's missional hermeneutic is Zwingli's literary and grammatical knowledge, which provides the framework for the Holy Spirit to give the meaning of the passage. Additionally, the aspect of *regula fidei*, the rule of faith and love, is essential for hermeneutic principles (Sargent, 2014:333-334). The fourth principle is Henrich Bullinger's *lectio continua* approach, where the study is done sequentially (Dowey, 2004:43), and the concept of the oneness of the eternal covenant that connects both interpretation and theological construction (Dowey, 2004:47). Like Calvin and Zwingli, Bullinger acknowledges the importance of the historical setting, languages, and elements of faith and love (Dowey, 2004:52).

The theology presented in the above discussion confirms that the Word is God's, and the human participation in the writing involved inspiration, the work of the Holy Spirit. Additionally, the whole Bible is one story, one covenant, in which all three persons are equally involved. The missional hermeneutic for the ADC can be developed from the notion that the Word of God is Jesus Christ. This is affirmed by the ecumenical creeds, which provide the framework of both the intra- and extra-cooperation of the three persons regarding the mission. In the light of this, the Word of God, which was written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is understood in the Trinitarian collaboration. Thus it becomes conceivable when the three persons are viewed participating in human affairs from Genesis to Revelation. The biblical languages can also be an interpretational tool for the ADC because they will help in ascertaining the originality of the words, and the wording of the scripture passages. This will assist in retaining the passage within its context.

4.2.5 Missional hermeneutic principles of the Bible in the ecumenical creeds in the modern period (17th C to modern)

This section discusses the theological principles that emerged from Chapter Three of the literature review with regards to the rise of Pentecostal theology in the modern period. These principles are argued in such a way as to respond to the suppositions that arose from the empirical study in Chapter Two.

In Moravian theology

Missional hermeneutic principles can be drawn from Zinzendorf's theology. The first is reading the Bible in the light of the sufficiency of the atoning death of Christ (Vogt, 2008:209). The second is his stress on the wounds of Christ (Vogt, 2008:211), and the third, the ascension of Christ (2008:214). If Zinzendorf perceived these as central to this mission, then the Old Testament presents the typologies fulfilled in the Christological wounds, death, resurrection, and ascension. For Zinzendorf, the Bible is entirely concerned with Christ alone, and the God who was revealed to Abraham and Moses was Jesus Christ (Vogt, 2008:214). The wounds and the death of Christ confirm the humanity of Christ as part of the Christology preserved in the ecumenical creeds. However, it does so only by emphasizing the Christology from below and not Christology from above. Christology from above is hinted at although in a reverse form through the ascension. The theory of the wounds and death of Christ can be a beneficial principle to the ADC through a prototypical approach. The notion of wounds and death have an OT connotation where the innocent blood of the animal would be shed to appease God, to reconcile the people back to God. This is accomplished in the new covenant by the blood of Christ, which carries a missional aspect.

In Wesleyan theology

John Wesley's hermeneutical tools, such as the use of the deuterocanonical books and reason to clarify the scripture to the audience (Jones, 1995:116), brings the notion that the Bible can well be understood by using other non-biblical sources for arriving at the right and intended meaning of the passage. The challenge with using the deuterocanonical tool in the ADC lies in its level of academic theology. The Roman Catholics, the Eastern Orthodox, and the Oriental Orthodox view the deuterocanonical books as canonical. If the purpose for the use of extra-biblical sources is not well understood, it may lead either to a replacement of the Bible or total dismissal of the extra-biblical materials. This calls for a rigorous theological conversation and scholarship because the context and the tradition of the ADC are assumed to be *Roho* (Spirit) based, and the Bible is the sole material through which the Spirit of God speaks to them. Other extra sources are not inspired, and thus they lack theological and spiritual appeal to the ADC interpreters.

While in Wesleyan tradition the hermeneutics are contained in the written songs and hymns whose focus is on Christological typology, allegory and paraphrasing (Tyson in C. Wesley, 1989:443-444), the African Divine Church does not have written songs. Most of the songs sung are attributed to the inspiration of the Spirit, who reveals songs circumstantially. To develop a hermeneutic from haphazard songs, as was observed in several of the ADC gatherings, may not give a concrete and lasting foundation for constructing a reliable missional hermeneutic. The hermeneutics of the ADC as a *Roho* (Spirit) church, which emphasizes the role of the Spirit, can be developed from Wesley's principle of searching the scripture in prayer and giving the Spirit pre-eminence in interpreting the scripture because he is the author of the scripture and the lives of the people (Koskie, 2014:60). The fact that the Holy Spirit is an interpreter shows the relationality of the persons of the Trinity as expressed in the creeds. In the creeds, the three persons share the same divinity, coexistence, and consubstantiality. When the Spirit reveals the intended message in the process of interpretation, what is revealed is the intention of God the Father through his Son to humanity. Similarly, the unity of the Trinity as preserved in the creeds is portrayed in the Spirit's economy of authorship when the Spirit conveys the Word of God, who is the incarnate Son. This brings the sense that the Spirit rightfully represents the Father and the Son in inspiration because he shares similar nature with the two.

In Pentecostal theology

The hermeneutical principles of Pentecostal theology express similar theological emphasis as those observed in the ADC's pragmatic theology. First, is the scriptural authority for Christian beliefs and living and theological experiences of the world. Second, is the notion of restorationism, where the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, "the Latter Rain," is viewed as accompanying God's plan of salvation. Third, the fivefold gospel is considered as the "full gospel," the basis of the doctrinal framework for explaining the scripture and spiritual experiences. Lastly, pragmatic naïve realism is integrated with an understanding of the supernatural (Oliverio, 2012:31-33). The fivefold principle is based on the five pillars of spirituality, namely, Jesus as the Saviour, Sanctifier, Spirit Baptizer, Healer, and the soon-coming king (Archer, 2010:10). The fivefold gospel provides the hermeneutical methodology in reading and understanding the scripture (Martin, 2013:4-5). Some of the practices proposed in the fivefold gospel

analogy are beneficial in developing the missional hermeneutic for the ADC. First, reading the Bible as one story, and secondly, viewing the Bible through the analogy that at the beginning and the middle of the Bible story Jesus Christ is its goal, which brings the salvific story of both the Old Testament and the New Testament into one story. Third, the view that the Bible is approached as a lived story, which precipitates a pragmatic interpretation (Martin, 2013:5-8). The question that needs to be asked of this analogy is, What about the end of the story? Who is the subject at the end of the story? Because Martin stops at the middle of the story. Concerning the pragmatic approach to the scripture, clarity has to be articulated regarding some passages that may not necessarily need a pragmatic approach, but just to believe them as they are, without having to do anything about them. However, the problem with the fivefold full gospel is the passivity of the Holy Spirit in the five pillars of Pentecostal spirituality, which informs their hermeneutics. While the ADC has an active Holy Spirit and a passive Christ, the suggestion made in the fivefold full gospel is opposed to the normality of the ADC. Because of this, this research proposes an active-active economy for both Christ and the Holy Spirit, because the fivefold full gospel portrays a less active Spirit Christology. Since the fivefold full gospel seems to imply a notion of activity and passivity of the two persons, it negates the provisions of the ecumenical creeds, which show both persons equally active concurrently.

4.2.6 Conclusion

Establishing a missional hermeneutic is important in designing a balanced approach to mission. A missional hermeneutic for the ADC can thus be developed along with the following principles. First is the principle to read the Bible in the light of the atoning death and the wounds of Christ. The terms “atoning” and “wounds” could depict a missional hermeneutic if they are assumed to evidence a typology of how the NT is fulfilling the OT through the blood of the new covenant.

Secondly, reason is important because it clarifies the scriptures. The deuterocanonical books are essential because they add to the clarification process. However, this research proposes a precaution for the ADC concerning the use of deuterocanonical books, because Protestants do not recognize them as canonical. While their informational history is helpful, they should not replace the sixty-six canonically accepted books.

Thirdly, songs and hymns express the hermeneutic, but they should be rooted in the scriptures. The songs sung should be evaluated against the scripture to ascertain their preservation of the complementarity of the Trinitarian economic functions. While hymns are preferable for preserving orthodox faith and theology, non-hymnal songs like enchantments or repetition of phrases may result in an unbalanced hermeneutic. For example, the ADC has this song, "*Roho bula Roho bula*" (Spirit reveal, Spirit reveal) mainly sung in the service. The question is, What is the Spirit supposed to reveal? Secondly, the Spirit seems isolated from the rest of the Godhead.

Finally, the fivefold full gospel at the centre of the Pentecostal hermeneutics seems to promote the notion of active-passive relationship between Christ and the Holy Spirit. The active-passive concept suggests a scenario of interchangeableness in the role of Christ and the Holy Spirit. Thus at some point, Jesus is assumed to be passive in participating in human affairs based on dispensational teaching as his role is taken over by the Holy Spirit. This approach is problematic because it proposes either the development of Christ alone, or the independence of the Holy Spirit, a concept that deactivates the Spirit Christology. This negates the affirmations of the creeds concerning the existing cooperation of the Godhead.

4.3 TRINITARIAN THEOLOGY IN THE ECUMENICAL CREEDS

4.3.1 Introduction

The second supposition that emerged from the empirical study concerned the need for establishing a proper Trinitarian theology. In the empirical study, the findings confirmed that there are variations in the way the colours are understood. For the ADC to establish a united Trinitarian theology of mission there is a need to develop an integrated meaning and symbolism for the three official colours of the church because they are useful for the theological understanding of the salvific involvement of the Triune God in the ADC mission.

This section suggests theological tenets, considered as theological principles, towards addressing this supposition of establishing a Trinitarian theology for the ADC based on the ecumenical creeds, in the four periods of the church. The previous chapter provides a framework from the literature review towards articulating a balanced Trinitarian

theology for the ADC. This ultimately will provide the basis for locating the place of Christ in Trinitarian theology. The guiding parameters are the following. Who is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit? To answer these questions adequately requires an articulation of the concept of perichoresis, the divinity of the three persons, the nature of the Triune God, the procession of the Spirit, and the oneness and the threeness of the Godhead.

4.3.2 Theological principles in the early church towards the development of Trinitarian theology for the ADC

The ADC colours, as they emerged in the empirical study, are missional, and an attempt towards a Trinitarian theology of mission. However, the harmonization of the symbolic meaning of green and white colours is essential in constructing a balanced Trinitarian theology of mission. While Christ is emphatically symbolized by the red colour, the Father and the Holy Spirit share the white colour interchangeably. The green colour symbolizes either the human agricultural economy or the state of human sin. In this Trinitarian attempt, it is unthinkable that Christ's red colour stands out unquestionably and without mixed meaning, yet he is deemphasized in the functional or economic Trinity. Since the Holy Spirit seems to be at the centre of the ADC's economic Trinity, he is thus overemphasized. This research proposes a deconstruction of the Spirit-active and Christ-passive analogy. This can be achieved by constructing an active-active formula where both Christ and the Spirit are concurrently at work. This will arrive at the ecumenical creeds' construct of Spirit Christology, where both are involved in each other, and with each other.

Principles from the Apostles' Creed towards a Trinitarian theology for ADC

The empirical study shows both a united Trinity as well as a divided Trinity. This indicates a measure of confusion in the doctrine of the Trinity. However, there are theological principles in the Apostles' Creed that could be useful for reconstructing the ADC Trinitarian theology. For example, the rule of faith as developed by Origen consists of One Father, the maker of heaven and earth and everything *ex nihilo*. Secondly, there is Irenaeus's construct of Christ as the Son of God, which Tertullian acknowledges as the Logos incarnate. Thirdly, the three theologians acknowledge the Holy Spirit as the one through whom Christ is brought to us (Schaff, 1877:35-37). The principle arrived at

in these expressions provides a balanced Trinity because each person depends on and accompanies the other. In addition, Christ as described here is both from above in the sense of the Son of God, as well as from below in the sense of the divine conception and the virgin birth.

In addition, the baptismal formula of the 2nd century maintains the persons of the Trinity. Pannenberg's (1972:1) three Trinitarian questions are key in identifying the distinction within the Trinity, which in turn is essential in developing the Trinitarian theology. However, for these closed questions to benefit the ADC, they should be reconstructed as open-ended questions to help generate retrievable information. For example: What do you believe concerning God's authority? What does it mean to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ? What does it mean to believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy church, and the forgiveness of sins? Barth's (1958:53) account of three articles in the Apostles' Creed add to the essential principles towards developing the ADC's Trinitarian theology. First is God's Fatherhood towards Jesus Christ, as God above man, which demonstrates Christ's eternal generation from above. The second article affirms Christ's humanity, and this God-man is key in interpreting the first and the third articles. This is because it is a hinge of the God-man relationship expressed in the first and the third articles. The formula is completed in the third article with God the Holy Spirit dealing with God as man, within man.

As established in the review chapter, in AD 180-240 the symbolism was essential in developing a doctrine of the Trinity. The Good Shepherd analogy (Jensen, 2000:748-749), which points to Jesus Christ, has an essential three-fold bearing on the development of the ADC's concept of the Trinity. First, it is resourceful in developing the humanity of Christ and the concept of the blood of the new covenant. Secondly, it presents Christ involved in mission as a shepherd, an aspect that puts Christ continually active as opposed to passive. Thus, Christ is at the centre of human spiritual and physical healing or wellness. The ADC's symbol of the red colour that denotes the blood of Christ is similar to the symbol of the Good Shepherd. This draws in the connotation of Christ endangering his life to save the sheep. This argument leads to the view that Christ is still involved in healing. Thus, it dispels the common notion in the ADC that healing is purely the work of the Holy Spirit. From the Apostles' Creed, the ontological Trinity is essential in constructing theological principles that explain the coexistence and

coessentiality of the triune God. Additionally, the economic Trinity from which functional Christology is derived is expressed in the perichoretic relationship of the three persons of the Godhead in the unfolding of the salvation plan. The overlap of both the ontological and economic Trinity essentially confirms the unity and inseparability within the Trinity (Torrance, 1996:8).

Principles from the Nicene Creed towards a Trinitarian theology for ADC

The Nicene Creed reinforces or interprets the definitions and theological principles expressed in the Apostles' Creed. The principles derived from the Nicene Creed in this period that can assist in the formulation of Trinitarian theology for the ADC, as a response to the misunderstandings found in the empirical study, would include the following:

1. Irenaeus' work in *Against Heresies*, Book I, establishes a Trinitarian principle through the economy of creation, with God the Father and Jesus Christ the only begotten Son cooperating in creation, which acknowledges the Nicene Creed statement that He was not created.
2. The principle of the Word incarnate, depicted in God dwelling among us, his suffering, death, descent, and then ascension into heaven (Schaff, 1885:873-874) presents a Christology that fits comprehensively into the Trinitarian mystery. This understanding has embedded the one God and not three Gods, as God Almighty, the incarnated Son, and his salvific mediatorial economy, and the Holy Spirit's economy as necessitating the events towards the birth of Christ, his passion, resurrection, ascension, and the second advent (Schaff, 1885:876). This Trinitarian principle is rooted in the formula of the coeternity of the Son, the begotten, and his pre-existence with the Father.
3. The Spirit within the Trinity prepares the sinner for the Son to redeem, hence leads him to the Father (O'Collins, 2013:75). The ontological arrangement and cooperation need to be held consistently in order to develop a balanced Trinitarian theology.

The acknowledgment of the flow of these events provides a concrete basis for the principles for developing Trinitarian theology for the ADC. The theology behind the

Nicene Creed regarding one eternal generation of the Son is key in constructing the doctrine of the Trinity (Giles, 2017:5). To derive an orthodox Trinitarian theology for the ADC, the Son has to remain distinct from the Father, the offspring of the Father's being, and consubstantial with him as a way of preserving the sameness of their deity.

The views of the Cappadocian Fathers are no less different from those of the early Fathers regarding the Trinity in the Nicene Creed. Basil the Great (c. 330-79), Gregory of Nyssa (c.335–c.394), and Gregory of Nazianzus (c.329-89) emphasized the concept of substance (hypostasis), and they developed a firm and a coherent conception of the Godhead that consisted of the three persons (McGrath, 2016:11). Basil's work *The Book of Saint Basil on the Holy Spirit* establishes the needed unity of the Trinity such that to exclude that unity collapses the possibilities of Trinitarian theology. But to maintain the Trinitarian theological enterprise, Basil in the mentioned work (Chapter V, section 7) arrives at the Trinitarian unity by underscoring the phrases in 1 Corinthians 8:6 "through whom" as referring to the Father, and "of who" in the case of the Son and the Holy Spirit. In his argument, the Father and the Son share in the phrase "of whom and through whom", and the Son and the Holy Spirit also share in the same phrase (Schaff, 1894:149). Basil (Chapter XVI, section 37) underpins this principle by maintaining the inseparability and the incapability of the Spirit becoming a separate person from the Father and the Son (Schaff, 1894:190). This economic role shows the cooperation of the Trinity that needs to be observed in articulating the Trinitarian theology of the ADC. The notion that seems to suggest the Holy Spirit working alone, as established in the empirical study, especially in healing, worship, Spirit baptism, and other post-conversion manifestations is corrected through this.

Gregory of Nyssa (1892:109) in Book XII *On the Holy Trinity and of the Godhead of the Holy Spirit*, identifies the principle of the divinity of the Godhead in the salvific economy of the saving faith, where the three are one. The three work as follows. The Lord Jesus Christ delivered saving faith to those who became the disciples of the Word. They are then enabled to join in communion with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and this indicates a transfer from corruptible life to immortality. This theological construct rests on the formula that the three are related symbiotically. For example, on the unity seen in the begetting of the Son, Gregory of Nyssa (1894:613) writes that the "Holy Spirit is the Unction of the Only Begotten, who is also called the Anointed of the Lord." The Spirit is

identified as the sign of the Kingdom. The Spirit shares in the glory of God and the kingdom of the Son cannot be received without the dignity of the Holy Spirit. Since each person shares in the dignity of the other, they are all God. Nyssa's understanding of divine personhood as countable individuals with a collection of properties suggests Trinitarian relational communion. This presupposes terms such as essence, one nature, or same essence (Turcescu, 2005:5), which are proof of the principles of Trinitarian consubstantiality, coeternity, and coequality. The rationality of this argument showcases the *homoousion* concept and explains how the three function together from an ontological relation to an economic relation in moving towards humanity. This is a perception that is to be embraced in the ADC's Trinitarian theology if the Holy Spirit is not to be emphasized more than Jesus Christ. This means there is no true Trinitarian theology where the three are not understood from a balanced perspective.

Salvation is an ongoing missional project of the Trinity. The assumption that Christ left it all to the Holy Spirit, a notion that traversed a large percentage of the empirical findings of the ADC practical theology, needs to acknowledge the interdependence within the family of the Trinity. It is this approach to the development of the ADC's Trinitarian theology that is needed to yield a theology that is coherent with the Trinitarian theological affirmations in the ecumenical creeds that acknowledge three persons as One God, coexisting consubstantially. That means, as Giles (2017:5) puts it, that the eternal generation of the Son and the procession of the Spirit explain the three-fold eternal self-differentiation in the life of the One God.

Principles from the Athanasian Creed towards a Trinitarian theology for ADC

The Athanasian Creed is resourceful in articulating the theological principles for developing a Trinitarian theology for the ADC, as detailed in the literature review chapter. This is because it offers a valuable response to the weak understanding of the Trinity, as explained earlier. For example, Athanasius' (1891:1070) *Four Discourses against Arians* explains the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son, which arrives at an argument that Christ is God from God, and he is God's Word and Wisdom. This means that the Word is the Son of God, hence the Father and the Son are two distinct persons but one Godhead, undivided and unseparated. This principle is important for it deconstructs the illusion of ancestral intermediary components that emerged in the empirical study. Although Athanasius' view of the Trinity is philosophical, it confirms the

incomprehensibility of the concept by human emotive experience, which is evident in the ADC. The hypostatic nature of Christ provides a unique and unparalleled position against the ancestral framework in developing the ADC's Trinitarian theology. This research proposes for the ADC an unbroken relationship of the Father and the Son, whose existence enables the procession of the Spirit. Thus, the function of the Spirit is representational of the Father and the Son, whose nature is indivisible and mutual love, as opposed to the Spirit's divisibility, which is an aspect that quantifies the Godhead. This is because the concept of divisibility leaves out the component of otherness that is preserved in the economic Trinitarian relationship as developed by the ecumenical creeds.

Bray (1984:177) identifies the Trinity in the Athanasian Creed in the clause "for there is one person of the Father, another of the Son and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son and the Holy Ghost, is all one, the Glory equal, the Majesty co-equal". It is from this clause that the principle of the distinction of persons is derived. This principle speaks of distinct economic functions that are accomplished interdependently, an element which supplies to the ADC Trinitarian theology the concepts of the oneness of the God of the Trinity, who is of the same nature, and consubstantial. These properties are important in preserving the members of the Trinity from separation on the basis of their roles and dispensational factors, a notion which emerged in the findings where the "now" period was categorized as the time of the Holy Spirit. In Bray's (1984:177-178) view, the power that the members of the Trinity used in accomplishing their *oikonomia* is equal, thus demystifying the notion of superiority of one over the others. A theological attempt towards superiorization of any of the persons empties the content of the Trinity. In Geis' (2013:23) view, the Athanasian Creed guards against the confusion of the division of the substance of God in the Trinitarian persons. The ADC has a strong and positive theology of the Spirit. That is why, its practical theology of the Spirit does not agree with that of Tropici, who relegated the Holy Spirit to the level of a creature who is only distinguished from the angels by rank (O'Collins, 2013:91-92).

