.

Dichotomies between Mainstream churches and African Indigenous Churches: A Practical Theology exploration of ancestral veneration.

Sam Tlali Dipali

Submitted in according with the requirements of the

Doctor of Philosophy in Practical Theology

In the subject Practical Theology

at the

University of South Africa

Supervisor: Prof Gordon Dames

December 2023

.

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned hereby declare that this thesis is my own work, both in conception and execution.



……

Sam Tlali Dipali

.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The journey has been long and tough, but I want to give Glory and Praise to God Almighty. I also want to thank my wife (Ntile) and my two sons (Ditebogo and Malebogo) for their support during difficult times.

I also want to thank Mrs Nokwazi Ndlala, Mrs Yakhe Kwinana, and the Ngakantsi family for their financial support throughout my studies. I thank Bonolo Mohlakoana for her initial editorial work and Tlamelo Matsheka for her prayers.

To all My Spiritual mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters and all of my Ancestors (Bakubung), I salute “Lesedi-Khanya.”

And to my Supervisor, Prof Gordon Dames, I salute.

.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my late mother Susanna Motlalepula Wesi

Thank you “Ankale”

And to my late grandmother Caroline Wesi

Thank you “Mma”

.

ABSTRACT

The subject of ancestral veneration has existed in the African communities and in our different churches for a long time; especially within the African Indigenous churches, where it is prominent. It is also visible in the Mainstream churches but was ignored up until it shows negative impact on the church, and then attempts to address it are considered. I grew up in the context of a household where my mentors-grandparents belonged to firstly, Mainstream church, which did not subscribe to ancestral veneration and secondly, belonging to the African Indigenous church in which ancestral veneration was recognised. My grandparents had different uniforms for these two churches and the worshiping approach towards the services of two churches was different. This difference between the two churches used to confuse me. As I grew up and I observed some dichotomies between the two church which at times create tension between its different members.

Therefore, this study, theologically explores dichotomies between Mainstream and African Indigenous churches regarding ancestral veneration, employing the doctrinal, liturgical and cultural approaches of the Mainstream and African Indigenous churches to arrive at the conclusions. Twenty-four interviews were held involving twenty-four willing participants which were randomly selected from Mainstream and African Indigenous churches. It is out of those interviews that I was able to analyse data, insights and concluded that there are beneficial similarities between the two churches and dichotomies which create tension between the churches and thus need to be addressed by both of them.

.

ABSTRACT – TRANSLATED IN AN AFRICAN LANGAUGE

Taba ya ho ananela badimo ke kgale ele teng Afrika le ka hara dikereke tse fapaneng ka nako e telele haholoholo jwang direkereng tsa Afrika (African Indigenous churches) moo ho ananela badimo ho etswang haholo. Ho ananela badimo ho teng dikerekeng tsena tsa sekgowa (Mainstream churches) empa ha ho elwe hloko ho fihlella hoba le ditlamorao tse mpe ebe hona ho bang le maiteko a ho bua ka yona kananelo ho badimo.

Ke hotse maemong a bophelo moo Nkgono le Ntatehomolo e neng ele ditho tsa dikereke tsena tse pedi; ya sekgowa e neng e sena taba le kananelo ho badimo, hape ele ditho tsa kereke ya Afrika moo kananelo e neng ele teng. Nkgono le Ntatemoholo ba ne ba ena le mefuta e fapaneng ya diaparo tsa dikereke tsena mme le ho atamela kgumamelo ho tsona ho ne ho fapane haholo. Ke hotse taba ena ke sa e utlwisise hantle ebile e mpherekanya hloho.

Ke ka moo, ho entsweng dipatlisiso tse tla shebanang le kutlwisiso sa sedumedi ka kananelo ya badimo mahareng a kereke ya sekgowa le ya Afrika. Ho bile le ho nyonya maikutlo moo ba nka karolo ba mashome amabedi le bone ba ile ba araba dipotso tse tshwanang. Dikarabo le di tshwaelo tsa bona di thusitse haholo phitlhellong ya ho fumana hore ho na le botle ba ho tshwana le bobe ba diphapang mahareng a dikereke tsena tse tlo hlokang hore di lokiswe.

.