The following section shows how the ecumenical creeds in the medieval period provide theological principles that can be used in formulating a Trinitarian theology for the ADC.

4.3.3 Theological principles for constructing ADC's Trinitarian theology from ecumenical creeds in the medieval period

The two central theological mysteries in this period are the mysteries of the Trinity and incarnation (Van Nieuwenhove, 2012:1-2). From the previous chapter, various authors' arguments provide the basic framework for formulating the necessary principles for constructing the Trinitarian theology of the ADC. First, Aquinas in *Summa Theologica* (Question 11, article 1) expresses an understanding of the Trinity as an indivisible and simple being, which guards against his multiplicity (Aquinas, 1912:47). Aquinas's use of terms like being, simplicity, and oneness of God is reminiscent of the language drawn from the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, which provide the basis for the principles of consubstantiality, co-eternity, and equality in the Trinitarian community. Secondly, the Spirit is one with the Father and the Son, and St. Ambrose reinforces this in his work *On the Holy Spirit* (Book I, Chapter 1, section 23-25 & Chapter II, section 27-30), stressing that the Spirit cannot be counted among other things because he is coequal with the Godhead. The Spirit is of God and possesses the fullness of perfect power, and proceeds from both the Father and the Son. Hence, he is of equal status to that of the Father and the Son (Schaff, 1893:137-139). The creedal theology of the Holy Spirit is a foreign concept in the ADC because the ADC's practical pneumatology portrays the notion of an active Spirit and a passive Christ. This is opposed to the ecumenical creeds' Spirit-Christology. The ADC's practical and narrative theology is rooted in the Spirit's manifestation. That is why, in the findings, both interviewees and respondents agreed that the ADC is a *Roho* (Spirit-led) church.

In Augustine's book *The City of God*, the Trinity develops as follows: God the Father is the creator of all, and Jesus Christ is the fulfilment of the Abrahamic seed who fulfils the universal promise of blessing. The Spirit is the divine Spirit (Augustine, 1871:333). In constructing the ADC's Trinitarian theology, some principles can be derived from Augustine's book *On the Trinity* (Book 1, Chapter 4, section 7). The first is to maintain the unity and the divinity of the Godhead, as well as the element of coequality and indivisibility of substance. The second is to embrace the fact that the three persons of the Godhead are not three gods but one God. The third is to keep the proper perspective of the ontological relationship, which holds the Father as the unbegotten but the begetter of the Son, the Son as the begotten from the Father, and the Spirit as belonging to the Father and the Son. In this explanation, each person cannot replace or

become the other; for example, the Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Father, neither is the Holy Spirit the Father nor the Son. This sequence does not suggest a hierarchy, but an economic arrangement, such that the Father does what belongs to fatherhood, the Son does what is required of the Son, and the Spirit what is of the Spirit (St. Augustine, 1963:10-11).

St. Anselm in his theological work, *Devotions of Saint Anselm Archbishop of Canterbury* (Chapter 23), in which God the Father is called “good”, emphasize the principle of incarnation. The adjective “good” is God’s Word, God’s truth, and also the incarnate Son. The Holy Spirit is placed between the Father and the Son to express the mutual love within the Trinity. This unity cannot be multiplied (Anselm, 1903a:45). Aquinas (1947) in *Summa Theologica*, Question 27 on *Procession of divine persons*, builds the Trinitarian ontology through a procession by way of similitude from God, also called generation, in the form of intelligible emanation. This affirms the Nicene Creed’s principles of *homoousios*, coequality, coeternity, and consubstantiality. The processions are dual, of the Son, and the Spirit (Aquinas, 1947:331-335). Since what proceeds, generates, or emanates from the source (God the Father) is the same as the source itself, these terms will be essential theological components for developing the ADC’s narrative and written Trinitarian theology, because it will provide the correct place for Christ in their doctrine of the Trinity.

4.3.4 Theological principles for constructing ADC’s Trinitarian theology from the ecumenical creeds in the Reformation period

The previous chapter confirmed that the Reformation period embraces and acknowledges the theological contents of the ecumenical creeds. This period provides a theological framework that can be used for developing a Trinitarian theology for the ADC. Calvin in his *Institutes* (Book 1, Chapter 13, sections 7 & 14) discusses important theological points that should appear in the ADC’s Trinitarian formulation. First is the equal divinity within the Godhead, which is a Nicene affirmation. Secondly, the Logos incarnation as the begotten of the Father before all ages. Thirdly, the pre-existence of the Holy Spirit and his equality with the Father, having the same sovereign power as that of the Father (Calvin, 1845:57, 62), which affirms the Constantinopolitan Creed. This theological understanding helps in shifting from the ADC’s de-emphasis of Christ in

its theological enterprise to Christological inclusion in realizing a balanced Trinitarian ecclesiology and missional community.

The relationship of the three persons that the ADC theology is to embrace in its Trinitarian development is one that is established in the creeds where the Godhead is internally interrelated and where each person belongs to each other (Torrance, 1996:50). This argument is evidenced in Calvin's position concerning equality in the divinity of the creedal Godhead explained above. The mystery of the revelation of God is to be understood in the light of the Logos incarnation, and Christ as the objective content of that self-revelation in knowing God the Father and the Holy Spirit. The Nicene confession of "we believe" in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit offers the formula for understanding the rest of the clauses in the creeds. Additionally, it functions as a guideline for exclusivity against including other gods into the Trinity (Torrance, 1997:22, 23), for example, the African traditional hierarchy of beings, in which the Spirit and Christ are counted in the same hierarchy with other African deities. In the empirical findings, this hierarchy was not quite conspicuous but was implied. The ancestors were perceived as benevolent spirits that occupy a special place in the spiritual hierarchy. In as much as they are not equated to Christ, they situationally replace him, or the benevolent spirits of the ancestors usurp his place (Interviewees S05, S06, S07, S12 & S14). The terms "remembered", and "honoured" as used by the interviewees regarding the place of ancestors may not essentially connote reverence accorded to ancestors, but it depicts the component of respect, which posits part of African spiritual hierarchy.

In the Second Helvetic and Belgic Confessions, the derivative principles are similar. For example, in the Second Helvetic Confession (Chapter 3) the theological contents of the creeds are mentioned, such as the oneness of God, in essence, nature, and coeternity. It acknowledges the Athanasian Creed's clause "we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in unity" (verse 3). The adjectives like "indivisible", and "inseparable without confusion" and "distinguished as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit" constitute important points to include in developing the ADC's theology. The concepts of the begetting of the Son and the procession of the Spirit provide a theological rule to show how the three persons are ontologically in one another. The Belgic Confession (article 8) affirms the creeds' identification of the persons through particular characteristics that keep the unity of one God. In this sense, the Father is not the Son, the Son is not the

Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son. This, however, does not suggest separate enumerability within the Trinity.

4.3.5 Theological principles for constructing ADC's Trinitarian theology from the ecumenical creeds in the modern period

The study of the literature of Pentecostal theology confirmed Pneumatology as the dominant theme relevant for this study from this period (17th to 20th centuries). This imbalanced emphasis on Pneumatology affects the theological understanding of the Trinity in the Pentecostal movement. The ADC is a Pentecostal denomination, described by most interviewees and respondents as a *Roho* (Spirit-led) church. It shares theological resemblance with other affiliates of Pentecostal theology.

In the 17th century, the Moravian movement, whose theology is rooted in Zinzendorf's teaching of the heart, the motherhood of the Holy Spirit, and the wounds of the Christ (Atwood, 2004:43-64) is insufficient for deriving principles for formulating the ADC's Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community, as well as the place of Christ in the Trinitarian mission. Zinzendorf's theology of the Father as God and Christ as the generation of the Father is correct. However, the teaching of the Spirit as a mother is problematic. This is because the Spirit mother notion complicates the concept of the Virgin Mary as the bearer of Christ. Unless the Spirit motherhood is taken to mean the tender care of the Spirit extended to Jesus both at conception and at ministry, it complicates the biblical structure and nature in the begetting of Jesus Christ. A further complexity emerges that destabilizes the formula, especially the formula where Christ seems to be the outcome of God the Father and the Holy Spirit. This in itself negates the biblical claim of the Spirit as proceeding from both. The ADC's teaching acknowledges the masculinity of the Spirit and so the notion of Spirit motherhood is strange. Thus, this teaching is unacceptable in the ADC, and hence lacks a theological basis for developing the ADC Trinitarian theology.

In the 18th century, the Wesleyan movement emphasized experiential theology over academic theology (Dieter, 1996:17-23). The Wesleyan experiential theology is not empty of orthodox theology, but its focus is much on experience rather than focus on doctrine. The ADC's theology is equally rooted in experientialism with the Spirit at its centre. The Wesleyan view of salvation as being the mercy of God the Father, through

the meritorious work of Christ (J. Wesley, 1980:124-125), is an attempt towards Trinitarian theology. The Wesleyan theology, which is rooted in second and third blessings, does not offer an adequate framework for working out the Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community for the ADC. The first blessing, which is justification, has the component of adoption into the children of God. The second blessing is perceived to be sanctification, which has the aspects of total eradication of the carnal mind and the inbred sin, through the baptism with the Holy Spirit (Ruth, 2005:39-40; Turley, 1999:20, 25). Robinson (2013:14), however, works out the third blessing from the second blessing. In his opinion, the third blessing is primarily baptism in the Holy Spirit. All these theological perspectives can collectively be a characteristic of experientialism. Experience confirms part of the human nature of the people. However, extreme experientialism will lean towards the Spirit's economy thus will necessitate a lack of theological adequacy to develop Spirit-Christology. The activeness of Christ seems to end at accomplishing the adoption of sons as an event. But looking at what goes on in both the second and the third blessings, the active Holy Spirit seems to have replaced the passive Jesus. The theology concerns the generation of Christ, the procession of the Spirit from the Father and the Spirit in making the relational concepts of *homoousios* and consubstantiality of the Trinity less developed.

The 19th century's emphasis was on the post-salvation Spirit manifestations such as prophecy, tongues-speaking, divine healing, and the theme of Christ's Second Advent (Robinson, 2013:3-4). This seems to suggest the need for a dialogue between the philosophical Trinity and experiential theology of this century that makes the Spirit dominant. This is reinforced by Cox (1995:47), who confirms the Spirit's prominence, Hollenweger (1997:182-183), who examines the notion of the higher life, Oberlin's theological view of the afterlife and the liberation of the present life, and Wacker's (2001:1) view of the 19th-century revival as "spiritual adventures." These were the determinant pillars of theological development in the Pentecostal movement. However, this trend can also be traced in the ADC. In the empirical findings, S02, S03, S04, and S13 agreed that prophecy, as the work of the Holy Spirit is important and common in the ADC. S05 added that in most cases what the prophet reveals in someone's life comes to pass. In the view of S06, prophecy enlightens and transforms the community through repentance. Interviewee S09 attributed the validity of the prophecy to the aged (elderly) through whom God speaks to the community. The theology of divine healing in

the 19th century, therefore, is a common practical and narrative theology in the ADC. Interviewees S02, S03, and S04 confirmed this as the economy of the Holy Spirit. S05 said that the Holy Spirit brings healing when he is invoked more in prayer (“apply him more”). This development seems to suggest the independence of the Holy Spirit, a notion that leaves the Trinitarian formula incomplete.

The 20th-century Pentecostals’ theological emphasis is not different from that of the previous century. Like the 19th century, the post-salvation manifestations of prophecy, healing, and glossolalia, derived from Parham’s theology (Wilkinson, 2009:17-18), are prominent in the 20th-century Pentecostal practice. The Azusa Street experience, which initiated modern Pentecostalism (Synan, 1997:105), expresses similar Spirit manifestations. The Azusa Street revival’s theological offshoot of experiential salvation shows the centrality of the Spirit’s economic role. This experiential theology, which seems to have undergirded theological development in Pentecostalism, identifies with the ADC’s experiential theology. Thus, the creeds have either been de-emphasized or assumed. The same de-emphasis on creeds emerged in the PAOC’s theology, which theologically influenced the ADC’s Trinitarian and missional theology. Althouse (2010:56) mentions PAOC’s acknowledgment of the historic creeds in passing and the universality of the church but he does not show how this is arrived at.

Since the experiential theological movements discussed above do not offer a complete theological framework to develop the Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community and the place of Christ, the following theological principles from orthodox theologians in the modern period are informative in constructing the ADC’s Trinitarian theology. First is Berkhof’s (1938:31) theology that suggests One God as existing in three persons as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit with none subordinate to the other. Secondly, Fairbairn (1893:393, 399) develops the Trinity from a mutual and a distinctive relation, without division. In this relation, the Father begets the Son and the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. Thirdly, Torrance (1996:32-34) reinforces the indivisibility and confirms a united Trinity of the three persons. Fourthly, Migliore (2004:89), who perceives grace and the holiness of the Triune God as inseparable, also maintains the concepts of indivisibility. Packer (2010:91) understands the God of grace as God of all grace, the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of grace, and the hope of grace as resting on the Lord Jesus Christ. Gunton (2003b:164-166) establishes an economic

Trinity, where the Son and the Spirit are God in action, mediating the Father in the world, in the creation, and in redemption.

The theology of revelation also provides an important source for the ADC Trinitarian theology. For example, Warfield (1968:33, 35) develops a revelation that is embedded in Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit in realizing salvation, such that while Christ is the revealed Son of God and the redemptive sacrifice, the Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. In Barth's (1956:203) theology of revelation, the Trinity is such that God the Father is the revealer, the act of revelation, and the "revealed-ness" in the Trinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, in their oneness and three-ness as well as three-ness and oneness.

In the suggested theological principles above, the terms used by each theologian reflect the language of the ecumenical creeds, especially the terms of consubstantiality, coeternity, and coequality. This means that to develop Trinitarian ecclesiology, the missional community, and the place of Christ for the ADC will necessitate a theological framework that draws from the ecumenical creeds' definitions.

The constitution of OAIC, the umbrella of AICs, suggests a Trinitarian embrace. For example, the Basis of Faith (Article 8.1) is important because it speaks to the oneness of God revealed in three persons as Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. The functions of the Trinity as given here essentially help to draw the needed role distinctions. However, the Father as the creator and sustainer of the world and Christ as the incarnate Son and redeemer of the world are briefly referred to compared to the Holy Spirit, whose role is more fully explained. OAIC's acknowledgment of the Apostles' Creed as the source of the Trinity (Addendum 3, Article 8.3) is beneficial to the ADC as an affiliate church. However, there is a need for the Nicene and the Athanasian Creeds because they give the in-depth expansion of the Apostles' Creed's expression of the Trinity, especially the place of Christ in Trinitarian mission. This will enable an adequate understanding of the ontological and economic Trinity and the perichoretic relationality of the Trinity needed in developing the ADC's Trinitarian mission.

4.3.6 Conclusion

Developing the ADC's Trinitarian theology requires a continued dialogue between the academic or written Trinitarian theology and the practical narrative theology of the ADC,

to locate the place of Christ in Trinitarian mission. The academic theological exercise through this research provides the background for articulating the ADC's practical and narrative theology in the light of the orthodox theological framework. The supposition concerning the need to establish a united Trinitarian theology of mission from the empirical study shows that there was a need to establish a consistent meaning for the three colours of the Church that are iconic in understanding the salvific involvement of the Triune God in mission. To achieve this, various theological views arising from the literature review were used in formulating the theological principles towards Trinitarian theology for the ADC.

The ADC's official colours are important in developing the Trinitarian theology of mission. However, for balanced theological development, various theological principles suggested from the ecumenical creeds in the three church periods are important in constructing the Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community of the ADC in locating the place of Christ in Trinitarian mission. The most common theological standpoints derived from the ecumenical creeds include acknowledgment of the One God in three persons, coeternal aspects of the Trinitarian persons, and the concept of Trinitarian coequality. Other theological principles can be developed around the consubstantiality within the Trinity, and distinction in matters of their economic roles, without separation or division. The question of separationism, which emerged in the empirical study, especially through the post-salvific manifestations, was addressed through distinctive economic functions within the Triune God, as envisaged in the historical creeds.

This supposition did not benefit significantly from the theological developments of the modern period. The primary reason for this is because the modern period does not emphasize the historical creeds. With the development of Pentecostal theology rooted in experiential theology, practical theology at the expense of academic theology proved insufficient in terms of providing the orthodox theology in developing the ADC's Trinitarian missional theology. The experiential theological notion based on the Spirit baptism, divine healing, prophecy, including the second and third blessing, is rooted in human emotions. Emotionalism is a human reality that, when developing theology, cannot be eliminated or replaced but needs to be redirected by sound biblical theological doctrines. This leads to an assumption that the theological content of the

creeds, which have a philosophical orientation, may not comprehensively address experiential theology because of its lessened address of the reality of experiential theology. This research, however, is not proposing a deconstruction of historical creeds. It is suggesting instead an embrace of the creeds through the perspective of the Pentecostal experiential reality. The research proposes to incorporate experiential reality in developing and applying the relationality of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit in their divine equality in the ADC's Trinitarian development. From this formula, the ADC will rework their experimental theology, which will capture all three persons of the Trinity in their practical theology. This is why a proposal for dialogue between academic and practical or public theology, which has been defined earlier on as a dialogical engagement of Christians with those outside the church in issues of basic interest through conversation (Kim, 2011: 3). This conversation is important for developing a balanced Trinitarian ecclesiology and understanding of missional community and the place of Christ for the ADC because it brings the rigorous academic theology in dialogue with the common life issues affecting the people harmoniously.

4.4 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TRINITARIAN COMMUNITY AND THE MISSIONAL COMMUNITY IN ECUMENICAL CREEDS

4.4.1 Introduction

This supposition is a combination of two related issues that emerged from the field study. The first was about insufficient understanding of the Trinitarian community shown in the perspectives of both the interviewees and the respondents. The other was the need to establish an ecclesial mission that has a centrifugal perspective, as opposed to the ADC's current centripetal missional methodology. This supposition regarding the relationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community (the church) aims at suggesting a shift from human-centred mission to the *missio Dei*, that is, a shift from the understanding of mission being from the headquarters of the church, or a place where church activities are centrally run and conducted, as observed in the empirical findings. The need is to establish a theological space in which mission is conceived as proceeding from the ontological Trinitarian community, through the economic Trinity, as the origin of the missional community. An understanding that the Trinitarian community in its mission to the world (*missio Dei*) as the source of the

ecclesial mission determines the definition and the development of the ADC's Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community in locating the place of Christ. The development of these theological principles is derived from the ecumenical creeds in the four periods of the church studied in the previous chapter.

4.4.2 Theological principles from the creeds in the early church period for developing the ADC's theology of the relationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community

There were differing responses from the field study on the relationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community. In some of the responses to the question of whether the mission of the church is the same as that of God, 90% answered "yes" and 10% said "no". One of the answers was that "the mission of God was to heal and forgive sinners and that of the church is to pray for the sick and tell people to repent of their sins before the rapture". The concept of God as the Sender of Christ and both of them as the senders of the Holy Spirit and the church is absent. On the second question, "Is the African community related to the community of God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit?" 96.7% answered with "yes" and 3.3% answered with "no". However, 96.7% of narrative theology responses revealed a misunderstanding. For example, the Trinity was understood in the light of the African concept of the hierarchy of beings, such that the African hierarchy of beings is reminiscent of the Trinity. Another perspective that supported the view that the African concept of divinities was similar to the Trinity was expressed by those respondents who felt that the divinities controlled the communication between the spirit world and the physical world. They argued that divinities formed the link between the ancestors and the living, the same way that the biblical Trinity communicates with the world. The 96.7% "yes" responses to the question are therefore disqualified by the narrative explanations offered.

Regarding the understanding of mission, the majority of the interviewees perceived it as a place (the headquarters) from where the ADC functions are coordinated. Some viewed it as the bishop's residence, while others perceived it as a sending authority so that the one sent to the field to conduct open-air evangelism or preaching becomes a missionary of Jesus Christ. S03 understood it as praying for the people of God to get the Holy Spirit. Two responses that showed a biblical element in the understanding of the mission were interviewees S17 and S24, who defined it as God's calling to spread

the gospel by the Holy Spirit. These misconceptions can be addressed through the theological principles discussed below.

Suggested principles from the Apostles' Creed

One of the principles that the ADC can derive from the Apostles' Creed is contained in the article "I believe a Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints". This should be understood in the light of the Trinitarian persons and their distinctive economic functions mentioned at the beginning of the Creed. The article establishes the relationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community. In this phrase, the Holy Spirit continues with Christ's mission in the visible church exclusively in the context of holiness where regeneration takes place (Ashwin-Siejkowski, 2009:98-99). Harned (1981:101-102) observes in the phrase three contributing Trinitarian and missional theological principles. First, the church is holy because it is the creation of the Holy Spirit, secondly, the church derives the element of catholicity from the body of Christ whose mission or reconciliation is universal. Thirdly, the concept of ecclesial apostolicity is rooted in the apostles' role to proclaim the gospel of Christ. The phrase expresses a prayer or a longing for unity in Christ (Howell 2005:116). This development would shift the ADC's understanding of mission from being a physical place to an economic function of the Trinity to the world.