Contents

ACRONYMS....13

List of Indigenous Terms....14

Chapter 1: Towards a Practical Theology exploration of ancestral veneration. 15

1.1 Introduction....15

1.2 Background....16

1.3 Research process....19

1.3.1 Experimental knowledge....20

1.3.2 Prior theory and research....22

1.3.3 Pilot and Exploratory Research....22

1.3.4 Thought Experience 23

1.4 Theoretical framework 23

1.4.1 Problem statement 23

1.4.2 Practical Theology....26

1.4.3. How does this study fit in the field of practical theology? 29

1.5 Purpose of the study 29

1.6 Aim of the Research 29

1.7 Objectives of the study....30

1.8.1 Qualitative research....31

1.8.2 Narrative research 31

1.8.3 Sample 34

1.8.4 Research Sample....36

1.8.5 Data Collection 37

1.8.6 Data Analysis and interpretation 37

1.8.7 Ethical consideration....39

1.9 Limitation of the study 40

1.10 Definition of terms used in this study. 40

1.10.1 Mainstream churches....40

1.10.9 Anthropology....42

1.10.10 Metropolitan 42

1.10.11 Hypothermia....42

1.11 Practical considerations....43

1.12 Conclusion and Recommendations....43

Chapter 2. Practical theological framework....44

2.1 Details of the six churches identified in the research....45

2.1.1 Methodist Church of Southern Africa....45
2.1.2 Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa....46
2.1.3 The Anglican Church of South Africa....48
2.1.4 Zionist Christian church....48
2.1.5 Church of Christ Assembly....50
2.1.6 Ethiopian Church of South Africa....51
2.2 Literature Review....51
2.2.1 Dichotomies....52
2.2.2 Ancestral veneration....53
2.2.3 Mainstream churches....58
2.2.4 African Indigenous Churches....59
2.2.5 Christian Worship....67
2.2.6 African Worship....75
2.2.7 African practices and rituals....77
2.2.8 Christian practices and rituals....79
2.2.8.5 Advent....81
2.2.8.6 Lent....81
2.2.8.7 Pentecost....81
2.2.8.8 Holy Communion....81
2.2.9 Anthropology and land....81
2.3 Summary....85
2.3.1 The church prior to the 1994-democratic dispensation in South Africa....85
2.3.2 The response of the church to apartheid prior to 1994 in South Africa: Social cohesion- "Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu."....89
2.3.3 African Spirituality....90
2.3.4 Traditional African Spirituality (TAS)....90
2.3.5 African Traditional Religion (ATR)....91
2.4.1 Old Testament....92
2.4.2 New Testament....95
2.5 Identified dichotomies between Mainstream churches and AIC....98
2.5.1 In house dichotomies....98
2.5.2 Traceable dichotomies....99
2.5.2.1 Historical dichotomies....99
2.5.3 Christian-Spirituality-dichotomies....100
2.5.4 Academic dichotomies....102
2.5.5 Theological and doctrinal dichotomies....102

2.5.5.1 Ordination. 103

2.6 Theological exploration of Ancestral Veneration. 104

2.6.1 Ancestral veneration in Ecclesiology. 104

2.6.3 Ancestral veneration in Eschatology. 109

2.6.6 Western Missionaries. 113

2.6.7 Morality of ancestors. 115

2.6.10 Ancestors v/s Saints. 117

Chapter 3: Research Methodology. 122

Introduction 122

3.1 Population. 122

3.2 Research design 123

3.3 Difference between qualitative and quantitative. 123

3.4 Social Construction Perspective. 124

3.5 Sample Method. 125

3.6 Data Collection. 125

3.7 Procedure. 126

3.8 Data analysis and interpretations 126

3.9 Ethical considerations. 128

3.10 Conclusion 130

Chapter 4: Research Findings. 131

Introduction 131

4.2 Subsidiary questions. 132

4.2.1 What are the main differences between Mainstream churches and African Indigenous churches? 132

4.2.2 Essence of participants' responses on the question- What are the main differences between Mainstream churches and African Indigenous churches? 136

4.2.3 How can we look at Jesus Christ as the great ancestor? 136

***4.2.4* Essence of participants' responses on the question- How can we view Jesus Christ as the great ancestor? 139**

4.2.5 How can Christian denominations find synergy in how they approach ancestral veneration in their respective spaces? 139

***4.2.6* Essence of participants' responses on the question- How can Christian denominations find synergy in how they approach ancestral veneration in their respective spaces? . 141**