The second principle is derived from the statement "and the forgiveness of sin", which implies both individuals as well as corporate forgiveness through the economic initiative of the Trinitarian community. While the forgiveness of sin is the work of the Godhead, the recipient of the act is the ecclesial community. Harned (1981:103, 105) views the statement as the heart of the biblical narrative, in which through the Spirit the missional community accesses the forgiveness of the Father through the incarnate Son. The confession that "we believe in One God, One Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit" suggests the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. To believe in the Father is the same as acknowledging his economic work. Similarly, to confess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is to embrace his incarnation, death, resurrection, ascension, and return. Additionally, to believe in the Holy Spirit is to believe in the church, baptism, the resurrection of the dead, and life everlasting (Sullivan, 1988:4-5).

The third principle can be drawn from the Apostles' Creed's statement, "I believe in the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins" (Addendum 2, A1). The principle is developed from perceiving the church as on mission in the Kingdom of God. This comes out especially in the church's mandate of confessing the theology of the forgiveness of sins. The theology of forgiveness should be understood in the light of the divine position of Christ as the Son of God, as well as in his humanity through which he makes peace between God the Father and sinful humanity as enabled by the Spirit. In Augustine's (1954:66) *City of God*, Book 17, Chapter 16, Christ who is God founded this city (the church) and he is its first citizen. In Chapter 18 the Lord Jesus is both Saviour and God of salvation. The kingdom is extended in the world as the Church grows (Ladd, 1959:15), thus the mission of God is continued through the sending of the Holy Spirit, who calls and empowers the church (Guder, 1998:4-5). The communion of saints gives helpful elements that the ADC can use to locate the place of Christ in developing the Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community. Balthasar's (1990:83) three perspectives explain this. First, the article reveals God's work of grace, which is the gift of the church. Secondly, the ecclesial community is the work of the Triune God, typified in the accomplishments of Jesus Christ, who replaced disobedient Israel. Thirdly, the Spirit of Pentecost, who is constantly appointing people to join the ongoing mission of Christ, continues with the mission to the world, making the church the bride of the Triune God.

Suggested principles from the Nicene Creed

The first principle can be developed from the Nicene Creed's phrase, "and I believe one holy catholic and apostolic Church". The principle is to maintain the oneness of the church, held together by Christ as its head, as opposed to denominationalism. The concept of "apostolic church" connotes the ecclesial mandate of preaching to the world both the apostolic traditions and doctrines, whose content is the Trinity. The ADC can ground its Trinitarian mission in the above statement by embracing the fact that the oneness of the church, its holiness and apostolicity, are embedded in both the nature and the economic role of the Trinity, which is characterized by Trinitarian interdependence. The following theological works concretize this principle. Redmile (2006:33) views the apostolicity of the church as being united under one divine head, worshipping one God and the Father through the same Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy

divine Spirit. Redmile's theology is both a challenge and reconstruction resource for the ADC's theology. This is because, in Redmile's view, the three persons seem to be active, as opposed to the ADC, whose theology tends towards situationism, where at some point especially in practical spirituality; part of the Trinity is active and the other passive. That is why the Holy Spirit is spoken of predominantly. Torrance (1997:252) comments that the phrase is a functional belief in the Triune God of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Torrance affirms the unity of the Trinity, confirming the definition outlined by the ecumenical creeds. As was seen in Chapter Three, Clément's view that the holiness of the church is not its own but is drawn from the Holy One (Glimm, 1947:33), roots the collaboration of the Trinity in mission. The ADC can use this perspective to deconstruct and realign its de-emphasized Christology to a balanced view of the Trinity.

The second principle proposed for the ADC's Trinitarian development is the undivided unity of the Trinity as displayed throughout the Creed. This is what Clément describes of the church in *On salvation*, Chapter 1. The principle of unity in the mission of the Father and the Son is key. This is because the *ecclesia*, which is the community of God, also referred to as the sojourners, is sanctified by the will of God through Jesus Christ (Justin, 1885:11) as the Trinity functions collaboratively. In this way, Clément affirms the creedal element of the "catholicity of the church". The catholicity of the church, which this work proposes for the ADC, is determined by the singularity of the God of the Trinity, and their threeness in terms of economic distinctions. These aspects underlie the oneness, holiness, and apostolicity of the church. The mission of the church connects to the Godhead to display this holiness by calling people to the Triune God to continue with the holy mission. So long as the church is connected to the Holy One, it will continue with the holy mission. Holiness or being spiritual as perceived by the interviewees is not contained mainly in good works and in the liturgical practices like foot-stamping "applying him more" (enchantment of the Spirit), rhythmic hand clapping, artistic drumming, and singing of the Spirit-led songs.

Padwick (2003:112) observes that repeated public repentance and ecstatic phenomenal experiences in Roho churches are considered as a preparation for the visitation and function of the Holy Spirit. He argues that this is the basic teaching of the Roho churches. However, it is not about human effort. For ADC, foot stamping in

prayer, enchantment of the some words like *riswa* (shouting at demons), energetic movement in church during worship, lying prostrate accompanied with utterances of some prophetic statements constitutes ritual purity that culminates in holiness. However, the biblical truth concerning holiness and spirituality is that it is God's work of grace communicated by Christ to humanity through the Holy Spirit where human righteousness is not effectual.

The Nicene Creed's repetition of "I believe in one God, the Father Almighty ... one Lord Jesus Christ ... the Holy Spirit ... one holy catholic church ... and one baptism for the remission of sins" reveals the following principles for the ADC's theological reconstruction. First, the Holy Spirit is one. Although the Nicene Creed does not mention this openly as it does with the rest, it is implied in the statement, "And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life; who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified". Secondly, this work suggests that the ADC's theological task is to rethink the double procession of the Spirit, which implies the participation of the Father and the Son in the economy of the Spirit in the world. Thus, it does not bring to an end the involvement of the Father and the Son in the economy of the Spirit, as implied in the ADC's practical theology. This principle will help the ADC to deal with the inactivity or passivity of Christ as well as the overemphasis on the economic activity of the Holy Spirit. The active participation of the Trinity with each other without lessening any of them relates to Ignatius' theology contained in the letter to the Ephesians 1:5. This speaks about the oneness of the church with Jesus Christ, the same Jesus who is with the Father (Walsh, 1947:89). The dependability of the church on the Trinitarian community appears in verse 9, where Ignatius writes, "like the stones of a temple, cut for a building of God the Father, you have been lifted to the top by the crane of Jesus Christ, which is the cross, and the rope of the Holy Spirit" (Walsh, 1947:91). Ignatius' epistle to the Romans, Chapter 4, emphasizes the church as the recipient of the mercy of the Father and the Son. This is confirmed also by Torrance (1997:253), who acknowledges that Ignatius perceives the ecclesial unity with Christ, which is determined by the Father's unity with Jesus Christ, His Son. Thus, the church as a human institution is the Lord's idea because it is rooted in the Holy Trinity.

Scudieri's (1997:64) view concludes this section in a balanced approach, which adds to the principles required for the ADC's theological process. This is because creeds, as Scudieri asserts, are functionally missional such that they provide necessary theological tools to proclaim the faith. For example, they express the eternity of the Trinity as the oneness of God the creator, the incarnation of Jesus, and his death for the atonement of the world. This confirms that the Triune God is involved in establishing his kingdom in the world. This argument confirms the Trinitarian elements in the Nicene Creed. For example, the first article is about God the Father Almighty and his role in creation. The second article establishes Christ's divinity as generated from the Father, which indicates his divinity, thus, "God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten". The incarnation appears in the Creed through the Holy Spirit to accomplish the salvation role. The incarnation is further evidenced in pre-resurrection events and post-resurrection events that culminated in ascension.

Suggested principles from the Athanasian Creed

The Athanasian Creed offers some theological pillars that can benefit the development of Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community towards locating the place of Christ in the Trinitarian mission of the ADC. This facilitates the shifting of mission from being understood as a church function and a bishop's residence to the *missio Dei*, in which the ontological Trinity moves to the world to birth and nurture the church as its missional agent through the Trinitarian economy.

The first cluster of the Creed (verses 3-28) puts forward the principles of Trinitarian community in which the persons experience uninterrupted cooperation in their divine essence. The distinctive properties of each person remain intact. Thus, the Father retains the attribute of un-begotten, the Son as begotten, and the Spirit as proceeding from the Father and the Son. The three do not relate hierarchically but coequally. The Father sends the Son on the salvific mission, through the Spirit who continues with the mission through the church (Schaff 1877:38). The ecclesial community is created by believing in the only true and living God, the Son and the Holy Spirit who are one in essence, three in persons and one Jesus Christ who is very God, and very man in one God. The damnation clause is "Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith. Which Faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt, he shall perish everlastingly" (Bray, 1984:176). The

catholic faith is a Trinitarian faith in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The missional community worships one God in Trinity (Bray, 1984:177). This deconstructs the ADC's notion that the Spirit is exclusively involved in worship, in the choice of songs, artistic drumming, and clapping of hands, which "motivates" the Spirit to manifest variously.

4.4.3 Theological principles from the creeds in the medieval period for developing ADC's theology about the relationship between the Trinitarian community and missional community

The theological tenets identified in the medieval period offer further suggestions for establishing the ADC's Trinitarian ecclesiology. This subtopic proposes a shift from any theology that draws from African traditional religion to a Trinitarian missional theology in which all the three persons equally take part in the mission.

Augustine's work *On Trinity*, Book I, Chapter IV, section 7 could be informative in the reconstruction of the ADC's understanding of the relationship between the Trinitarian and missional community, through the economic Trinity. He argues that since the Trinity is a community, incarnation does not constitute the Trinity entirely, because only the Son was born, died, was crucified, and was resurrected on the third day to redeem humanity (Augustine, 1963:11), but the silence of the Father and the Spirit does not demean their role in Christ's mission. Augustine explains more about this in Book XV, Chapter 52, where the death of Christ, which he calls "holy baptism on the cross," acquits humanity from the bondage of sin (Augustine, 1887:534) and where righteousness is the gift of God through the Holy Spirit. In Augustine's view, justification is twofold. It comes first from Christ's redemptive work and secondly from the new nature changed by the Holy Spirit (Naidu, 2014:167-168). Augustine brings the cooperation of Christ and the Spirit, which is important in developing a Spirit-Christology. In this principle, the two persons of the Trinity work concurrently, and none of them is passive or more active than the other. Deansley (1925:41) further comments that Augustine is said to have baptized ten thousand converts and dedicated the cathedral "in the name of the Holy Saviour, our God, and Lord Jesus Christ", and observes that this is a missional formula, confirming that in Matthew 28:19, which replicates most creedal baptism formulas. What is expressed here is the principle of

economic cooperation (perichoresis) within the Trinity that informs the procession of the missional community that should instruct the ADC's theological reconstruction.

Anselm's *First Meditation*, particularly Meditation V, helps give a proper perspective for the shift in the ADC's theology of Trinitarian and missional community. The church is the body of Christ, a community described as follows: "Thine eyes are the eyes of Christ ... for Christ is the truth... Thy mouth is the mouth of Christ ... reserved only for the praises of God and the edification of thy neighbor" (Anselm, 1872:15-16). This denotes the origination of the church from Christ. From Anselm's Meditation VI, the church draws its unity from the unity of the Father and the Son. In Christ, the church becomes the bride, and Christ its Bridegroom, and the church is bound to Christ by an everlasting love (Anselm, 1872:16-17). Additionally, in Anselm's Meditation VIII, Christological titles are important for understanding the theology of Trinitarian and missional community. For example, Christ is the Redeemer, anointed with the ointment of incarnation to call humanity back to the things of the Spirit and to share in God's glory (Anselm, 1903a:61-67).

To include the above theological pillars in the development of the ADC's theology of Trinitarian ecclesiology and missional community towards relocating the place of Christ, will not only motivate the development of a balanced and orthodox theology but will make a way for acknowledgment of the ecumenical creeds. This will assist in effecting the shift in the ADC'S approach to the Trinity from the African cosmology of hierarchy of beings which equate the members of the Trinity, especially Christ and the Spirit, with divinities. Additionally, the theological foundations will also help to move their theology of mission from being a mere place of mission operations to understanding it as the *missio Dei*.

4.4.4 Theological principles from the creeds in the Reformation period for developing ADC's theology about the relationship between the Trinitarian community and missional community

The literature review of the Reformation period observed that theological developments were based on the theological contents of the ecumenical creeds. This means that the Reformation period provides sufficient theological perspectives for developing the theology of Trinitarian ecclesiology and missional community towards relocating the

place of Christ in the ADC. For example, in Calvin's *Institutes* (IV, II, ii) the church belongs to God, and the elect of God are joined to the body of Christ its head through the Holy Spirit (Calvin, 1845:540). Christ is the founder of the Catholic Church, which is universal, united, exclusive, and apostolic (Schaff, 2011:128, 130). What is essential for the ADC in establishing its Trinitarian and missional community is to place Christ as a connection between the Trinity and the missional community. The apostolic community continues in mission by calling, teaching, and baptizing them in the name of the Trinity.

In Calvin's *Institutes* (IV, I, ix-x) the principles for the development of the Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community are identified as follows. First, God's role is to maintain the power and faith of the church through the preaching of the Word to nourish the church. Secondly, God anoints and consecrates the servants for the service, and thirdly, God connects the Spirit and his promises in making the mission effective. In this case, the Spirit represents God and enables the believer to conceive of the salvific promises for an effectual mission. The church is constituted by those who are adopted as sons of God, sanctified by the Spirit to become members of the body of Christ (Calvin, Book 4.1.7). The Trinitarian community puts mission into effect by God's incarnation of the begotten Son as the redeemer. Christ, who is very God and very man, is the mediator between God and man in actualizing salvation. In this plan, the church becomes the heirs of the kingdom of heaven through the Son of God (Calvin, II, XII, i, ii). Parker (2002:58) argues that for Calvin, Christ has been, is, and will remain the redeemer. This places Christ in an active position in both salvation and human life as opposed to the ADC's notion of the Spirit replacing his position. The Holy Spirit did not replace Christ in the real sense of the term as used in the ADC. It should instead be understood that the Spirit continues with the mission in Christ, because Christ and mission are different, in the sense that while Christ is a person, the mission is God's framework of restoring humanity and creation. If Calvin's (*Institutes*, III, I, i) three heavenly witnesses consisting of the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit relate to water, blood, and the Spirit, it could suggest the following. First, it suggests a relationship between the Trinitarian members, which is essential for the ADC's process towards Trinitarian theology. Secondly, the unity expressed by the Trinity affirms the creedal definitions that defend the divinity, coequality, and coeternity of the Godhead, which economically creates the ecclesial community in mission. The unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit determines salvation. The Son and the Holy Spirit are both

God and their equal divinity justifies the content of the salvation message. The ADC should realign its theology on the basis of the principle that the three persons of the Trinity are interrelated. Thus, as the Son leads the believer to the truth, he is responding to the sending of the Father through the Holy Spirit (Torrance, 1996:49). This work suggests that the ADC realigns its proclamation mission to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit and has the Trinity corporately involved in the worship and devotion of the church (Torrance, 1996:70-71). The above illustrates the components of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan creedal affirmations about the divinity of the Godhead and the distinctive economic properties that facilitate the birthing and growth of the church. To realign the ADC's Trinitarian ecclesiology, the missional community, and its location of the place of Christ to the aforementioned Calvinistic position, the ecumenical creeds can be used as the framework for developing both academic and public (or practical) theology.

The definition of the church provided in the Second Helvetic Confession (SHC) of 1566, (Chapter 17) brings the sense of the Trinitarian community cooperating to bring about the missional community. Thus, the assembly of the saints called from across the world are those who know, worship, and serve the true God, in Christ the Saviour by the Word and the Holy Spirit. The adoption of some of the Helvetic confessions of 1566 is resourceful since it embraces the article of the Apostles' Creed, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints" (Richardson 2016a). The Helvetic Confessions' consideration of the one church as rooted in one God, one Mediator, one Shepherd of the one body of Christ, whom one Holy Spirit leads into salvation, denotes the essential properties of the Trinity and is thus important for constructing the ADC theology.

Additionally, the Belgic Confession of 1561 (article 27) which portrays the church in an act of constant washing by the blood of the new covenant through the sanctification and the sealing of the Holy Spirit, helps to deconstruct the ADC's understanding of cleansing from enchantment through possession by the Spirit and brought about by foot stamping, to an act of faith in God's work of grace. Torrance (1997:24) acknowledges that such a church participates in the Triune God through the eyes of grace, the grace of Christ which is the same as the grace of God, and argues that since Christ as the given grace has the same essence as the Giver of the grace, the purity of the church is to remain

dependent on them and not on human righteousness as expressed in the ADC's lived theology. The ADC's Trinitarian ecclesiology needs to embrace the definitions arrived at in the ecumenical councils as stated above.

4.4.5 Theological principles from the creeds in the modern period for developing ADC's theology about the relationship between the Trinitarian community and missional community

The literature review established that there was less emphasis on the ecumenical creeds in this period. Two modern debates suggest reasons for the reduced or less developed concern towards the creeds in the modern period. First is "whether we can believe at all in God conceived as a being other than the world" (Gunton, 2003b:15-16), which perceives the existence of an objectively metaphysical God as incompatible with human freedom. The second debate is about the nature of God, that is his being, and how he moves to relate with us (Gunton, 2003b:15-16), which brings the idea of how the spiritual nature of God relates to the natural and physical world. This suggests a problematic standpoint about the Trinity because if God is not understood in the perspective of the orthodox Trinity, difficulties arise in developing the doctrine of the Trinity. Gunton (2003b:56) further points to the inadequacy of the theology of the church for giving little attention to the concept of the being of God as Triune because it is a difficult intellectual concept. Newberg (2012:20-21) attributes the less developed doctrine of the Trinity in the church to the rise of Pentecostalism and the emphasis on the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit (as a second or third blessing). It is this approach to the Trinity that has affected the development of the ADC's theology about the relationship between the Trinitarian and missional community. However, there are nonetheless significant indications of Trinitarian and missional theology that help reconstruct the ADC's theology of the Trinitarian and missional community. In Chapter Three, the review was limited to the rise of Pentecostal theology, which has had a direct influence on the ADC's lived theology. To establish principles from the modern period useful for developing a more orthodox Trinitarian theology in the ADC, this chapter will now evaluate the contributions of non-Pentecostal theologians.

In the 20th century, Van Gelder and Zscheile (2011:25-26) observe the shift towards Trinitarian thinking in Karl Barth's reaction against the Kantian spirit of the Enlightenment that understood the Trinity as literally irrelevant. Barth's characteristics of

the church are important for formulating the ADC's Trinitarian and missional theology. First, the notion that the church exists from God through revelation and reconciliation, and secondly, that the identity of the church and its life is from Christ, through the Holy Spirit. Thus, the church is called the body of Christ because it believes in God, the revealer of Christ. Thirdly, his expression of the church as a post-incarnational community upholds the fact that the church responds to the self-revelation of God in Christ Jesus (Bentley, 2010:9-10). These points are derived from the section of Barth's *Church Dogmatics* that deals with the incarnation of the Word and the proclamation of the church. Barth's theology of reconciliation insinuates mission, in the sense that any "Christocentric emphasis points us directly to God himself who in Christ confronts us" (Berkouwer, 1956:123). This connotes that in the work of Christ (Christological mission), the missional community comes in contact with the work that is inseparable from that of God. The true God is only spoken of in the light of the revelation of Jesus Christ, and an attempt to isolate God from Jesus is a "disjunction" between the first and the second article of the Apostles' Creed (Berkouwer, 1956:124).