4.2.7 How can the Christian community practice inclusive and contextual Christian ministry?(This means how Christian community worship, praise, preach and pray in such a way that it speaks to the current voice, current demands, and expectations of themembers?). 141

4.2.8 Essence of participants' responses on the question- How can the **Christian community practice inclusive and contextual Christian ministry?(This means how Christian**

community worship, praise, preach and pray in such a way that it speaks to the current voice, current demands, and expectations of themembers?). 143
4.3 The essentials of the findings: 144
4.3.1 Oneness of God: 144
4.3.2 Tolerance and respect in respect of the view of Ancestral Veneration 145
4.3.3 Differences between Mainstream and AIC: There are differences in theology,doctrines, and teachings regarding the Ancestral Veneration. 146
4.3.4 Conflicting in understanding ancestral veneration. 146
4.3.4.1 Ancestors. 147
4.3.1.2 Western invasion. 147
4.3.1.3 Africanization 148
4.3.1.4 Biblical perspective. 149
4.3.4 Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu: 149
4.4 Summary 150
4.5 Summary of important findings. 151
4.5.1 Biblical interpretations. 151
4.5.2 Jesus as the great ancestor. 152
4.5.3 Doctrines. 152
4.5.4 Western invasion. 153
4.5.5 Zionist Christian Church (ZCC). 153
4.5.6 Conflicting views on ancestors 153
4.5.7 Dichotomies on ancestral veneration. 154
4.5.8 Similarities. 154
4.6 Usage of research findings. 154
4.7 Field notes/ Observations 155
Chapter 5: Data analysis and interpretation. 157
5.1 Introduction. 157
5.2 The Oneness of God 158
5.3 Unity of the church. 159
5.3 Witness of the church. 160
5.4 Unity of the church as a homogeneous principle. 161
5.5 Conflict amongst churches. 162
5.6 Understanding the role of ancestors. 162
5.6.1 Ancestors. 162
5.6.2 Role of Ancestors. 163
5.6.3 Ancestors and God. 165

5.7 Conflict in understanding ancestral veneration.....167
5.7.1 Perceptions. 167
5.7.2 Confusion caused by Western invasion.....168
5.7.3 Africanization as a solution. 169
5.7.4 Contextualization. 170
Chapter 6: New Discoveries, Conclusions and Recommendations. 172
6.1 New Discoveries. 172
6.1.1 Veneration of God. 172
6.1.2 Theology of co-existence. 173
6.1.3 Baptism.....173
6.1.4 A church not in synchronicity with its member's spiritualties. 174
6.2 Conclusion. 175
6.2.1 Introduction. 175
6.2.2 Mainstream churches and African Indigenous churches. 180
6.2.3 Is Christianity African? 181
6.2.4 Finding coherence between Christian Spirituality and African spirituality. 182
6.2.4.1 Coherence. 183
6.2.5 Dichotomies because of Perceptions and Conflicts. 184
6.2.6 Perception.....184
6.2.7 Conflicts. 186
6.2.8 Religious Exceptionalism. 187
6.2.9 Land and Anthropology.....189
6.2.9.1 Land. 189
6.2.9.2 Anthropology.....189
6.3 The role of the church in managing and resolving dichotomies related to ancestral veneration.....190
6.3.1 The church. 191
6.3.2. The society. 192
6.3.3 The role of the church in resolving conflict. 192
6.3.4 Pastoral care. 193
6.4 Recommendations.....193
6.4.1 Ecumenical conversations. 193
6.4.2 Religious tolerance. 194
6.4.3 Education. 194
6.4.4 Back to the Roots. 195
6.4.5 Recommendation for further research. 195

.

6.5 Conclusion. 195

Bibliography. 197

List of Appendixes. 205

.

ACRONYMS

MCSA - Methodist Church of Southern Africa

CCA - Church of Christ Assemblies

AIC - African Independent Churches

ECSA - Ethiopian Church of Southern Africa

ZCC - Zionist Christian Church

ELCSA - Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa

AIC-African Indigenous Churches

TAS-Traditional African Spirit

ATR-African Traditional Religion

DEWCOM-Doctrines, Ethics and Worship Committee

.