To perceive the church as a community that the Holy Spirit unites into the body of Christ (Jensen, 1999:197) is to affirm the Spirit Christology of the Nicene Creed of both double procession and Spirit involvement in Christ's conception and birth. This challenges the ADC's practical emphasis on the Spirit and at the same time proposes a way towards a Spirit-Christ related Christology. The Spirit cannot be isolated from the Trinity in its economic role because, in the ontological community, Jensen (1999:181) perceives the Spirit as one creating community in the life of the Godhead. What is implied is the equality in the Godhead, which proves the Nicene Creed's statement concerning the Spirit's equal divinity in the Godhead, since he proceeds from both the Father and the Son, who are worshipped and glorified together. The Athanasian Creed's defence of the unity of the Godhead is also affirmed in the statement "we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in unity ... the Godhead ... is all one, the glory equal, the majesty coeternal". The concept of oneness in worship and glory confirms the participation of the Trinity in each other in the Trinitarian economy. Thus, any miracle or manifestation is not to be confined to the Holy Spirit as it appears in the ADC's practical theology. In Moltmann's (1977:53, 55) understanding of the Trinitarian movement into the world, God is the sender of the Son, and the Holy Spirit shows the Trinitarian attribute of the two generating from one source, and this generation is what derives the equal divinity and

eternity of the Triune God. The sending concept in mission first confirms the cooperation of the Trinity, which only happens on the basis of the “equality”, “coeternity” and “consubstantiality” as displayed in the Nicene and Athanasian definitions. This work recommends to the ADC to provide an equal place for the Godhead in mission by perceiving mission as belonging to the one God who is manifested as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Mission is accomplished by and through the three persons of the Trinity. Their united divinity does not allow either emphasizing or prioritizing one at the expense of the other. Mission belongs to God, thus, in the Trinitarian economic arrangement; the Father is the sender of his Son, and the Son his audience. The Son moves on mission by incorporating and sending the disciples, who accomplish it through the Holy Spirit (Tennent, 2010:75, 76). Two things emerge from this: first, the succession of mission from the Father, then to the Son, and the Holy Spirit does not suggest missional dispensationalism or declining superiority from the Father to the Holy Spirit through the Son. However, it emphasizes the oneness affirmed in the ecumenical creeds where the Godhead is one, functioning in and through each other. The involvement of the disciples in the mission realises the Apostles’ and the Nicene Creeds, which preserve the place of “one holy catholic and apostolic church”. Secondly, this approach is recommended for the ADC’s reconstruction of its mission, from being a place to being the Triune God’s involvement in the world for the sake of humanity. In *prothesis* (the purposes of God, indicating the eternal nature of the *missio Dei* in Christ), and in the *mystērion* (the mystery), God communicates the mission of Christ on earth, and in *koinōnia*, the goal of the mission is achieved as the *ecclesia* communes with the Godhead (Torrance, 2008:164-173). The Holy Spirit enables this union. The inclusion of these characteristics in the ADC’s written theological development would indicate a shift towards the ecumenical creeds, which will inform the reconstruction of its practical, or lived theology.

The ADC is capable of moving towards achieving a balanced approach to Trinitarian mission. This is based on the understanding that the participation of the church in the mission of God is reminiscent of taking part in the movement of the Trinitarian love into the world (Bosch, 1991:390). Since the mission is about God and not about us, the church’s mandate is to join God in the redemption function in Jesus through the Holy Spirit (Tennent, 2010:61, 64). In Ladd’s (1973:269-270) view, the church is an instrument of the kingdom of God in his mission.

4.4.6 Conclusion

This section has aimed to show that the African Divine Church of Kenya can develop its Trinitarian theology and missional community by adopting the affirmations of the ecumenical creeds. The Trinitarian community begets the missional community of the church, and this is what makes the church universal. Additionally, the ecumenical creeds provide the basis for the relationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community. The church is holy because the Trinitarian community imputes its holiness. The church is the creation of the Holy Spirit, and its catholicity consists in the body of Christ, who is its head, thus making its reconciliation mission shift from local to a universal mission.

The church is a missional community in the kingdom of God. As a missional community, the church was founded by Jesus Christ who is its head and is included and involved in the mission of God on earth. The apostolicity of the church is rooted in the Nicene Creed's declaration, "I believe one holy catholic and apostolic church". In this affirmation, denominationalism is foreign to the concept of the universality of the church. It is the body of Christ that forms the basis of the universality of the church. Thus, the ADC, being a member of the militant church, must move from understanding the mission as a mere coordination office for the denomination's affairs to a church in a reconciliation mission. For the ADC as a church to remain active in its militant mission, it must remain connected to the life and mission of the Triune God.

The catholic faith is a Trinitarian faith in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The church worships one God in Trinity (Bray, 1984:177). Through the economic cooperation (perichoresis) within the Trinity, the comparison that the church originates from the Trinity is affirmed. The three persons are equally and corporately involved, thus leaving out none, or de-emphasizing none of the Godhead members. Thus, the notion of emphasizing the Holy Spirit more than Jesus Christ because "this is the dispensation of the Holy Spirit" is not appropriate. The church belongs to God and Christ is the elect one sent by God to connect his people to the kingdom and mission as its head through the Holy Spirit.

The ecumenical creeds, therefore, contain both the Trinitarian and ecclesial missional aspects of the community. This is revealed through the notion that the Trinitarian

community accomplishes the mission by God's plan of incarnation through the begotten Son, who functions as the redeemer. The Christ who qualifies this missional assignment is both "very God and very man". He is the mediator between God and humanity in actualizing redemption. The Holy Spirit continues with the work of mission through the ecclesial community.

4.5 CHRISTOLOGY

4.5.1 Introduction

This section addresses the fourth supposition about the need to establish a concrete theology of Christ to insulate it from the African traditional and ancestral worldview. One of the common views that emerged in the empirical study was an African traditional view of ancestors with its hierarchical structure of beings that seemed to infiltrate and inform the understanding of Christ, such that at times the two concepts of Christology and ancestorology replace each other interchangeably in the context of ecclesial and cultural practices. This section aims at reconstructing theological principles towards establishing a Christology for the ADC based on orthodox faith. The ecumenical creeds' affirmations and definitions will provide the framework for articulating the development of Christology. This will be accomplished by responding to the questions of why Jesus Christ is called the Son of God, which will assist in establishing the hypostatic concept of the nature of Christ. The hypostatic union and the shared titles between the Son and the Father that confirm his divinity will form the basis for extricating Christ from the ancestor question.

4.5.2 Theological principles in the ecumenical creeds towards building an ADC Christology

In the empirical findings, the interviews and questionnaires confirmed a confusion between the concept of ancestors and Christology. For example, interviewee S06 said that since Christians believe in Christ as their first ancestor, ADC Christians must believe in their ancestors who died in righteousness, because they will bring constructive information on behalf of the living. S07 argued that the ancestors bring constructive dreams to the living depending on their relationship with the living before they died. S10 added that ancestors are remembered by their actions while they were

alive, and by giving their names to the new-born children. He referred to the ancestors as the living dead to show their mediation through dreams. The interviewee further narrated that the ancestors are equally honoured through regular memorial services. S12 and S14 argued that the living dead are remembered for their teachings and instruction and how their good lives should inform the behaviour of the living. This would mean that apart from being Christ-like, one also should be ancestor-like (ancestorization). S23 argued that ancestors are important because they bring blessings. These theological perspectives cannot be ignored because of the nature of the African worldview on the spirit world, what Nyende (2008:44) calls the “enchanted world”. They are a powerful force that obscures an understanding and development of Christology in the operation of salvation in human life.

From the literature review on the development of Christology in creeds in the early church, the medieval, and the Reformation periods, orthodox theological principles emerged that are informative in deconstructing these views in order to reconstruct Christology for the ADC.

Early church period

In the early church, the concept of Christ’s incarnation can be drawn from the Apostles’ Creed in the phrase “...was conceived by the Holy Ghost” (Holcomb, 2014:27-30). The concept of incarnation gives the basis of the gospel story in the phrase “he suffered ... was crucified, died and buried ... rose from the dead and ascended into heaven.” Incarnation theology, which connects the Father’s presence to humanity, can assist the ADC to develop a balanced Christology from above as well as from below. Skarsaune (2008:229-230) affirms incarnation by arguing that Christology can be traced in the creed by considering his humanity attained through the virgin birth. The theology of the incarnation in the Apostles’ Creed deconstructs the concept of human ancestry as held by the respondents, because Christ enters humanity not as one naturally born, so it is not appropriate to equate him to an African traditional ancestor, because his generation is eternally from God.⁶

⁶ The gospel of Matthew and Luke speak to the role of Jesus’ human ancestry through an illustrative genealogy. While Matthew (1:2-16) begins with Abraham whom the Bible identifies as the father of the Jewish people, Luke (3:23-38) finishes with Adam. Thus, Jesus connects and identifies with humanity, but in a special and unique way, he is both God and man, who comes to restore the

In the Nicene Creed, the terms used such as “coessential”, “coeternal”, “begotten before all the worlds”, “begotten not made”, state a principle that connects Christ eternally to God the Father, and this refutes the notion that there was a time when he did not exist or was created (Schaff, 1877:36). These terms cannot be used to describe natural human ancestors. That means that the ADC Christology, which sometimes is inclined towards ancestors, cannot offer a balanced Christology. To reconstruct the ADC’s Christology, the Nicene Creed can be used to affirm the equality of the Son and the Father. Pawl (2016:12-15), commenting on the Nicene Creed in conciliar Christology, shows how the Creed offers solutions to articulating the place of Christ in the ADC’s theology. This is seen in the Creed’s affirmation of Jesus as the second person of the Trinity. His dual nature, identified through the incarnation and combined in a hypostatic union, safeguards the principle of incarnation. Although the conciliar Christology is philosophically developed, as opposed to the ADC experiential theology, it calls for dialogue between the philosophical approach and the experiential approach. This dialogue can be shaped by rooting experience in the continual divinity and humanity of Christ in human affairs. This puts Christ in an active role rather than being replaced by the Holy Spirit in the ADC’s theology.

The early church fathers’ development of Christology, examined in Chapter Three, provides pointers towards the theological principles necessary for the reconstruction of the ADC’s theology. First is Irenaeus, who in *Against Heretics* (Book I, Chapter IX, section 2) pre-empts the Nicene language of the only-begotten, the Creator of all, the true light who illuminates men, the incarnate one who dwelt among us, including the passion experience. Second is Tertullian’s theology in his *Apology*, Chapter XII, regarding the sameness in nature and the coeternity of Christ with God explained as one God, the creator who created *ex nihilo* through the Word, who is also the only Son. Similarly, Tertullian’s acknowledgment of the divine conception by the power of the Spirit and of the Father (Tertullian, 1885:513) speaks to Christ’s characteristics that do not befit the natural ancestor. Thirdly, Origen in *On Christ* (Book I, Chapter I, section 1-2) repeats a similar description of Christ as Tertullian, but he adds that the Son is God’s Wisdom, existing hypostatically. This Wisdom pre-existed as the Word of God through whom creation was accomplished (Origen, 1885: 574-578). Origen’s interpretation of

relationship of God and man in the first Adam. Both make important reference to Jesus as the son of Abraham, and David to unveil the messianic title, which is key in human redemption.

Ephesians 1:5ff brings the Father and the Son together because the Father accomplishes election and predestination through Christ. Christ is described as the Son, and the High Priest of God mediating people to God (Schaff, 1885:18-21). The concept of Christological mediation, therefore, should replace the hierarchical structure of enchantment and the African ancestors who are believed to mediate information to the living. Origen's explanation accommodates the *homoousion* concept derived from John 2:2, 26, which affirms the unity of the Father and the Son (Torrance, 1981:5-6).

Further principles helpful to the ADC's theological process towards Christology can be drawn from the Athanasian Creed. First, the clause "there is one person of the Father, another of the Son and another of the Holy Ghost, and the Godhead of the three is one" (Bray, 1984:177-178) essentially suggests the oneness of the nature of the persons, who, although distinct, are not numbered in the sense of pluralization of the populace. Additionally, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit should be maintained as equal constituents of the one Being of the Godhead. This work proposes that the ADC should uphold the One Being concept in both formational and practical theology of their Trinity, which brings the sense of the equal involvement of the Godhead in the lived and functional theology.⁷ The creeds can help the ADC to guard the doctrine of Christ against being developed from an ancestral standpoint and against a tendency towards his de-emphasis. This is done by counting Christ, not in the sense of hierarchical enumeration, but as a distinct person of equal necessity in the functional Trinity. The second principle can be developed by allowing the inseparability of the Word and atonement (Ferguson & Wright, 1998:52) and the Logos incarnation (Bindley 1950:87-91). While this appears somewhat philosophical for the ADC, its practicality is in the functional accomplishment of the incarnated Word in the finished work on the cross (atonement). The misconception of Christ's passivity can be dealt with by maintaining both the divinity and the humanity of Christ in the functional Trinity. The challenge in the ADC functional Trinity is its assumption of the Trinity as functioning in turns. This confines Christ to the atonement role but also seems to demean his attribute of omnipresence through the notion of the replacement by the Holy Spirit.

Medieval period

⁷ Functional theology is used in this work to refer to the acted, liturgical and public or demonstrated theology in the ADC. This is evident in preaching, singing, and interpretation of the Spirit manifestation in divine healing and miracles.

The medieval period as observed in Chapter Three can provide theological principles for the ADC's reconstruction of its Christology. This assumption is premised on the fact that this period affirmed the ecumenical creeds whose framework provides a balanced Christology. The emphasis of the theology of Christ in the early church was foundational and its extension to the medieval period necessitated Christology that is rooted in an ecumenical creedal framework. The theological principles herein towards a defence of orthodox Christology against African ancestral worldview are responses that can essentially help the ADC either review or reconstruct its theology of Christ. However, the Petrine theology with its teaching of Pontiff Vicarage of Christ threatens the orthodox position in the ecumenical creeds. Another doctrine connected to pontification is Mariology, which stretches the concept of *theotokos* (Mary the carrier of God) beyond the creedal teaching. In essence, Mary is accorded a venerable position with other saints, which attracts the tendency towards mediatorial worship. This brings about a similar notion of ancestorology in the worship of the ADC, as confirmed in the empirical findings that makes the construction of Christology problematic.

The concept of person in the Godhead is foreign in the African worldview, but Boethius Severinus provides a theological principle that can be used to develop the concept of the person of Christ. His view of a person as an individual substance as well as of rational nature is essential for the ADC because it offers the idea of a complete hypostatic nature of Christ. One nature is drawn from the incarnated Word and the incarnated Lord is one of the Trinity (Evans, 2002:29). The rationality of the person confirms and emphasizes Severinus' embrace of the definitions of the Council of Ephesus (O'Collins, 2013:101). Although the concepts of individual nature and rationality in developing Christology may not seem to fit into the ADC's practical theology, it is necessary because it removes Christology from simply being an abstract concept to being a relational Christology. It is this rationalized relationality that the ADC needs to embrace to safeguard the activity of Christ in their practical theology. Christ is being viewed here as a unique person in the sense that the two natures are combined in him hypostatically. African ancestral theology does not sustain this theological threshold. The empirical research showed that the ADC presents the characteristics of African ancestral theology. This emerged from interviews with S05, S06, S07, and S10, who hold the view that ancestors have a place in the life of a Christian, especially in mediating revelation from God. Christ, therefore, joins the group of ancestors, although

at a higher rank. Severinus' conception of Christ as a person with a rational nature needs to be emphasized so that such a conception does not confine Christ to the past, like the ancestors. In the process of reconstructing the ADC's Christology, the connecting assumption should be the "present-ness" of Christ and his role in salvation history, which includes elements of freeing humanity from life-related predicaments.

The principle of one person with dual natures is emphasized by Anselm in *Proslogium Monologium* Book I, Chapter VIII, where he writes, "but we say that the Lord Jesus is very God and very man, one person with two natures and two natures in one person" (Anselm as explained by Deane, 1903b:193). This adds to the above explanation for the ADC concerning the task of reconstructing Christology that meets the threshold established by the ecumenical creeds. In Richard of Saint Victor, in *On the Trinity*, Book I, Chapter V, the Nicene definitions about the Trinitarian persons is a suggestive framework for the ADC towards its theological reconstruction because Christ is rendered equal to the rest of the Godhead. At the centre of this development, the ADC should embrace the Trinity of the three persons, not three eternal beings, but rather one eternal being. Equally, the three should be acknowledged not as created, but a single uncreated and imminent being (Angelici, 2011:76,77). From the empirical study, the ADC affirmed the unity of the threeness and the oneness of the Trinity, but the challenge emerged in their functional or practical theology, in which the Holy Spirit is active by replacing Christ, who is less prominent in the Spirit manifestations. Richard of Saint Victor's concept of the eternal being and oneness of the Trinity provides to the ADC the place of Christ that is not bound by time or a dispensational notion.

Reformation period

This period shows the embrace and development of the theology of the ecumenical creeds, thus offering further bases for articulating theological principles towards preserving an orthodox Christology and defending Christ from the African ancestral correlation as emerged in the empirical research. The first theological principle that corrects the assumed correlation of Christ with the African ancestry is drawn from Calvin's *Institutes*, IV, IX, viii, where Christ shares the same substance with the Father (Calvin, 1845:621). This relationality is important for the ADC because it confirms the framework provided in the Nicene Creed, in which God the Father is revealed in Christ. The principle about Christ's revelation of the Father can be useful to the ADC if its

practical lived theology is restructured on the understanding that revelation is not bound by time. The deactivation of Christ in the ADC's practical theology, which tends to render the revelation of God confined within a certain period, destroys the component of the eternity of the Trinity. The natural human birth of the African ancestors falls short of these divine relational and eternal properties.

A second principle was drawn from the Belgic Confession of 1561, article 10. It concerns the generation of the Son from the Father and the hypostatic union of Christ's natures. The theological terms, which describe the Son's equality and pre-existence with the Father, can become part of the framework for developing the ADC's Christology. For example, "we believe that Jesus Christ according to his divine nature is the only begotten Son of God, from eternity not made, nor created, but coessential and coeternal with the Father, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of His Person (Heb. 1:3) unto him in all things," speaks to the deity of Christ (Bratcher, 2020).

A third principle drawn from the Belgic Confession of 1561, article 18, shows the Nicene Creed's affirmations of the concept of incarnation, and his incarnational mission to the world, which proves his humanity. This confessional aspect, being sent into the world as the Father's only-begotten and eternal Son who took the form of a servant and the likeness of men (Phil. 2:7) is essential for the ADC. Through the virgin birth under the Holy Spirit, Christ received the true human nature as well as the human soul (Bratcher, 2020). The Belgic Confession presents a Christology that ADC should pursue. This is because, the Confession acknowledges Christ as the centre of the mission of God. Such a Christ is characterised as omnipresent thus, in a constant collaboration with the Holy Spirit in salvation, and spiritual experience such as divine healing, miracles and in human affairs.

A fourth principle was drawn from the Second Helvetic Confession of 1566, Chapter XI, which builds the divinity of Christ by calling him the true God, who was predestined and foreordained from eternity by the Father to be the Saviour of the world. The theology of adoptionism is refuted by confirming the divinity of the Son as being both coequal and consubstantial with the Father (Bratcher, 2018). The concept of adoptionism is not expressed in the ADC's practical theology. However, while adoptionism is a non-Trinitarian doctrine that perceives Christ exclusively from below, through his human

activities, the African Divine Church acknowledges Christ of the Trinity. The theological problem with the ADC is a lessened emphasis on Christ in favour of the Spirit.

Modern period

In this period, the review moved to examine the roots of Pentecostalism and to compare them to the teachings of the ecumenical creeds. This is because the ADC is highly influenced by the Pentecostal movement. The literature review showed a less developed Christology in the modern period as a result of a seeming trend away from the affirmations of the ecumenical creeds, especially in churches that subscribe to Pentecostalism and its theology. The 17th-century Moravian theology, which stemmed from Zinzendorf's teaching, caused a problem in ascertaining proper Christology. Some elements of this theology can be used to reconstruct the ADC's Christology, for example, the theology of the heart, the motherhood of the Holy Spirit, and the wounds of Jesus Christ (Atwood, 2004:43-44). The ADC could have a closer relationship with the theology of the heart and the wounds of Christ because this speaks of emotions and feelings that are key in the ADC's worship. Secondly, the theology of wounds has the connotation of healing, whereby the wounds are translated as the stripes of Jesus by which we are healed. Most of the interviewees, such as S2, S3, S4, agreed that in the ADC healing is common and is the work of the Holy Spirit. S22 narrated his experience of praying for a woman suffering from infertility and she got healed and bore children. Additionally, S22 prayed for a man who received healing and the act attracted many people to join the ADC. S05 reiterated that the Holy Spirit brings healing because "we apply him more."⁸ However, Engel's (2011:71) support of Zinzendorf's teaching as revealing the Trinity, especially the notion that "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is our true Father and the Spirit of Jesus Christ is our true mother and that the Son of the living God, his only born Son, is our true brother and husband" needs a corrective. If the Spirit of God and Jesus is to be addressed as our true mother, what becomes of Calvin's (*Institutes* 1:13:3) Reformed affirmation "that the Father and the Son and the Spirit are one God, yet the Son is not the Father, nor the Spirit the Son, but that they are differentiated by a peculiar quality"? The qualities of the Godhead include a nurturing approach to his people. However, this nurturing approach that Zinzendorf seems to

⁸ This has a connotation of invoking the person of the Spirit in prayer for healing more than the rest of the persons of the Trinity, because he is looked at as the bearer or carrier of healing.

advance need not alter the biblical gender of the Trinity. The feminine language used here suffocates the paternal tone maintained in the entire biblical narrative. The orthodox doctrine whose theological tenets are contained in the ecumenical creeds is lacking in the Moravian theology because its theology emphasizes prophetic ministry (Schneider, 2010:30) and other related Spirit baptism manifestations.

The brief historical background given in the literature review for the 18th century Wesleyan movement indicated that Christology is not given a specific developmental emphasis except that it is dealt with side by side in the Wesleyan understanding of experiential conversion. The Nicene definitions of “God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made”, which is philosophical, may deem to lack the experiential component. This is to say, the ADC’s passive Christology can be shifted to proactivity by maintaining the presence of Christ in the spiritual experiences as their cause through the Holy Spirit. This will provide a balanced theological remedy to the existing emphasis on experiential theology over doctrinal theology by bringing Christ to the centre of the church’s experience. Dieter (1996:17-18) argues that Pietism preferred experience over theology, with an emphasis on individual commitment to the life of witness, experiential religion, and perfectionism, which availed an opportunity for conversion and second blessing. Also key is its altar theology, which emphasized the three aspects of entire sanctification, faith, and confession, all leading towards experiential soul rest (Dieter, 1996:23). While the task of this research is not to develop a replacement of the experiential theology practiced in the ADC, the aim, however, is to suggest theological principles that will root experience in biblical theology that leads to an active upholding of the entire economic Trinity. The Wesleyan view that a sinner is justified and made righteous by the grace of God through the merit of Christ is helpful to the ADC. This is because the component of the relationship involved in the Father and Son marks a continuity of their covenant that the ADC needs in its attempt towards Christology. For the ADC, justification and righteousness need to be embraced to enhance the active involvement of Christ together with the Holy Spirit in the life of the people. This includes salvation economy and the benefits of salvation, which may include divine healing and miracles.

The Evangelical Awakenings in America in the 19th century do not offer a clear theological framework that acknowledges the definitions of the ecumenical councils and creeds, as the literature review confirmed. Christ is mentioned in reference to his second coming, as well as restoration of the gifts and baptism of the Spirit and divine healing as part of the redemptive work of Christ (Robinson, 2013:3-4). The 19th-century emphasis was on Pneumatology (Cox, 1995:47). The theology of higher Christian life and the theology of Oberlin, which stressed the notion of holiness and sanctification, is reminiscent of the second blessing (Hollenweger, 1997:182-183). The theology of health and divine healing resonates well with the ADC's belief in healing, a theology that has less articulation in the orthodox doctrinal affirmations of the ecumenical creeds. For the ADC, like the 19th-century theology mentioned above, the post-salvation experience taken as the economy of the Holy Spirit is prominent, including the higher life notion, sanctification, and holiness. However, how healing is part of Christ's redemption does not exhaustively safeguard Christ from de-emphasis. This research recommends that the ADC should develop a doctrine of the Trinity through the above-mentioned theological terms. To do this, this work suggests a question formula, for example: What is the work of the entire Godhead in effecting redemption, sanctification, holiness, or divine healing? In the case where one person of the Trinity seems to be elevated towards prominence while the others remain passive or partially active, the trajectory would imply misconstruction.

Concerning Christology in the 20th century, the literature review showed that there is a less developed theology of Christ in the Pentecostal movement. Instead, its theology is rooted in Charles Parham's Pentecostal theology. This theology emphasized glossolalia as the initial sign of Spirit baptism, the second experience as the beginning of the "latter rain" (Wilkinson 2009:18; Cox, 1995:48). Additionally, it emphasized prophecies and tongue-speaking (Bartos, 2015:26-27). Miller and Yamamori (2007:3) show that the expression of the doctrines of the Trinity and Christology in Pentecostal theology presents challenges in understanding the God of the Trinity and the divinity of Christ. Among the people they interviewed, the Pentecostals only saw the Spirit present in worship, prayer life, and their daily experiences. Spiritual experience was seen as a spiritual exercise consisting of ascetic strict self-discipline to attain spiritual ecstasy and to communicate with the spiritual world. From this spiritual exercise, such utterances like "God has spoken to me" emerged. The mediation of the received information or

utterances is what obstructed the development of biblical Christology. Cox (1995:57) speaks to these experiences in the context of the Azusa Street Revival by listing the following theological characteristics: songs and testimonies, spontaneous sermons and exhortations, joyous shouts, prayer with sobs and tears, and intercession for the sick as a sign of the influence of the Holy Spirit. The theology of both Parham and Seymour have experientialism as a common element, much of which appears in the ADC. This means the dual theology is less sufficient in terms of theological resources for reconstructing the ADC's Trinitarian ecclesiology and mission. The experiences like shouts in prayer, sobs, and tears are not to be denounced because they form part of the ADC's African cultural orientation, which makes their experience of God unique compared to the mainline churches. However, what it lacks is the philosophical component of a collaborative Trinity that is to dominate such manifestations. This is fundamental in the ADC's theological process of dialoguing charismatic experiences with the framework of ecumenical creeds towards a balanced reconstruction of its concept of the Trinity.

In the literature review, the theology of the PAOC was important because of its direct historical relationship with the ADC and its influence on its practical theology. It was noted that Althouse (2010:56) argues that the PAOC acknowledges the historical creeds of the universal church such it believes in the basic doctrines and teaching contained in the "ancient creeds of the early church known as the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian." Additionally, the PAOC subscribes to the confessions of the Reformation fathers, especially by the Reformed churches of the 16th and 17th centuries, thus the PAOC is an orthodox spiritual church that embraces the creeds and Protestant confessions and is not in any conflict with the catholicity of the church. Smith (2010:38), however, maintains that despite these statements, the roots of the PAOC lie in a Pentecostal-pneumatic emphasis, which is a common element that characterizes any Pentecostal tradition, the ADC included. In the empirical study, most interviewees confirmed that ADC's emphasis on Spirit baptism and accompanying manifestations is a theological belief and practice inherited from the PAOC. Theological emphasis on the Spirit's economy becomes problematic when locating the other persons of the Trinity, especially the place of Jesus. Reliance on the Holy Spirit's economy, in the context of the African worldview of spirits, is largely influential in articulating Christ's salvific mediation and holistic life in general. This means the African world of spirits draws

partially from African traditional religion, which has saturated African spirituality. African spirituality that leans towards a practical and experiential approach to the deity embraces an ecstatic trajectory. It is this trance that AICs and the ADC, in particular, needs to make clear as to where the spirit world ends and the Holy Spirit begins. This is because it is here that the borderline between Christ and African ancestors collapses.

In the review, it was observed that many liberal theologians deny the incarnation. Just a few are given here. For example, Leslie Houlden dismissed the Christology of the Council of Chalcedon (451 AD), and Michael Goulder and Francis Young, who denied that the pieces of evidence in the New Testament point towards incarnation (c.f. Markham, 2017:120). These misconceptions among many others may not be the realistic representation of Christology in this period, but they portray a Christological deficiency.

In the ADC, suffering and healing are key concepts towards the restoration of humanity. They are used to explain the results of salvation. All this is attributed to the Holy Spirit. Exorcism, as explained in the empirical study, is one of the spiritual exercises of setting one at liberty. That explains why all human predicaments are attributed to some cause, which in most cases is related to malevolent spirits from the spirit world as opposed to benevolent ancestral spirits. In the ADC's Pneumatology, the Spirit is central in dealing with these human predicaments. The formula could be prayer plus faith, plus invocation of the Holy Spirit, and the result is healing. Christ comes in by reciting "by his wounds you have been healed" (I Pet. 2:24). Markham (2017:120-121) suggests a theological principle that can be used to develop the ADC's Christology in clarifying his involvement in restoring human life. First, to respond to theodicy, the ADC needs to have God in Jesus Christ in a distinctive way. Augustine's perspective about theodicy expounds on the previous point where God returns good to the sinful through divine mercy (Griffin, 2004:63). The second principle for the ADC is to include incarnation in its understanding of Jesus Christ as the revelation of the Word of God. This work treats Christ's revelation of God as an ongoing work in the accomplishment of the salvation story. Thirdly, the ADC must understand the forgiveness of humanity in the light of Christological soteriology (Markham, 2017:120-121). To concretize the development of the ADC's Christology, Christological names are essential in locating and preserving Christ's presence and place in the economic Trinity. Such names would include Christ, meaning

the Messiah, which portrays the connotation of the ruler of the Messianic kingdom, and the Son of God, denoting the Messiah or theocratic king. Equally essential is the name Son of Man, which denotes the humanity of Christ (Berkhof (1938:71-72)). The African Divine Church, being a *Roho* church, as revealed in the empirical study, showed tendencies towards de-emphasizing the place of Christ. As shown above, a balanced Christology can be developed using the names and his role in the kingdom of God. This research suggests that the ADC uses these names in the ongoing mission of calling people to faith as well as in the restoration mission. That is to say, Christ is still the mediator of healing, miracles, and human-divine blessing through the Holy Spirit. Christological titles and names are eternal; thus, they give Christ a theological position in remaining an active architect of human restoration.

African Christian Theology

In the literature review of African Christian theology, Kombo's (2007:234) table of Sotho-Tswana metaphysics shows a less developed Christology in which the hierarchical arrangement of the beings categorizes Christ as one of the many divinities. This category is made up of superhuman beings and ancestors, and the spirits of departed men. This resembles the views that both the interviewees and the respondents expressed in the empirical findings. For example, interviewees S05, S06, S10, S12, and S14 expressed the importance of the ancestors in human life and spiritual affairs. On the other hand, 20/30 respondents (66.6%) agreed that ancestors have a place in prayer and worship of the living. This implies a conflict between Christ and the ancestors in the task of developing an orthodox Christology based on the definitions of the ecumenical creeds. However, Kombo's (2007:76-77) proposal of reinterpreting the ecumenical creeds in the African context without mere citation or ignoring them is essential because it will shift the African security from ancestors to Christ who is both sovereign God and man.

Although Nyamiti (1999:3-19) argues that Christology is the most developed concept in African theology, this research suggests that this is only on the academic level. The practical experience as shown by the empirical tabulation in Chapter Two (table 2.1, the role of ancestors in prayer and worship), indicates intruding elements of a mixture in practical worship of ancestral functions and the work of Christ. In most cases, ancestral functions outweigh the mediatorial role of Christ. Clarke's (2005:289) argument that

African Christology is of age because it is being critiqued from within is a positive step in the right direction. However, his assertion that African Christologies have remained simply as “a systematic academic reflection on the mystery of Christ” means therefore that they do not affect the African realities, or if they do, it is only to a minimal level. The reason for this is that a culture is only transformed when the gospel about who Christ is penetrates the cultural context, moving it to a new understanding. This research proposes a paradigm shift as part of developing African Christology. The paradigm shift suggested here is a turn away from ancestral spirituality connected to necromancy to direct access to God through Jesus Christ. This means “a theological suffocation” of the created state of heaven, the abode of the human ancestral community of spirits.

This argument calls into question Nyamiti’s (1999:3-19) suggestion that African Christology is a finished task. Daneel (2001:204) agrees that academic Christologies in Africa need a dialogue with the functional Christologies in the life of African people. This call is urgent because, as Maina (2009:84) proposes, there is a need for a developed understanding of the gospel and the person of Christ, who after Vatican II has been viewed as a member of the African community. This view is what Kombo (2007:250) renders as “Christology from below”. The danger is that African theology, which is influenced by the African view of the hierarchy of beings, prevents the development of “Christology from above”, because the Christology from below is congested with numerous divinities that obscure the incarnation of Christ. This is the turning of the Word into flesh, which is key in establishing the redemptive work of Christ as well as developing his theology in the light of the Trinity. This research has shown that academic Christology has remained a private theology in the theological academies, and it does not interact with the public theology which is the most used and referred to by many. African academic Christologies need to enter into theological dialogue with the public lived theology if the definitions of ecumenical creeds are to be of influence in developing an orthodox Christology for the ADC. Christology is a mystery and Maina (2009:104) argues that it is impossible to interpret incarnational mystery, in which Christ is both man and God, by another African mystery of ancestor beliefs.

The AICs’ theologies and narratives, although mainly oral, demonstrate publicly their Christology. However, since they are influenced by contextual African realities, their concern is less philosophical and less academic in their approach to Christology. The

challenge with academic and orthodox Christology is with its privatization of orthodox doctrines within the church pews or theological libraries. Each strand seems to be moving in the opposite direction. Thus, syncretization and ancestorology assume a theological priority. Considering the findings from the literature review, the ancestral benevolence that AICs embrace is a limiting factor in developing their Christology. The field research concerning the place of Christ in the ADC confirmed the interplay between Christ the Mediator and the ancestral mediatorship. The common channels of ancestral conveyance of information from the spirit world to the living are dreams, visions, prophecies, and ecstatic experiences. The task for the ADC in its effort towards developing a balanced Christology is to work out a framework of disassociating the two. This can be done by validating Christ and ancestors against the ecumenical creeds and their theology. That which meets the theological threshold should be upheld.

The AIC's Christology lacks a clear theological framework for developing an orthodox Christology. This is because of the obscurity of the ancestral concepts on the person and work of Christ. Makhubu (1988:59-63) confirms this argument because he shows the involvement of ancestral spirits in AIC worship and points out how problematic it is for an African to conceive the notion of the Father having a Son without a mother figure. Once the concept of the Son's generation from the Father is denied, as Makhubu shows, the begetting of the Son becomes a western concept that lacks African cosmological support, since the African mind-set of getting a son is drawn from the formula "man plus a woman begets a son". Unfortunately, this cannot produce an African view of the begotten son of God because the approach is too humanistic. What is needed is to approach the subject using African analogies that will generate faith in God begetting Christ.

Hayashinda's (1999:84) research in Ethiopian-type churches, confirmed less developed Christology because of the ancestral mediation present in Christian churches. This is demonstrated through the notion that dreams convey messages from God. It is problematic for many African cultures to move beyond the perception of the transcendence and unapproachability of God (Makanda, 2011: 81). This unfortunately has caused Africans to revert to ancestral access to God. This is informed by the African context of an "enchanted world" (Nyende, 2008:44) which formalizes the community of benevolent spirits to mediate or prescribe a solution to African causalities.

The African philosophy of the spirit world ingrained in African traditional religion and spirituality is an intertwined coexistence. That is why listening to God as a common aspect in African spirituality offers a platform to listen to both the living dead or significant deceased persons. Since African spirituality is communal, the veneration of ancestors is communal (Knoetze, 2019:1-4). These arguments are similar to the empirical findings in Chapter Two, where, for example, interviewee S13 denied the relationship with the ancestors but admitted the possibility of their presence in bringing emissaries in dreams. S24 felt that ancestors should be given priority in matters of spirituality and faith, hence they are given special honour. The centrality of findings shows a less developed African Christology that the ADC may not fully benefit from because it is inclined towards ancestor Christology. However, this work proposes bringing side by side African narratives like the one illustrated above. African stories end with the ancestors. However, there are possibilities in African philosophy that beyond the ancestors lies the sole Causer of things and happenings. Thus, the power wielded by such a Being is supreme. It is on this basis, that an understanding of the complex theology of the eternal generation of the Son from the Father can be built.

In the review of the literature, it is evident that African ancestors cannot rival Christ (Bediako, 1995:217-218). Similarly, the Akan ancestral Christology is insufficient in comparison to the Nicene Christology and the atoning work of Christ (Agyarko, 2009:69). Thus, ancestral Christology offers less theological support towards the ADC's establishment of Christology. The empirical study confirmed tendencies towards the place of ancestors in the ADC's spirituality, for example, in the perspectives expressed by interviewees S2, S3, and S4. This research uses the ecumenical creeds' theological affirmations on Trinity to dismiss as unfit any ancestral methodology towards Christology. This is because the two themes are both mysteries, which require separate theological treatment. After all, a mystery cannot be used to unfold another mystery (Maina, 2009:104). Secondly, an analogy is limited in expression, thus using ancestor analogy to develop Christology is limited. This means that the gap left due to the analogical limitation is likely to be occupied by ancestorology. This argument confirms what Maina (2009:86) argues, that African theology still has a task to develop a firm foundation on the person and ministry of Christ. He further proposes a move by African theology from a definition stage of the identity, goals, and the scope of Christology.

Unless the scope is defined to safeguard orthodox Christological parameters, the African Christology is still in danger from ancestral inclinations.

4.5.3 Conclusion on Christology

The ecumenical creeds offer a firm defence and framework for developing Christology. While the creeds show philosophical complexities in establishing the hypostatic nature of Christ, they are essential for they provide the needed evaluative theological principles towards a Reformed Christology that the ADC needs. The framework of the ancestral Christology is insufficient in developing Christology, thus unfit for the ADC to draw principles from. This is because it cannot maintain the aspects of the Son's eternal generation and his incarnation, which is provided for in the creedal affirmations. What the ADC needs in order to develop a consistent place of Christ in the Trinitarian economy is to acknowledge the hypostatic union of his humanity and divinity.

The lived theology of the ADC, like that of other Pentecostals that embrace dramatic experience in their spirituality, is not necessarily to be replaced with the philosophical Christology of the ecumenical creeds. The task of this research is not to replace the existing dramatic practices of the ADC, because they make the ADC distinctive from others. However, to restore the de-emphasized place of Christ, this work has proposed a process of rooting the practices in the orthodox theology of Christ as contained in the creedal affirmations, which are also acknowledged by various Reformed confessions. That means that any experiential undertones in Christology that relegate Christ to a passive role should be dealt with in order to restore Christ to an active and participatory role in the economic Trinity.

African Christian theology is in the process of establishing a balanced Christology. That means its Christology is not yet complete. This is because it still shows some inclination towards the use of African traditional aspects that may not provide a strong basis for the ADC in developing a hypostatic Christology. Thus, African theology should revert to the ecumenical creeds as a framework from which to draw principles that enable the establishment of a Christology that is felt both in academia and in practical experience. This is what will assist the ADC's reconstruction of its Christology. Christ is both God and man, who is never passive or only active at times, but is continuously involved with human life through the Holy Spirit.

4.5.4 Overall Conclusion

The ecumenical creeds are theological pillars that are essential in developing a balanced approach to Christology. Proper articulation of Christology, which proposes a hypostatic nature, preserves the place of Christ in the Trinity. The question of the incarnation in the phrase “was conceived by the Holy Ghost” gives the basis of the gospel story. To develop Christology, the Nicene Creed’s terms like “coeternal”, “coequal”, “coessential,” “begotten before all the worlds”, and “begotten not made” are key. Such terms cannot describe fully the human ancestors, so attempts to develop Christology from the perspective of human ancestors is problematic and heretical. These creedal terms provide a design for the ADC’s process towards a proper Christology that embraces Christ’s omnipresence, which means he is present and active in human affairs apart from salvation. That is to say, any attempt by the ADC towards a Christology that negates the omnipresence of Christ would be inappropriate, and should inform a turn towards Christology determined by the creeds.

Through the Trinitarian economy, the place of Christ is preserved. This confirms the sameness in nature and the coeternity of Christ with God the Father which, is explained in the theology of one God of the Trinity. The concept of Christological mediation that articulates the humanity of Christ is over and above the ancestral mediation. The two are different in the sense in which they are begotten. While Christ is begotten from God, as both God and human being, ancestors are only a departed community of human spirits.

The Athanasian concept as expressed by Bray (1984:177-178)—“There is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost, and the Godhead of the three is one”—speaks to the unity and oneness of the Triune God. There is one Godhead and not three Gods. Christ is equal to the rest of the persons of the Godhead. That means God’s revelation is embedded in Christ, a concept that points to the generation of the Son from the Father.

Apart from the ecumenical creeds confirming the place of Christ in the Trinity, both the Helvetic Confession of 1566 and the Belgic Confession of 1561 equally affirm the same; therefore, they are essential for the ADC. The Second Helvetic of 1566, Chapter ix, confirms Christ as the true God, predestined and foreordained from eternity by the

Father to be the Saviour of the world. In the Belgic Confession of 1561, article 10, the Son is said to be the Father's generation.

Pentecostal theology's approach to Christology is through the earthly accomplishments of Christ. This is a turn towards an emphasis on human nature (Christ from below). Since Christology from below cannot ensure a complete biblical and orthodox Christology, a dialogue between the Logos and the Spirit Christology needs to take place. The ADC requires a Christology that is both from above and from below to help deconstruct the notion of the ancestor Christology. It is through the Logos and the Spirit Christology that the divinity and the humanity of Christ will be acknowledged. To have Christ from below as predominant over Christ from above, denies a complete expression of who Christ is.

There is a need to work out the formula for Christ in the modern period especially following the Pentecostal emphasis on experientialism. The theology of the second and the third blessings towards entire sanctification provides theological elements towards Christology. However, as explained, the notion requires a critical approach in the light of the affirmations of the ecumenical creeds. The modern glossolalia, which seems to be shaping modern Christian spiritual experience, requires a conversation with the theological tenets provided for in the ecumenical creeds. This will help to maintain the biblical and theological foundation of the church.

The African Divine Church that subscribes to the Pentecostal tradition needs an urgent articulation of its theological position, especially in regard to Christology. African Christian Christology needs to move from the level of definitions to the level of defining its Christological scope. This will help to prevent Christology from getting mixed up in the African structure of human ancestors. This means that the academic and public theology should engage in a dialogue so that the worked-out balanced Christology moves from academic libraries to the mission field, where theological deficiencies are observed practically.

4.6 GUIDELINES FOR A PARADIGM SHIFT

4.6.1 Introduction

In this section, this research uses the ecumenical creeds as the framework for challenging the theological presuppositions that emerged in the empirical study. A chart has been used to achieve this process. This section suggests theological principles from the ecumenical creeds that can be used as guidelines towards the realization of the suppositions that emerged from the empirical study. The ecumenical creeds provide the framework for addressing the suppositions towards the ADC's theological reconstruction. The principles drawn from this will form theological pillars that the ADC can use to develop a balance between lived and academic theology. The aim is for the ADC to establish a Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community that will enable them to preserve and locate Christ in the Trinitarian mission.