List of Indigenous Terms

- Mphabadimo – An event honoring the ancestors by slaughtering a sheep or goat or cow for them. It also involves drinking of African beer and inthe early hours of the morning, the family that has performed the ceremony will have private time to speak to their ancestors using a slaughtered animal as a symbol.
- Tebello - A night vigil. It takes place on the eve of the funeral
- Lebollo - An initiation school for boys
- Izinkonzo zo moya - The churches regarded as “spiritual churches”
- Sangoma- Traditional doctor
- Manyanos- Organisations
- Ho mata terese- To run in a circle or with bare feet
- Phiri- Sesotho/ Isizulu surname which means “wolf”
- Mthimkhulu- IsiXhosa surname which means “big tree”: Grootboom- Afrikaans surname which means “big tree”
- Ubuntu- humanity
- Makhetha- Sesotho surname

.

Chapter 1: Towards a Practical Theology exploration of ancestral veneration.

1.1 Introduction.

The Mainstream churches and African Independent churches (AIC) have been in existence for a long time and were predominantly visible in the rural, semi-urban and prevalent in urban areas, including metropolitan areas. Chikane (1992:118-122) asserts that churches have been there and at times used as hiding places by political activists during the apartheid era and they understood God as God of liberation and that to find refuge in the churches was to find liberation. Despite their co-existence as churches, visible signs of differences have also been there. These being signs of doctrinal, liturgical, and cultural practices approaches. Such differences have in some incidents created unnecessary tension between the Mainstream churches and AIC (Kgatle & Mashau, 2023).

This study seeks to explore the dichotomies currently experienced in the worship practices between the Mainstream churches and AIC. As indicated above, these were two different groups of churches co-existing and were visible in the communities and doing Christian ministry. Yet despite their presence, there were also visible differences between them which at times caused tension and discomfort. Kgatle and Mashau (2023) identify such a difference in how churches view unveiling of tombstones which is a practice within the scope of ancestral veneration. It is a problem because one observes then, in both churches, an element of disrespect regarding ancestral veneration. This is also observed during normal conversations at funerals and during sermons conducted by these churches. This study, therefore, seeks to look at the dichotomies between these churches using the doctrinal, liturgical and cultural practices of these churches and to do a theologically exploration on to ancestral veneration.

.

1.2 Background.

I was raised by grandparents whom when I was as young as ten years old, introduced me to firstly faith in God and secondly to the Mainstream churches and African Indigenous church (AIC). By Mainstream Church, I am referring to a group of Protestant denominations with roots deep in the American experience. They include Baptists, Congregationalist, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterian (Bibletools. org, 2023). My grandparents would attend the Methodist church of Southern Africa (MCSA) regularly on Sunday-mornings and in the afternoon of the same Sundays, they would change and wear other clothes of a different church and the new service will start inside the "*mokhukhu*" (zinc house) in our backyards. I do not remember the name of the church, but it had followers. During worship and singing in the Sunday afternoon service, drums and clapping of hands will take place to stimulate singing and worshipping whilst other congregants will be running around in circle "*Ho mata terese*" (to run in circles during the church service) will happen.

It is from that age that I came to understand the existence of the Mainstream churches and the AIC, and I grew up wrestling, and yet fascinated by the differences in their doctrinal, liturgical, and cultural practices as I know them now. Most of the time, maybe twice a year, my grandparents will slaughter a cow and or sheep and, in the afternoon, congregants will gather to feast and thank and venerate ancestors for life. The purpose of and the symbolism of slaughtering a sheep or a cow was to uphold the tradition of the elders through generations of communal feasts. This was done so that the community could come together and no one in the community or village should feel alone and feel poor. Moreover, the slaughtering represents the sacrifices to the ancestors which continues to be common among Africans. Wepener, Esias and Meyer (2011:4) cite that slaughtering is not only limited to church services in the AIC. It is also done during weddings, for reconciliation, for initiations of boys and girls, at the funeral for washing of hands and for "the washing of pickaxes." The washing of hands is a ritual performed after completing the burial rights at the graveyards. It is believed that you cannot enter the house of the bereaved or eat with your hands full of the soil from the graveyards. It is regarded bad luck. Equally so, washing pickaxes serves the same purpose. The slaughtering is still happening in some Mainstream churches, but it is not for ancestral veneration but for people to simply eat especially after a long service such as Good Friday

.

service.