4.6.2 Table: Theological principles from the ecumenical creeds as guidelines towards the realisation of the suppositions

Table 4.1

Suppositions	Theological principles from the Apostles' Creed	Theological principles from the Nicene Creed	Theological principles from the Athanasian Creed
1. The need to establish a missional hermeneutic	ADC to root its missional hermeneutic in the Triune God. To keep the statement "I believe in God the Father...in Jesus Christ his Only-begotten Son...in the Holy Spirit" to the fore in reading the salvation story.	ADC to move to a systematic reading of the Scriptures, allowing the roles of the ontological and economic Trinity to act as a hermeneutic. The Holy Spirit's double procession helps confirms the activeness of the entire Trinity in the biblical story. The given statement confirms this. "And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance	ADC to move to a new definition of the persons of the Trinity that consist of "...one God in Trinity and Trinity in unity...of the Father, another of the Son and another of the Holy Spirit..." Art. 2-6.

Suppositions	Theological principles from the Apostles' Creed	Theological principles from the Nicene Creed	Theological principles from the Athanasian Creed
		with the Father, by whom all things were made.... And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life; who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified"	
2. The need to establish a Trinitarian Theology	ADC to draw its doctrine of the Trinity from the oneness of the Godhead with the Father as the maker of everything, Jesus Christ as the Son begotten of the Father, incarnated and in the Holy Spirit. "God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven... And in Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, our Lord... I believe in the Holy Spirit"	ADC to establish the place of Christ in the Trinity. Expressions such as "God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made...", and "was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary can serve to preserve the deity and humanity of Christ and prevent comparison with the ancestors.	ADC to develop a Trinitarian theology based on one Godhead that has "the equal glory, the majesty co-eternal" (Art.6) The oneness can be maintained by using the titles "one almighty" (Art. 13-14), "one Lord" (Art. 17-18).
3. The need to develop the relationship between Trinitarian and missional community	ADC to draw its doctrine of the church from the holiness and unity of the saints and the unity of the Trinity. "I believe in one holy, catholic church, the communion of the saints..."	ADC to establish the oneness of the Godhead in the confession "I believe in one God" who is explained as the Father, the Son as "one Lord Jesus Christ" and the Holy Spirit as "the Lord and Giver of life; who proceedeth from the Father and the Son" ADC to work on a theology of perichoretic community that produces the ecclesial community defined as "one holy catholic and apostolic Church." From this, the apostolic role of the church in mission can be established.	ADC to develop a theology of Trinitarian community through perpetual intercommunication, and collaboration of the three persons, which preserves each person's economic role. The economic role of the Godhead is what produces the ecclesial community that accomplishes its mission with the help of the Godhead. ((21) The Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten. ((22) The Son is of the Father alone; not made nor created, but begotten. ((23) The Holy Spirit is of the Father and the Son; neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding). Christ's incarnation reveals his

Suppositions	Theological principles from the Apostles' Creed	Theological principles from the Nicene Creed	Theological principles from the Athanasian Creed
			economic role in salvation (art. 30-39)
4. The need to work out Christology (the place of Christ)	ADC to work out Christology premised on Christ who shares equal deity with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, and equal humanness with humanity. The Christ should be one who was conceived uniquely, suffered, died, buried, and rose again. This will help ADC shift from ancestral methodology to Spirit Christology.	ADC to establish Christology that is rooted in eternal generation as revealed in the sameness of titles and his role in the salvific economy. Such terms like "One Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten-Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father," can serve to confirm the active presence of Christ as in human life affairs, which includes after salvation.	ADC to construct Christology through ontological, and economic Trinity. Important for the ontology is the pre-existence as: "Almighty, all as "one God" an "one" (Art. 12-17). For the economic component, the incarnation is important to show the salvific role (Art. 29-41). The two can serve to confirm the deity and humanity that are essential in safeguarding Christ against ancestral comparisons.

4.6.3 Explanation

The need to establish a missional hermeneutic is a response to the need for the ADC to embrace the methodology of reading the Bible as one salvific story from the Old Testament through the New Testament. To approach the Bible in this way will enable the ADC to develop a missional hermeneutic that is rooted in the Trinitarian mission, which will enable it to locate the place of Christ. From the three ecumenical creeds, the ADC can draw the following principles. First, from the Apostles' Creed, the missional hermeneutic should be Trinitarian. The creedal statement, "I believe in God the Father...in Jesus Christ, his Only-begotten Son...in the Holy Spirit" is important in revealing first the oneness in the divinity and the coeternity of the persons of the Trinity, as they are located in the biblical narrative. Secondly, the statement reveals the economic role of the Trinity, which supports holding the story as one. Secondly, the ADC needs to shift from haphazard to systematic reading of the scriptures. Such an approach will allow both the ontological and economic roles of the Trinity to become the basic theological pillars on which to establish a hermeneutic methodology. A balanced

hermeneutics is one, which preserves the basic biblical theology, which upholds both the ontological and economic function of the Trinity in the mission of the church. The foundational embrace of correct Trinitarian theology will inform the accuracy of the development of a proper hermeneutic. The Nicene Creed of the double procession of the Spirit from the Father and the Son holds the three together. The concept of the three being active in each other in accomplishing their functions confirms the activeness of the Godhead in the mission without any being passive. Thirdly, the activeness of the Godhead can be understood by the ADC through a re-definition of the persons of the Trinity. The Athanasian Creed's definition of "one God in Trinity and Trinity in unity ... of the Father, another of the Son and another of the Holy Spirit" (Art. 2-6) helps establish this.

To establish a Trinitarian theology, the ADC can draw its doctrine from the oneness of the Godhead. This can be done through the economic Trinity, which the Apostles' Creed affirms. For example, the Father is the creator of everything and begets the Son. The Son as the only begotten is also incarnated which confirms his deity through the eternal generation and confirms his humanity that implies the salvific role. The "I believe in the Holy Spirit" should confirm the fact that the Spirit is equally part of the Godhead. This collapses the tendency to overemphasize the Holy Spirit. By using the Nicene Creed's framework, the ADC can establish the place of Christ in the Trinity through such expressions: "God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made", and "was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary". Such can serve to safeguard the deity and humanity of Christ and prevent it from being compared with the ancestors. A successful development of Christology by eliminating any component from African traditional ancestry adds to a balanced view of the Trinity and thus Spirit-Christology. Additionally, the ADC can develop a Trinitarian theology that is centred on one Godhead confirmed by the Athanasian creedal phrase, "the equal glory, the majesty co-eternal." The ADC can maintain this oneness through the titles such as "one almighty, "one Lord" that the creed uses to elaborate the equality of the Trinity. The shared titles can help the ADC preserve the active and equal participation of the Trinity in both salvation and other issues related to human life, for example, healing and miracles. Any divine healing and miracles should be rooted in the entire Trinity as work accomplished corporately.

The need to develop the relationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community in the ADC is important in locating the place of Christ in the Trinitarian mission. The ADC can achieve this by drawing its doctrine of the church from the holiness and the unity of the saints as well as from the unity of the Trinity, which the Apostles' Creed affirms in the statement, "I believe in one holy, catholic church, the communion of the saints". This will enable the ADC to move away from a denominational approach to the church. Secondly, it will shift the ADC's understanding of mission from being a physical centre for managing and dispersing mission activities. Secondly, the ADC can establish the oneness of the Godhead using the Nicene Creed's confession, "I believe in one God" who is explained as the Father, the Son as "one Lord Jesus Christ" and the Holy Spirit as "the Lord and Giver of life; who proceedeth from the Father and the Son". The concept of the double procession of the Spirit from the Father and the Son should not be taken to mean the double privilege of the Spirit to make him inactivate the place of Jesus Christ. Instead, it should be taken as a concept to explain the theology around the deity and divinity of the Holy Spirit as an equal person in glory and majesty with others. On the same note, the ADC should work on the theology of the perichoretic community. A complete understanding of the divine perichoretic community will result in an ecclesial community that is a product of the Godhead and will qualify for the definition "one holy catholic and apostolic Church." This will provide a blueprint for establishing the apostolic role of the church in mission. This work also proposes to the ADC to develop its theology of Trinitarian community expressed through perpetual intercommunication and collaboration of the three persons. This can help to preserve the economic function of each person. It is evident from the Athanasian Creed that the ecclesial community is produced by the Trinitarian economy, and that its participation in the mission is enabled by the Godhead (Articles 21-23, 30-39). Since the Godhead superintends the ecclesial mission, it brings about the understanding for the ADC that the entire Trinity takes part in divine manifestations in the life of the believers. Thus, none is either more active or superior than others.

On the supposition concerning the need to work out Christology, this work proposes for the ADC to premise its theology on the Christ of the Apostles' Creed, such that Christ shares equal deity with the Father and the Holy Spirit, and is equal in humanity with humanity. This view of Christ, who was conceived uniquely, suffered, died, buried, and rose again, can help the ADC to shift from ancestral methodology to Spirit-Christology.

In Spirit-Christology, Jesus is not separated from the Spirit, and the Spirit is not removed from Jesus. They work collaboratively to dispense any notion of passivity or de-emphasis of Christ. Secondly, the ADC needs to establish Christology that is rooted in the eternal generation of Christ, using the titles he shares with the Father and his functions in the economy of salvation. The terms and expression of the Nicene Creed are essential, such as “One Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father”. This can serve to perceive Christ as the one who is continually present and involved in human affairs, especially after salvation, as an equal partner in the Trinitarian economy. Considering the Athanasian Creed, the ADC can use its content, especially its developed ontological and economic Trinity. Through the ontological Trinity, the ADC can draw the principle of Christ’s pre-existence with the Father through such expressions as “Almighty ... one God” and “one” (Articles 12-17). The Athanasian Creed gives the economic element of this principle in the incarnation in Articles 29-41, which can help to understand his role in salvation. The dual constructs can better serve the ADC towards a comprehensive view of deity and humanity, which is key in safeguarding the person and place of Christ against ancestral inclinations. While the ancestral formula lacks the duality in nature, it cannot be used to construct Christology that is only completed in a hypostatic formula.

4.6.4 Conclusion

This research, therefore, recommends to the ADC the ecumenical creeds as the framework for developing its missional hermeneutic, its Trinitarian theology, and the relationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community. The same framework is preferred in developing the ADC’s Christology. This framework brings the three persons of the Trinity together starting from the ontological relationality to the economic intercommunication, which produces an ecclesial community. This ecclesial community participates in the mission of God as enabled by the Triune God. The ADC’s reconstruction of a balanced Trinitarian ecclesiology with result in Christ being seen as a continually present and active member in the Trinitarian economy.

CHAPTER 5:

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The conclusion to the study summarizes the research and findings of Chapters 2-4 and shows how each chapter contributed towards the answering of the primary research question of the study, "What theological principles can be articulated about Trinitarian ecclesiology and missional community that can assist the ADC regarding the place of Christ in Trinitarian mission?" Then, it discusses the findings of the study in relation to the outcomes drawn from the empirical research. Next, it lists and discusses the recommendations drawn from the research. This includes suggested guidelines towards a paradigm shift in the ADC's theological construction of Trinitarian ecclesiology and missional community towards a balanced articulation of the place of Christ. Lastly, it shows the limitations of the study and makes recommendations for further research.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTERS

5.2.1 Chapter One

Chapter One laid out the design of the entire study. The problem that informed the need for the study was derived from personal experience of the ADC with its emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit. It was also influenced by the work of Ezigbo (2010:25-46) on African Christologies. Ezigbo's study of motifs of gap and fulfilment, deconstructionist, reconstructionist, and solution presuppositions in African Christologies highlighted the existing gap concerning the place of Christ in African theology and the tendency towards not seeing Christ in his dual natures, both divine and human. This led to the primary research question, "What theological principles can be articulated about Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community that can assist the African Divine Church of Kenya regarding the place of Christ in Trinitarian mission?" Other subsidiary questions were developed from it that provided the scope of the study. They were:

- What is the background of the African Divine Church of Kenya as an African Instituted Church with special regard to their understanding of the role of Christ in Trinitarian mission?

- What can be learned from a study of the development of Trinitarian ecclesiology and missional community during the early church, medieval, Reformation, and modern periods in history, with special reference to the role of Jesus Christ as the second person of the Trinity?
- What guidelines can be formulated for a paradigm shift towards an understanding of Jesus Christ's role in Trinitarian mission in the African Divine Church of Kenya?

Thus, the study aimed to articulate theological principles concerning Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community, to assist the African Divine Church of Kenya regarding the place of Christ in the Trinitarian mission.

The objectives of the study directed the method of the study in its examination of the research questions. These were:

- To describe the background of the African Divine Church of Kenya as an African Instituted Church with special reference to their understanding of the role of Jesus Christ in Trinitarian mission.
- To discuss the development of Trinitarian ecclesiology and missional community during the early church, medieval, Reformation, and modern periods in history with special reference to the place of Jesus Christ as the second person of the Trinity.
- To formulate guidelines for a paradigm shift towards an understanding of Jesus Christ's role in Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community for the formulation of a doctrine of Trinitarian mission in the African Divine Church of Kenya.

The aim and objectives shaped the direction of the study towards the central theoretical argument that sought to deal with the theological principles of the ecumenical creeds which, if properly articulated, would enable the ADC to develop a theology of Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community that can assist them in their understanding of the place of Christ as the second person on the Trinity. The methodological framework proposed enabled the research to proceed in an orderly fashion towards the realization of its goals. It was imperative to work out the ethical consideration that ensured

voluntary participation and the confidentiality of the research participants. The risk level of the research was considered and rated as low.

5.2.2 Chapter Two

Chapter Two addressed the subsidiary research question, “What is the background of the African Divine Church of Kenya as an African Instituted Church with special regard to their understanding of the role of Christ in Trinitarian mission?” Its objective to describe the ADC’s background as an AIC with special reference to their understanding of the role of Christ in the Trinitarian mission was achieved through an empirical study. The methodologies used to achieve this included the empirical study and the literature review with a descriptive presentation of the information. The researcher obtained the necessary ethical approvals from the relevant authorities to legalize the process of the data collection. The chapter set out the research setting of the study, which was the African Divine Church of Kenya, located in Vihiga County. The gatekeeper was important in this study thus, the researcher worked with the archbishop of the ADC.

Since this study used a qualitative approach, the number of participants was comparatively small and their views were assumed to represent the general population. The researcher adopted the purposive sampling method because it provided in-depth and specific information that answered the research questions. The data was collected through semi-structured interviews, in-person observations, and questionnaires. The process enabled the researcher to interact with the participants. The data collected was analysed through thematic categorization that was based on the central theoretical argument of the study. Since the study took into consideration the feelings and facts of the participants as information, a continuum approach was important. The analysis was done using Creswell and Creswell’s six steps of analysis. The narrative nature formed part of the researcher’s analysis. An inductive approach enabled the researcher to develop concepts from the data into readable and understandable information and general theories. The findings of the data were thematically organized into historical, practical, and theological aspects. This arrangement was used to articulate the theological position of the ADC.

The objective to describe the background of the ADC as an AIC in relation to its theology of the place of Christ in the Trinitarian mission was achieved through the

empirical study through the historical, practical, and theological themes that emerged. These can be summarized as:

1. The ADC is a *Roho* (Spirit) church based on its prominent reference to the Holy Spirit in acquiring the name of the church and in its use of the three colours (red, white, and green), that are missional.
2. The ADC, like any AIC, showed problems in articulating the Trinitarian economy. This leads to an overemphasis on the role of the Holy Spirit and a lower place and lessened involvement of Christ in the Godhead. This could be demonstrated in the mixed explanations about the three colours thought to signify Trinity, as well as in the manifestations of divine healing and prophecy.
3. Like other AICs, the ADC showed a tendency in its lived theology towards a concept of ancestral involvement. This harms the development of an orthodox Christology.
4. The ADC, like other AICs, is charismatic, which leads to lessened reference to the philosophical Trinity as laid out in the ecumenical creeds and more emphasis on the practical Trinity. As a member of the Organisation of African Instituted Churches (OAIC), the ADC subscribes to the constitution that acknowledges only the Apostles' Creed (Articles 8.1 & 8.3).
5. The hermeneutical concerns that characterize AICs emerged in the ADC. These endanger faithful Bible interpretation. These include the stamping of the foot in prayer, taken from Ezekiel 6:11, the need for physical energy in confession (Eccl. 12:1-4), and emphasis on the baptism of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2 which is preceded by experiential entry into a trance.

These theological issues resulted in four suppositions as follows:

1. The need to establish an urgent biblical, missional hermeneutic where the Bible is read with an understanding of how the *missio Dei* unfolds as one story from the Old Testament through the New Testament. This will assist in locating the equal involvement of the Trinity in the mission.

2. For the ADC to establish a coherent Trinitarian theology of mission, there was a need to maintain a cohesive meaning and symbolism of the colours of the flag, turban, and headscarves. As established in the findings, the three colours are iconic in understanding the salvific involvement of the Triune God in mission. The ADC's colours are symbolically rich and suitable for upgrading their understanding of the role of Christ in the Trinity's functions.
3. An understanding of a Trinitarian community was necessary. Throughout the findings, less understanding of this was noted in the perspectives that were given by both the interviewees and the respondents to questionnaires.
4. There was a need for a shift to be made in the ecclesial mission. From the views expressed by both the interviewees and the respondents, the concept of the church maintained a localized dimension. Once it is rescued from the local to a universal dimension, without embracing universalism, the Trinitarian mission theology of the ADC will be balanced. The shift from a centripetal missional ecclesiology towards a centrifugal one is a matter of urgency in the ADC's theology.
5. Although the ancestral concept was shifting towards cessation, there was still a need to form a concrete theology of Christ that would dilute adherence to the African traditional hierarchy of beings, which hinders the development of Christology. From the findings, the lack of correspondence between the African traditional ancestry and the work of Christ called for a theological deconstruction in order to reconstruct a balanced Trinitarian mission for the ADC.

The third and four suppositions were combined into "the relationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community" because they showed similarities in content. Thus, the suppositions were reduced to four, which were addressed in Chapter Three.

5.2.3 Chapter Three

The question addressed in Chapter Three was "What can be learned from a study of the development of Trinitarian ecclesiology and missional community during the early church, medieval, Reformation, and modern periods in history, with special reference to

the role of Jesus Christ as the second person of the Trinity?” This was answered through a discussion of the development of Trinitarian ecclesiology and missional community during the early church, medieval, Reformation, and modern periods in history with special reference to the place of Jesus Christ as the second person of the Trinity. The discussion developed theological principles for the four suppositions through the literature review using the ecumenical creeds as the framework.

The review suggested that the early church period’s hermeneutical elements of literality, historical and literal types used in the OT, that were fulfilled in the NT, as well as its typology, could inform the ADC in its development of a missional hermeneutic. The review established first, that the ADC could develop its Trinitarian theology around the Trinitarian economy as articulated in the Nicene Creed. Second, since the language of the ecumenical creeds recognizes the sameness in the divinity and the nature of the Godhead, it would benefit the ADC to use them as a framework to address the problem of the de-emphasized place of Christ. The Nicene and Athanasian creeds were seen to be instrumental in this as they expressed the ontological relationality of the Godhead and presented the Trinity as equally worshipped and glorified. The Trinitarian community and the missional community were established as interrelated in the sense that while the Trinitarian community exists in one glory, they cannot worship themselves, but they are worshipped by the ecclesial community. On one hand, the Trinity was viewed as involved in the mission. On the other hand, the church participates with the Trinity as sojourners in the *missio Dei*. In this connection, the church is also referred to as “called and sanctified” by the will of God through Christ. It was suggested that a balanced Christology for the ADC could be drawn from the creedal statements regarding Christ who is both God and man, without confusion or division. This would render Christ a unique and incomparable mediator in contrast with the ancestorology model of Christology demonstrated in the ADC’s lived theologies.

The literature review of the medieval period gave further pointers towards the establishment of Trinitarian theology by the ADC. First, it proposed the principle of the equality of the Trinitarian members as they are worshipped together. Secondly, it suggested that the concept of the double procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son and the terms coeternity, divinity, coequality, and consubstantiality of the Godhead used in the ecumenical creeds could be used to address the ADC’s practical

and experiential theology. The Trinitarian and missional community was built on the economic distinction, the finished work of the cross, and the imputed righteousness given through the Holy Spirit. This could assist the ADC to shift its conception of mission from being a place of ecclesial administration to being the movement of God's initiative in which the church as the body of Christ participates. Besides that, the deemphasized place of Christ could be addressed through Richard of Saint Victor's Christology, and that of Boethius. Such Christology preserves the important terms of coeternity, coequality, and consubstantiality that maintain the relationality of the Father and the Son.

The Reformation period provided the following responses to the empirical study's suppositions. First, the adoption of the hermeneutical aspects of sole sufficiency of the scripture, inspiration, the perspicuity of scripture, the use of biblical languages, and divine revelation could assist in the development of the ADC's missional hermeneutic. Secondly, the ADC could develop its Trinitarian theology within the scope of the distinguishable economy role in salvation. This will make the place of each person be retained as fully active. This approach confirmed the sharing and collaboration that exists in the community of the Godhead in providing and completing the biblical salvation story. These arguments are important because they could help address the ADC's notion of Christological passiveness in its approach to the Godhead. Thirdly, the relationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community could be developed through articulating the church as the product of the Trinitarian community, and, at the same time, as an instrument of the Godhead in its mission. This would shift the mission from a denominational definition to a universal concept and movement of God into the world. Lastly, Christology could be preserved through all the ecumenical creeds that implied a non-replacement of Christ's approach. All three ecumenical creeds portray a Christ who is equally involved in salvation and human affairs, and they do not suggest that Christ is replaced by the Holy Spirit. That means that the ADC could reconstruct its practical theology of divine healing, Spirit baptism, and the place of dreams and vision to include the active involvement of the entire Godhead in human affairs, and to present Christ as an active participant.

The modern hermeneutical theology of the sufficiency of the atoning death of Christ, and the centrality of his wounds are important for the ADC. However, they are limited

because they mainly emphasize the humanity of Christ. The concept of rationalism helps to underscore the philosophical framework of the theology presented in the ecumenical creeds. The Pentecostal hermeneutic of scriptural dialogue with practical living, the concept of restorationism which is viewed as the accomplishment of the salvific plan, and the four/five gospel model, which brings about the notion of experiential supernaturalism, is similar to that of the ADC. What is missing that needs to be included in the ADC's hermeneutical reconstruction are the components of historicity and literality. The theology of the second blessing and the Pentecostal experientialism that emerged from the review chapter could help in the ADC's theological process of reconstruction. However, this approach, if left as it is, is problematic because it will conflict with the unity between Christ and the Holy Spirit and let the Spirit appear to be working independently from the Word of God. Therefore, the Spirit Christology approach is recommended for the ADC. Although the ADC has a prominent practical Pneumatology, Zinzendorf's theology of the mother Spirit (Atwood, 2004:64) is not applicable, hence not helpful because it compromises the biblical gender.

The review of literature on African Christian Theology showed a less developed African Christology, characterized by a focus on the enchanted world. The presence of these tendencies in the ADC's theology would suggest that the move towards a more balanced Christology would benefit from the incorporation of the theological framework of the ecumenical creeds to shape the place of Christ in the Trinitarian mission. The question about the place of ancestors was important because it led to the discovery of the less developed Christology, since African ancestors influenced the framework for working out a balanced Christology. This could help address the tendencies towards ancestral Christology that seem to affect orthodox Christology in African Christian Theology. The creeds are important because they provide a Christ who is both from above and from below, unlike ancestor Christology.

The inherited Pentecostal theology originated from the Moravians' heart theology, the Wesleyan theology of holiness and entire sanctification, and the emphasis on the baptism in the Holy Spirit. These theological emphases found their way to the Azusa Street Revival. The theological emphasis of these movements shapes the theology of AICs. All these theologies are rooted in the practical aspect of faith. This thesis

proposes a dialogue between these theologies and the philosophical ecumenical creedal theology in order to combine both reflexive and action theology.

The AICs' lived theology is the source of African Christian theology. Thus, the AICs' emphasis on the Holy Spirit as the presence of God expresses tendencies towards lessened participation of Christ in human affairs. This is expressed in the attribution of post-salvation experiences like divine healing, prophecies, the manifestation of dreams and visions to the Holy Spirit, and this characterizes many *Roho* churches. The study suggested that the OAIC should recognize other ecumenical creeds apart from the Apostles' Creed it acknowledges because they help expound the brevity of the Apostles' Creed's theology. Thus, they will provide a balanced approach to the doctrine of the Trinity in addressing the passivity of Christ in human providence as seems to be seen in the ADC. The study confirms that the Holy Spirit is equal to the Father and the Son in deity, eternity, and consubstantiation, which guarantees equal participation of the Trinitarian persons in salvation and human affairs.

The context of African theology is African traditional religion, which imbalances the development of an orthodox African Trinitarian theology and mission. The hierarchical structure places God above all. The equal arrangement of the orthodox Trinity is attacked by categorisation of the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ among the spirits, divinities, or ancestors. African traditional religion's unsystematic embrace of the spirit world has found its way into African theology in its attempts to understand the Trinity. This framework also has influenced AICs, whose view of the Trinity is characterized by less systematic doctrine. The study suggests systematic doctrine through the ecumenical creedal framework as an evaluative roadmap.

The emphasis on historical Jesus which affects his deity opens up to ancestorology. The ancestral Christology which seems to be the departure point of African Trinitarian theology that is common in AICs requires the systematic philosophical framework of the ecumenical creeds in developing a balanced Trinitarian mission.

5.2.4 Chapter Four

The question for Chapter Four was "What guidelines can be formulated for a paradigm shift towards an understanding of Jesus Christ's role in Trinitarian mission in the African Divine Church of Kenya?" The objective of this was to "formulate guidelines for a

paradigm shift towards an understanding of Jesus Christ's role in Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community for the formulation of a doctrine of Trinitarian mission in the African Divine Church of Kenya".

Chapter Four achieved this objective through a discussion of the four suppositions from the empirical study through the four periods of the history of the church, to form guiding principles towards a paradigm shift in the ADC's Trinitarian mission. The centrality of the ecumenical creeds was maintained. The OAIC's embrace of the Trinitarian economy of the Apostles' Creed was helpful with the suggestion to embrace other ecumenical creeds to maintain the ontological and economic Trinitarian pillars that are essential towards a balanced Trinitarian mission in the ADC. What was arrived at is the suggestion that the ecumenical creeds have essential theological pillars that can be used to reconstruct the ADC's Trinitarian theology. The proposed guidelines for the ADC's paradigm shift were stated as follows:

1. To establish a missional hermeneutic that is rooted in the Triune God as expressed in the Apostles' Creed as follows: "I believe in God the Father ... in Jesus Christ, his Only-begotten Son ... in the Holy Spirit" which reveals the economic Trinity and its oneness in reading the Bible. The Nicene Creed's ontological and economic Trinity should be used as a hermeneutic for reading the story of the scripture, and the double procession of the Spirit from the Father and the Son essentially shows the continuous engagement of the Godhead in the saving economy in the Bible.
2. To work out a Trinitarian theology, the research suggested an embrace of the Apostles' Creed's view of the oneness of the Trinitarian community, the Nicene Creed's view of the hypostatic nature of Christ and his eternal generation from God, together with the incarnation through the Holy Spirit expressed as "God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made", and "was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary". The needed equality of the Godhead in the shared glory, majesty, and titles that the Athanasian Creed show, is resourceful in emphasizing the consubstantiality of the Trinity. This sorts out the problem of emphasizing the Spirit over Christ, thus, Christ's functionality does not end at his ascension. This helps to deal with the problem of listing Christ among the line of African ancestors.

3. To establish the relationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community the research suggested that the ADC develop this by locating the holiness and unity of the saints based on the unity of the Godhead drawn from the Apostles' Creed: "I believe in one holy, catholic church, the communion of the saints" which helps the ADC shift from the mission as a denominational activity to a movement of Godhead in the world through the church. The Nicene Creed's expression of the oneness of the Godhead, such as "I believe in one God" expressed as "one Lord Jesus Christ" and the Holy Spirit as "the Lord and Giver of life; who proceedeth from the Father and the Son" and the double procession assures the divinity of the Triune God. This will help the ADC as it points to the equal involvement of the Trinitarian persons in both salvation and acts of divine providence. The mutual collaboration of the Triune God in the Athanasian Creed preserves the equal economy in the salvation that results in the being of the church. In this relationship, the Trinity sustains the church in its mission.
4. To work out Christology, the research suggested that Christology be predicated on the Apostles' Creed's claim that Christ is of equal deity to the Father and the Holy Spirit as well as his humanness equal to humanity, which helps it to move from ancestor Christology to Spirit Christology. The Nicene Creed states this as "One Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father." This provided a Christology that is grounded in the eternal generation, which is affirmed in the shared titles and salvific economy. This connects to the Athanasian Creed's ontological and economic Trinity, which confirmed both the deity and humanity of Christ. This safeguards Christ against the ancestor Christology framework. The ADC needs the Christ that the creeds defend, who is established both in ontological and economic relation with the entire Godhead, who is both God and man, and whose nature is neither undivided nor confused. Such a Christ cannot fit into an ancestral framework.

5.3 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

These findings show how the research responded to the question of “What is the background of the African Divine Church of Kenya as an African Instituted Church with special regard to their understanding of the role of Christ in Trinitarian mission?” This helped to confirm the research’s central theoretical argument that required “the articulation of proper theological principles concerning Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community that can assist the ADC in their understanding of the second person in the Trinity.” To articulate the response, the researcher used three methods for empirical analysis. They included semi-structured interviews, in-person observation, and questionnaires. The data from the interviews resulted in historical, practical, and theological thematic aspects.

The historical findings revealed the ADC’s common themes of prophecy, prayer, and repentance, which are key in its liturgy. The findings confirmed that the name ADC was arrived at through reading and meditation of John 15:1-17, a vision that was revealed to the pioneers in dreams and vision.

The practical findings revealed that the ADC is a Spirit-led (*Roho*) church usually demonstrating its spirituality in Spirit-led songs, loud expressional and experiential prayer, drum beating, and exorcism. Ezekiel 6:11 was the interpretational source of foot stamping. According to the participants, the Holy Spirit and not God the Father instigated Noah’s construction of the ark, the migration of Abraham from Ur to the foreign land, and initiated the change of Jacob’s name to Israel. The ADC’s baptism is Trinitarian, rooted in Matthew 28:18-20. The findings established that the ADC’s colours symbolize their belief in salvation. These findings led to the supposition on the need to establish a missional hermeneutic for the ADC, in which the Bible would be read as one story in which all three persons are involved.

The research on the ADC’s theology confirmed the de-emphasis on the place of Christ. This was detected in the confusion that emerged in the understanding of the economic Trinity, where role distinction was lost by mixing up the functions of each person. The ADC colours on the flag implied the Trinity. However, the mixed responses on the meaning of the white colour expressed in the findings by the respondents implied the need to rework the ADC’s Trinitarian mission. This tended towards weakening the

perichoretic relationality of the Trinity. The findings from the questionnaire revealed that the ADC believes in the Trinity and that the Trinitarian members are all involved in salvation, baptism, and healing. However, there was confusion concerning the distinct economic role of the persons. This confusion informed the supposition on the need to establish the Trinitarian theology for the ADC.

The supposition concerning the need to establish the relationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community was derived as follows. First, the findings established that the ADC's concept of the mission was focused on the buildings as a place of denominational administration of the ADC affairs and the archbishop's residence. This prompted the formation of the supposition on the need to establish a proper understanding of Trinitarian mission and the missional community. While prophecy was an important part of the mission, the findings confirmed that current prophetic utterances are inclined to commercial influence. By this, they explained that the prophecies given today are done for financial gain, which affects the validity of the prophetic ministry in the ADC. Thus, the historic prophetic ministry was truer compared to the contemporary prophecies. Additionally, the supposition on the need to work out the relationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community for the ADC was further derived from the findings, which established that the ADC is a *Roho* church. This was confirmed by 83.3% of the respondents. Secondly, there were questions concerning the relationship between the African community and that of the Trinity. This resulted in a suggestion for the reconstruction of the ADC's understanding of Trinitarian community and ecclesial community. This helped to shift away from including the African traditional cosmology in the development of the Trinitarian community.

The supposition that called for the need towards a reworked Christology was drawn from the responses on the question of the place of the ancestors in the ADC's theology. The responses revealed mixed views. Some supported while others denied the importance of the ancestors. Nonetheless, this confirmed the influence of ancestors in constructing Christology. The findings considered this as important to the research because they resulted in a suggestive theological approach towards a balanced Christology for the ADC's Trinitarian mission. The need to establish an orthodox Christology was also drawn from the researcher's visits to the ADC's four

congregations, and the observations showed the dominance of the role of the Holy Spirit. For example, the Spirit was said to influence the variation in sound during prayer, change from one song to another, rhythmic clapping of hands, foot-stamping, and the charismatic voice and movement of the pastor in preaching.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The first recommendation is for the ADC to develop a missional hermeneutic that is Trinitarian. This will enable the ADC to locate the place of Christ in the Trinitarian mission. The ecumenical creeds can be used as a framework for establishing the needed hermeneutic. First, the component of the Apostles' Creed concerned with the unity of the Godhead is to be maintained in the approach to the biblical narrative. Secondly, the Nicene Creed's claim of the double procession of the Spirit speaks to the activeness of the three persons of the Godhead whereby each person collaborates in accomplishing the salvific economy which the entire story preserves. The collaboration rooted in the perichoretic relationality does not allow passivity in the Trinitarian involvement in the biblical story. The Athanasian Creed's emphasis on "one God in Trinity and Trinity in unity" synchronizes the oneness of the Godhead developed by the Apostles' and Nicene creeds. This would help the ADC to preserve the unity of the Godhead in the biblical salvation story and the interpenetration of the Godhead with its salvific economy.

The second recommendation is for the ADC to work out its Trinitarian theology. The study recommends that such theology should be rooted in the indivisibility of the Godhead as laid out in the ecumenical creeds. The Apostles' Creed establishes how the Godhead functions economically. Such economic relationality is not based on the superiority or inferiority of any members of the Triune God but on their unique distinction. This will enable the ADC to develop a concept of the distinction in roles of the three persons of the Triune God without collapsing the unity and equality. The Nicene Creed's theology of "God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made" and "was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary" fundamentally roots the doctrine of the Trinity in the core concept of consubstantiality that is at the centre of constructing the shared nature of the Trinity. The shared nature is key in establishing Trinitarian theology. The possibility of maintaining the shared nature of the Trinity including their coeternity falls in the Athanasian Creed's category of the Triune God's

equal glory and equal eternal majesty. The ADC needs to embrace this in its construction of Trinitarian theology. The foundational titles shared by the Triune God can help to shape the ADC's view of Trinitarian equality when it comes to its practical theology of divine healing, exorcism, and miracles.

The third recommendation requires the ADC to establish the relationship between the Trinitarian community and the missional community. The ADC can achieve this process by building this relationality on the concepts affirmed by the ecumenical creeds: the universal church, its holiness, and the unity of the saints that is preserved by the unity of the Trinity. This formula informs the shifting of the ADC's understanding of mission from being a place to being a movement of God the Father in which the Trinity equally participates. The unity of the Godhead, drawn from the Nicene Creed, preserves the doctrine of the One God who is expressed as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit and helps to affirm the Trinitarian persons' equal and active involvement in the salvation economy. Equally, the statement in the Athanasian Creed which affirms the church as the product of the Trinitarian economy is important in building the relationality of the Trinitarian and missional communities.

The fourth recommendation requires that the ADC works out its Christology that fits in the limits of the orthodox faith. This study recommends that this be worked out through the Father's shared deity with the Son and the Holy Spirit, as affirmed by the Apostles' Creed, which preserves the truths that Christ suffered as a human being, died, was buried, was resurrected, and will come back the second time. This kind of Christology is adequate to overcome the concept of ancestor Christology. Ancestor Christology is limited since it deals with human ancestors whose role and existence are negligible in the ecumenical creedal theology because, naturally, ancestors possess one finite human nature. The ancestor Christology is thus insufficient in drawing up the balanced Christology that the ADC needs. The Nicene Creed's affirmation of the eternal generation of the Son, such as "One Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father" is a fundamental defence against the ancestor narrative. The Athanasian Creed's view of the ontological and economic Trinity is also of use in moving the ADC towards a more defined Christology. The ontological Trinity which preserves Christ's pre-existence with the

Father and the economic Trinity which conserves the place of Christ in the Trinity through his role in the salvation plan have the potential to shape the ADC's development of the place of Christ. The deity and humanity of Christ defended by the ecumenical creeds places Christ in a unique position in the ADC's development of its Christology. It is far beyond comparability with the ancestral matrix that gets lost in one human nature.

This study suggests further steps towards the revision of the ADC's Trinitarian mission. The first would be to suggest to the leaders that they hold theological seminars with the clergy and other leaders on the need for the church to develop a balanced theology. The second would be for the researcher to provide consultation for the ADC's leadership to assist them with a review of the current curriculum of Boyani ADC theological college. Boyani ADC theological college is a resourceful tool because it is a recognized organ of the church. Thus, it will help in the planning of the training of both the practicing clergy and students who will use their training in helping the denomination to restore the correct Trinitarian theology and other dogmatic themes.

5.5 THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY TO THE WORLD OF AIC RESEARCH

This study makes a positive contribution to AIC scholarship in various ways, based on the assumption that the ADC shares a similar theological orientation with the rest of the AICs, as was established in the literature review. First, the research contributed to the world of AIC scholarship the value of developing a missional hermeneutic. A missional hermeneutic puts in place the theological principles drawn from the ecumenical creeds in shaping an understanding of the role played by the Godhead in salvation history. These hermeneutic guides in embracing the Bible as one story that needs to be read and understood as one narrative. Rooting a missional hermeneutic in the unity of the Triune God is fundamental for AIC hermeneutics.

Secondly, a strong Trinitarian theology for AICs can be developed through the framework of the ecumenical creeds, which proposes theological guidelines for developing a balanced Trinitarian theology. The ecumenical creeds may not be recited per se, but their theological components are essential in developing and evaluating Trinitarian theology. A properly developed Trinitarian theology determines the understanding of the shared economic role of the Godhead. This study suggests how

AICs could move towards a Trinitarian theology through a study of the Trinitarian perichoresis that the ecumenical creeds preserve. Although perichoretic relationality is devolved in their distinctive economic operations, such devolution does not lack a collaborative unity among the members of the Godhead. This can help AICs to direct the discussion concerning the involvement of the Godhead in human affairs as a complementarity, in which each person of the Trinity enhances the role of the other. For AICs, this means that in as much as the Holy Spirit is considered as the one who took over after Christ's ascension, it does not mean that Christ was replaced but only that his role is being accomplished, and his person glorified together with God the Father.

The third contribution to the world of AIC scholarship is the developed Spirit Christology that aims at preserving the place of Christ in the Trinitarian mission. As established in the empirical study, the de-emphasis on the place of Christ results from the apparent passivity of Christ in such themes as divine healing, miracles, prophecy, and Spirit baptism, which are all attributed to the Holy Spirit. Additionally, AIC theology can benefit from this study where it proposes a balanced Christology from below and above, as the ecumenical creeds affirm. This helps to root AIC Christology in the affirmations of the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian creeds that Jesus Christ is both God and man. This, therefore, necessitates the collapse of the ancestral Christology model through which many AICs create a means to embrace the place of ancestors in their worship. This approach provides for both AICs and African Christian theology in general a framework for addressing and developing Christology that is free from the influence of ancestorology.

Lastly, this study benefits AIC scholarship by establishing a balance between the philosophical Trinity as laid out in the ecumenical creeds and the lived theology of AICs. AICs can achieve this balance by bringing into a dialogue both the academic philosophical Trinity and the lived theology that is rooted in feelings and experience. The dialogue would take cognizance of the fact that philosophical and academic exercise is important in putting into propositional form what feelings and experience may not be able to defend. At the same time, feelings and experience cannot be replaced by a philosophical construct, since AICs are contextualized churches whose reality is rooted in demonstrative experientialism that defines part of who an African is. The AIC scholarship can benefit from this study in the sense that excesses towards

either philosophy or experientialism can be addressed by embracing the philosophical issues about the Trinity in the ecumenical creeds, but also by allowing the human person to understand their relationship within the Trinity experientially. In this case, philosophy informs the experience of what the Trinity is, while experience brings to philosophy a human concept of feeling, which is an aspect of African theology and worship.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Considering the empirical study towards the establishment of the ADC's Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community towards the place of Christ in Trinitarian mission, the following are suggestions for future studies.

There is a need to study the doctrine of eschatology in the ADC to ascertain the role of Christ in the church. Christ brings to view the doctrines of the church and eschatology, in which his place is key in developing the understanding of these doctrines. The role of Christ in these theologies places him at a unique and higher place compared to the human ancestors. Thus, it will help to establish further the place of Christ and his incomparability with the African ancestral model of Christology. Additionally, this will help establish the ADC's theology concerning the state of the departed souls, thus establish the biblical and theological position regarding the departed souls.

There is a need to study the ADC's doctrine of soteriology, which will further help to locate the place of Christ in the Trinity. The role of Christ in salvation as a pointer to the Christological sacrifice brings about the concept of him qualifying the divine standard to satisfy the justice of God. The justification of this demand locates Christ in the Trinity as God, who only at the level of God offered the right sacrifice for human redemption. This finding will seek to root the involvement of Christ in human affairs as a continual work as opposed to the supposed passivity that the empirical study confirmed.

The researcher recommends a further study on the ADC's Pneumatology in relation to the rest of the members of the Trinity. This will seek to establish Pneumatology that is both biblical and Trinitarian. Moreover, it will help to address the prominence of the Holy Spirit in the ADC's Trinitarian mission.

The researcher recommends the study of prayer and revelation in the ADC. This will seek to find out the place of human physical and charismatic engagement in worship as well as the centrality of the Trinity in the doctrine of revelation, which are key concepts in the ADC narrative and lived theology.

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1. KEY:

ADDENDA ON PERMISSION FOR EMPIRICAL STUDY

Addendum A: The ethics clearance certificate

Addendum B: Letter from the promoters NWU

Addendum C: NACOSTI permit

Addendum D: Clearance letter from the Ministry of Interior & Coordination of National Government, County Commissioner of Vihiga

Addendum E: Permission of authority to carry out the research from the Ministry of education State Department of Early Learning and Basic Education, County Education office

Addendum F: Letter of goodwill from ADC leadership

ADDENDUM A: THE ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



Private Bag X1290, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222
Fax: 018 299-4910
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Senate Committee for Research Ethics
Tel: 018 299-4849
Email: nkosinathi.machine@nwu.ac.za

28 October 2019

ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY

Based on approval by the **Theology Research Ethics Committee (TREC)** on 28/10/2019, the Theology Research Ethics Committee hereby approves your study as indicated below. This implies that the North-West University Senate Committee for Research Ethics (NWU-SERC) grants its permission that, provided the special conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the study may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

Study title: Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community: The place of Christ in the African Divine Church of Kenya.																														
Study Leader/Supervisor (Principal Investigator)/Researcher: Dr Caroline Seed & Prof Dries du Plooy																														
Student: M Titus Ingaboh																														
Ethics number:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>N</td><td>W</td><td>U</td><td>-</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>9</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>9</td><td>-</td><td>A</td><td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">Institution</td> <td colspan="3">Study Number</td> <td colspan="3">Year</td> <td colspan="3">Status</td> </tr> </table>			N	W	U	-	0	1	9	0	1	-	1	9	-	A	6	Institution			Study Number			Year			Status		
N	W	U	-	0	1	9	0	1	-	1	9	-	A	6																
Institution			Study Number			Year			Status																					
Status: S = Submission; R = Re-Submission; P = Provisional Authorisation; A = Authorisation																														
Application Type: Single Study																														
Commencement date: 2019/10/28		Risk Category: Minimal																												
Expiry date: 2020/10/27																														
Approval of the study is initially provided for a year, after which continuation of the study is dependent on receipt and review of the annual (or as otherwise stipulated) monitoring report and the concomitant issuing of a letter of continuation.																														

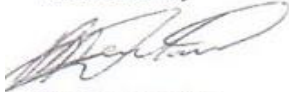
Special in process conditions of the research for approval (if applicable):

General conditions: While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, the following general terms and conditions will apply: - The study leader/supervisor (principle investigator)/researcher must report in the prescribed format to the TREC: - annually (or as otherwise requested) on the monitoring of the study, whereby a letter of continuation will be provided, and upon completion of the study; and - without any delay in case of any adverse event or incident (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the study. - The approval applies strictly to the proposal as stipulated in the application form. Should any amendments to the proposal be deemed necessary during the course of the study, the study leader/researcher must apply for approval of these amendments at the TREC, prior to implementation. Should there be any deviations from the study proposal without the necessary approval of such amendments, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited. - Annually a number of studies may be randomly selected for an external audit. - The date of approval indicates the first date that the study may be started. - In the interest of ethical responsibility, the NWU-SCRE and TREC reserves the right to: - request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the study; - to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modification or monitor the conduct of your research or the informed consent process; - withdraw or postpone approval if:
--

- any unethical principles or practices of the study are revealed or suspected;
 - it becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the TREC or that information has been false or misrepresented;
 - submission of the annual (or otherwise stipulated) monitoring report, the required amendments, or reporting of adverse events or incidents was not done in a timely manner and accurately; and / or
 - new institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary.
- TREC can be contacted for further information or any report templates via Rudy.Denton@nwu.ac.za.

The TREC would like to remain at your service as scientist and researcher, and wishes you well with your study. Please do not hesitate to contact the TREC or the NWU-SCRE for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely

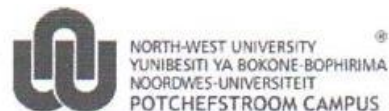


Prof Rudy Denton
Chairperson NWU Theology Research Ethics Committee

Original details: (22351930) C:\Users\22351930\Desktop\ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY.docm
8 November 2018

File reference: 9.1.5.4.2

ADDENDUM B: LETTER FROM THE PROMOTERS NWU



Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: +2718 299-1111/2222
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

FACULTY OF THEOLOGY
Tel: +2718 299 1845
Fax: +2718 299-4800

2019-11-11

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Titus Makusi Ingaboh (30941636) is a registered PhD candidate at North-West University, Faculty of Theology. His research title is:

Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community: the place of Christ in the African Divine Church of Kenya.

Titus has received Ethics Clearance from North-West University to undertake this research. (Certificate # NWU-01901-19-A6)

The study leaders for the research are:

- Dr Caroline G. Seed
- Prof. ALR du Plooy

We would like to ask for permission for Titus to conduct his research in Kenya between 20/11/2019 and 27/10/2020.

Should you have any questions concerning the research, please contact Dr Caroline Seed on Caroline.Seed@nwu.ac.za

Thanking you in anticipation,

Yours sincerely

Dr Caroline Seed

Prof. ALR du Plooy

ADDENDUM C: NACOSTI PERMIT

 REPUBLIC OF KENYA	 NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
Ref No: 430844	Date of Issue: 12/December/2019
RESEARCH LICENSE	
	
This is to Certify that Mr.. Titus Ingaboh of North-West University, has been licensed to conduct research in Vihiga on the topic: Trinitarian Ecclesiology and the Missional Community: The place of Christ in the African Divine Church of Kenya for the period ending : 12/December/2020.	
License No: NACOSTI/P/19/3073	
430844	
Applicant Identification Number	Director General NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
	Verification QR Code
	
NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.	

**ADDENDUM D: CLEARANCE LETTER FROM THE MINISTRY OF
INTERIOR & COORDINATION OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT, COUNTY
COMMISSIONER OF VIHIGA**

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



THE PRESIDENCY
MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND COORDINATION OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

Email: vihigacc1992@gmail.com
Telephone: Vihiga0771866800
When replying please quote

COUNTY COMMISSIONER,
VIHIGA COUNTY,
P.O. BOX 75-50300,
MARAGOLI.

REF: VC/ED.12/1 VOL.III/63

14th January, 2020

All Deputy County Commissioners,
VIHIGA COUNTY.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION-MR. TITUS INGABOH

This is to introduce to you Mr. Titus Ingaboh of North West University to carry out research on
*"Trinitarian Ecclesiology and the Missional Community: The place of Christ in the African
Divine Church of Kenya"* in Vihiga County for a period ending *12th December, 2020.*

Kindly accord him all the necessary assistance.

C.GITAU
FOR: COUNTY COMMISSIONER
VIHIGA COUNTY

COUNTY COMMISSIONER
VIHIGA COUNTY

**ADDENDUM E: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT THE RESEARCH FROM
THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION STATE DEPARTMENT OF EARLY
LEARNING AND BASIC EDUCATION, COUNTY EDUCATION OFFICE**



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EARLY LEARNING AND BASIC EDUCATION

Telegrams:
Telephone: (056) 51450
When replying please quote

COUNTY EDUCATION OFFICE,
VIHIGA COUNTY,
P.O. BOX 640,
MARAGOLI.

REF: CDE/VC/ADM/VOL.2/39/159

14th January, 2020

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT RESEARCH
Mr. TITUS MAKUSI INGABOH

Reference is made your letter 30th August, 2020.

Permission is hereby granted to the above named student from The place of Christ in the African Divine Church of Kenya to carry out research on **"Trinitarian Ecclesiology and the Missional Community" in Vihiga County – Kenya** to enable him write a thesis as required of him by the Institution.

Kindly note, in order for the office to be informed a copy of the same be shared with the County Education office for intervention purposes upon completion of the research.


Hellen Nyang'au
FOR COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
VIHIGA COUNTY

for:
County Director of Education
Vihiga County

Copy to:

County Commissioner
VIHIGA



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EARLY LEARNING AND BASIC EDUCATION

Telegrams:
Telephone: (056) 51450
When replying please quote

COUNTY EDUCATION OFFICE,
VIHIGA COUNTY,
P.O. BOX 640,
MARAGOLI.

REF: CDE/VC/ADM/VOL.2/39/159

14th January, 2020

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT RESEARCH
Mr. TITUS MAKUSI INGABOH

Reference is made your letter 30th August, 2020.

Permission is hereby granted to the above named student from The place of Christ in the African Divine Church of Kenya to carry out research on **"Trinitarian Ecclesiology and the Missional Community" in Vihiga County – Kenya** to enable him write a thesis as required of him by the Institution.

Kindly note, in order for the office to be informed a copy of the same be shared with the County Education office for intervention purposes upon completion of the research.


for:
County Director of Education
Vihiga County
Hellen Nyang'au
FOR COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
VIHIGA COUNTY

Copy to:

County Commissioner
VIHIGA

ADDENDUM F: LETTER OF GOODWILL FROM ADC LEADERSHIP



AFRICAN DIVINE CHURCH

HEADQUARTERS BOYANI
GOD FIRST

P.O. BOX 907 - 40100
KISUMU
TEL: 0202030328
E-mail: afridichurchboyani@yahoo.com

Our Ref:.....

Your Ref:..... 05/07/2018

NWU/GST
Ethics Committee
South Africa

Ref: Goodwill permission /consent for Rev. Titus Makusi Ingaboh

I hereby grant goodwill permission to the above named Student who intends to undertake his academic research in African Divine Church of Kenya in, Western region in Vihiga County. The topic of his research is *Trinitarian Ecclesiology and Missional Community in African Divine Church in Kenya*. This subject is relevant and of great benefit to our denomination African Divine church because it will help to document our narrative theology for posterity.

We expect that the student will only work without any due deviation from the course and intention of his assignment. The African Divine Church Vihiga County welcomes Rev. Titus Makusi Ingaboh to work with us in accomplishing the said research task.

Finally we promise to give Rev. Titus Makusi Ingaboh the maximum moral and spiritual support he needs in doing his study because it will add to our theological resources.

Grace and Peace
Yours In – Christ Service,
For: **AFRICAN DIVINE CHURCH**



REV. JOHN S. J. CHABUGA
(ARCHBISHOP)



St. John 15:1-17

CC.
Organization of African Instituted Churches (OAIC)-Programme for Theology and Ministerial Formation

ADDENDUM G: ECUMENICAL CREEDS

ADDENDUM G1: THE APOSTLES' CREED

Introduction

While there is no verifiable written word for word representation of the Apostles Creed prior to 340 A.D., we can be confident that the Apostles Creed is the most accurate representation of the Christian Faith in the form of a creed. The Saints taught what they called "The Rule of Faith" which is essentially the Apostles Creed. The early church had no codified defined creeds as we have today. The Christian teachings were handed down through the preaching of the Saints. The early church taught what is basically in the Apostles creed, yet, they never had a written form of their teaching and called it "The Apostles Creed."

The Creed

The Apostles' Creed

1. I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.
2. And in Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, our Lord;
3. Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary;
4. Suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell;
5. The third day He rose again from the dead;
6. He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
7. From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.
8. I believe in the Holy Spirit.
9. I believe a holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints;
10. The forgiveness of sins;
11. The resurrection of the body;
12. And the life everlasting. AMEN.

Formatted by James Richardson 3/24/2016.

<http://apostles-creed.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Apostles-Creed.pdf>

ADDENDUM G2: THE NICENE CREED

Introduction

The Nicene Creed, also called the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, is a statement of the orthodox faith of the early Christian Church, in opposition to certain heresies, especially Arianism. These heresies disturbed the Church during the fourth century, and concerned the doctrine of the Trinity and of the person of Christ. Both the Greek, or Eastern, and the Latin, or Western, Church held this Creed in honor, though with one important difference. The Western Church insisted on the inclusion of the phrase and the Son (known as the Filioque) in the article on the procession of the Holy Spirit, which phrase to this day is repudiated by the Eastern Church. Though in its present form this Creed does not go back to the Council of Nicaea (325 A.D.), nor to the Council of Constantinople (381 A.D.), as was erroneously held until recent times, it is in substance an accurate and majestic formulation of the Nicene faith.

The Creed

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made.

Who, for us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again, with glory, to judge the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life; who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spake by the prophets. And I believe one holy catholic and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. AMEN.

Formatted by James Richardson 4/04/2016.

<http://apostles-creed.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Nicene-Creed.pdf>

ADDENDUM G3 : THE ATHANASIAN CREED

Introduction

This Creed is named after Athanasius (293-373 A.D.), the champion of orthodoxy over against Arian attacks upon the doctrine of the Trinity. Although Athanasius did not write this Creed and it is improperly named after him, the name persists because until the seventeenth century it was commonly ascribed to him. Another name for it is the Symbol Quicunque, this being its opening word in the Latin original. Its author is unknown, but in its present form it probably does not date back farther than the sixth century. It is not from Greek Eastern, but from Latin Western origin, and is not recognized by the Greek Church today. Apart from the opening and closing sentences, this symbol consists of two parts, the first setting forth the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity (3-28), and the second dealing chiefly with the

incarnation and the two natures doctrine (29-43). This Creed, though more explicit and advanced theologically than the Apostles' and the Nicene Creeds, cannot be said to possess the simplicity, spontaneity, and majesty of these. For centuries it has been the custom of the Roman and Anglican Churches to chant this Creed in public worship on certain solemn occasions.

The creed

- (1) Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the catholic faith;
- (2) Which faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. (3) And the catholic faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity;
- (4) Neither confounding the persons, nor dividing the substance.
- (5) For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son and another of the Holy Spirit.
- (6) But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit is all one, the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal. (7) Such as the Father is, such is the Son and such is the Holy Spirit.
- (8) The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate, and the Holy Spirit uncreate.
- (9) The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Spirit incomprehensible. (10) The Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Spirit eternal.
- (11) And yet they are not three eternals, but one eternal.
- (12) As also there are not three uncreated nor three incomprehensibles, but one uncreated and one incomprehensible. (13) So likewise the Father is almighty, the Son almighty, and the Holy Spirit almighty;
- (14) And yet they are not three almighties, but one almighty.
- (15) So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God; (16) And yet they are not three Gods, but one God.
- (17) So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Spirit Lord; (18) And yet they are not three Lords, but one Lord.

- (19) For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge every person by himself to be God and Lord;
- (20) so are we forbidden by the catholic religion to say: There are three Gods or three Lords.
- (21) The Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten.
- (22) The Son is of the Father alone; not made nor created, but begotten.
- (23) The Holy Spirit is of the Father and of the Son; neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding. (24) So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits. (25) And in this Trinity, none is afore, nor after another; none is greater, or less than another.
- (26) But the whole three persons are co-eternal, and co-equal.
- (27) So that in all things, as aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped. (28) He therefore that will be saved must thus think of the Trinity.
- (29) Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation that he also believe rightly the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- (30) For the right faith is that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and man.
- (31) God of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; and made of the substance of His mother, born in the world.
- (32) Perfect God and perfect man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting.
- (33) Equal to the Father as touching His Godhead, and inferior to the Father as touching His manhood. (34) Who, although He is God and man, yet He is not two, but one Christ.
- (35) One, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the manhood into God. (36) One altogether, not by the confusion of substance, but by unity of person.
- (37) For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ;
- (38) Who suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose again the third day from the dead; (39) He ascended into heaven, He sitteth on the right hand of the Father, God Almighty;
- (40) From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. (41) At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies; (42) And shall give account of their own works.
- (43) And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting, and they that have done evil into everlasting fire. (44) This is the catholic faith, which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved.

Formatted by James Richardson 4/04/2016.

<http://apostles-creed.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Athanasian-Creed.pdf>

ADDENDUM G4 : THE CHALCEDONIAN CREED

Introduction

The Chalcedonian Creed was adopted in A.D. 451 at the Fourth Ecumenical Council in Chalcedon (Located in what is now Istanbul). It primarily establishes the Orthodox doctrine of Christology.

The Creed

We, then, following the holy Fathers, all with one consent, teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man, of a reasonable soul and body; consubstantial with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the

Manhood; in all things like unto us, without sin; begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, according to the Manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, unconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ; as the prophets from the beginning have declared concerning Him, and the Lord Jesus Christ Himself has taught us, and the Creed of the holy Fathers has handed down to us.

Formatted by James Richardson 3/24/2016.

<http://apostles-creed.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Chalcedonian-Creed.pdf>

ADDENDUM H: A SECTION OF OAIC CONSTITUTION

Adopted from OAIC constitution

8.1 Basis of Faith

OAIC member churches confess their faith:

In one God revealed in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

In God the Father who created and sustains the world;

In God the Son, who became fully man in Jesus Christ; through whom the world is redeemed and evil overcome;

In God the Holy Spirit, who speaks through His people and His prophets, who empowers people with His gifts of healing, prophecy, and preaching, for service and witness in the world;

In the Holy Bible, both Old and New Testaments, as God's Word through which God reveals Himself to people and as therefore an authoritative guide for faith and life.

8.2 Categories of Membership

There shall be three categories of members that is to say:

- a) African Instituted Churches in Africa and in the Diaspora
- b) Para-church organizations (Church Associates)
- c) Charitable Institutions (Fraternal Associates)

8.3 Eligibility and Application for Membership: Churches

- a) Any African founded Church that believes in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, the Holy Trinity and the Christian Doctrine as declared in the Apostles' Creed and accepts the OAIC basis of faith as set out in Article 8.1 above is eligible for membership on production of its constitution and a certificate of registration as a Church or any other legal evidence to support registration or government recognition.
- b) Applications for membership shall be made in a prescribed form and submitted to the Executive Committee of the respective OAIC Region/Chapter. Where there is no Chapter applications shall be submitted to the Executive Committee of the respective Region.
- c) The application for membership shall be accompanied by a recommendation by 2 fully paid up member churches.
- d) The Executive Committee of the respective Chapter or Region as the case may be shall scrutinize the application and may reject or approve it by a two-thirds majority vote at a duly convened regular meeting.
- e) Registration fees shall be determined by the OAIC International Executive Committee from time to time
- f) The OAIC International Executive Committee shall set annual membership fees applicable to different categories of member churches.
- g) Annual membership fees will be paid during the first quarter of every calendar year.
- h) Member churches that are not fully paid up will lose their right to vote in OAIC meetings.

ADDENDUM J: QUESTIONNAIRE

Trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community: The place of Christ in the African Divine Church of Kenya.

This guided questionnaire focuses on the African Divine Church's trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community to revisit its theology on the place of Christ and his function in the Missio Dei.

I know you as a leader and member of ADC will agree with me that the church is rapidly growing numerically in the country and thus there is need to have a written theology of ADC. This interview seeks to engage with you so that your views will help provide an evaluation process towards establishing a balanced trinitarian ecclesial and missional theology of the place of Christ in formulating a written ADC theology.

Questions

Please mark your response with a X in the appropriate box

1. God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit are involved in salvation **YES ☐ NO ☐**

If yes, explain the work of each.

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.....

2. Do you think God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit are all involved together in healing ministry?

YES ☐ NO ☐

Explain your answer.

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3. Do you believe in baptism in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit? **YES** ☐ **NO** ☐

Explain your answer.

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4. Is the mission of the church same as the mission of God? **YES** ☐ **NO** ☐

Explain.....

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5. Do ancestors have a place in prayer and worship? **YES** ☐ **NO** ☐

Explain.....

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6. Is ADC a Roho/ Spirit church? **YES** ☐ **NO** ☐

Explain.....

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.....

7. Is African community related to the community of God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit?

YES ☐ **NO** ☐

Explain.....

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8. Do the colors of the church flag represent the church's mission? **YES** ☐ **NO** ☐

Explain.....
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9. Does the Holy Spirit have central place in the songs, preaching and prayer of the church?

YES ☐ NO ☐

Explain.....
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.....

10. What makes a church in your view?

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ADDENDUM K: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Trinitarian Ecclesiology and the Missional Community: The Place of Christ in the African Divine Church of Kenya.

This guided interview focuses on the African Divine Church's trinitarian ecclesiology and the missional community to revisit its theology on the place of Christ and his function in the missio Dei.

I know you as a leader and member of ADC will agree with me that the church is rapidly growing numerically in the country and thus there is need to have a written theology of ADC. This interview seeks to engage with you so that your views will help provide an evaluation process towards establishing a balanced Trinitarian ecclesial and missional theology of the place of Christ in formulating a written ADC theology.

Questions:

Historical

1. Please summarize how you understand the history of ADC.
2. In your view how did the name ADC come about?

Practical

3. Kindly explain the importance of loud prayers and stamping of feet when praying.
4. How are the flag and its colours important to ADC mission?
5. In your view how does beating of drums help during prayer and worship?
6. Please give some information about baptism.

Theological

7. What do you believe about God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit?
8. What do you believe about the Trinity?
9. What is your understanding about mission?
10. What do you believe about community?

11. What is prophecy and how does it come about?

12. In your own opinion what is the importance of ancestors?

13. What do you believe about healing?

14. When is a person said to be spiritual?

Thank you very much for your cooperation and contributions. In case you might have any other relevant information to this don't hesitate to call me.

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