The Mainstream churches and AIC continue to co-exist and is evident during pre-funeral prayers, *"Tebello*," (night vigil). This is the service held on the eve of the funeral. People will gather in the late afternoon to receive the deceased one and will hold prayers the whole night, comforting the family until the next day of the funeral. They also meet during and in cultural gatherings such as *"mphabadimo," (*ceremony of food and drinks dedicated as a gift to ancestors*)* and "*lebollo*" (initiation school) gatherings. This event is a celebration of boys who successfully underwent a process of initiation at the mountain. They can spend one month to six months at the mountain being taught how to be men and their penis foreskin is removed as a mark of being men.

The cultural gatherings mentioned above are attended by members of Mainstream churches and AIC despite the knowledge differences between them such as their views on ancestral veneration, preaching styles and their biblical interpretations to mention a few. These cultural events are attended with a clear view that they (gatherings) are part of the broader way of life called African Spirituality. Kgatle and Mofokeng (2023) look at the recent "strange actions" done in the church by some pastors and attributes the root of such actions to the negative contributions by missionaries who made black people feel inferior. Kgatle and Mofokeng (2023) continue to say it is that inferiority complex which over the years engulfed the mind of African people and that as Africans begin to decolonize themselves and their faith from western missionaries, they get confused on what is right and wrong and end up with such practices of eating rats and snakes as a form of worship.

Notwithstanding the influence of missionaries, Mainstream churches and AIC belong to the same communities and are interrelated. Oosthuizen (1996:308) asserts that the relationship which now exists between the Mainstream and the AIC has arisen up the negative influence of missionaries it will be wrong to contrast the Mainstream and AIC because as time evolve from the past to current, one church is born out of another and vice versa. Therefore, this means there is an understanding of unity amongst the members of Mainstream and AIC. For instance, during a funeral led by a Mainstream church, the AIC will come and support the process and join in praying, singing and worshipping and this will happen vice versa.

.

The relationship between Mainstream churches and AIC cannot only be explained by their actual pastoral participation in the community engagement but extends further to the sharing of membership. Firstly, there are members who attend the Mainstream churches and AIC. Watts, Nye, & Savage (2002:59) call this sharing of membership "double denominating" and caution ministers to be aware of double denominating because it has the potential to be destructive to the ministry of the church. I understand the destruction to the ministry to be in relation to different doctrines and beliefs which may develop within the double denominating congregants. This may be two different Mainstream churches or two different AIC and or one Mainstream churches and AIC. A congregant will attend the Sunday morning Mainstream church service and, in the afternoon, or late Saturday night attend the AIC service.

Anderson and Pillay (1997:227) report that AIC put their emphasis on the Holy Spirit, divine healing, exorcism, prophecy, revelation. This is different from the Mainstream churches, and it is my observation that some people from Mainstream churches would visit the AIC for healing purposes and then return to their Mainstream churches. Olawo (2021:52) mentions that such people from the Mainstream visit the AIC because they regard their sickness as being cursed and only the healing, exorcism, prophecy, and revelation in the AIC can help them. The view is that AIC appeals to both Christianity and traditional forms of healing. Therefore, it raises the question: Why are the Mainstream churches not practicing healing regarding their healing purposes like AIC?

Secondly, there are many Mainstream church members who trace their faith from the AIC churches but have crossed over to the Mainstream churches. This has happened across the different demographics of our communities. For example, in the past, members from the AIC would be part of the Mainstream churches because there were not enough of AIC in most of the metropolitan towns where they worked. Currently, the trend has changed because there is evidence of growing numbers of AIC in the metropolitan cities.

On the other hand, the migration of members of AIC from rural places to urban places is not caused entirely by the lack of the AIC in some parts of the country but is an influential migration. Some influences are caused by people looking for a better life for their family. Segetti and Landau (2011: xiii) contend that one of the reasons why there is migration is due

.

to poverty, conflicts, and politically volatile inequality in Africa. This situation may also be traced within some rural areas in South Africa where there are no economic developments at all.

Despite this background, the way ancestral veneration is approached by the Mainstream churches and AIC still shows gaps which may influence how churches view ancestral veneration. For instance, during the night vigil gathering mentioned above, there will be a tolerated tension between the Mainstream churches and AIC churches on the reading and the preaching of the certain scriptures. AIC will preach and interpret Exodus 3-God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in an ancestral veneration tone because the AIC preachers have no hermeneutical tools and skills of homiletics, hence their interpretation of Exodus 3 is such, meaning God is simply at the center of history in a nutshell. This is supported by Wepener, Mbaya and Barnard (2011:258) when they say members of the AIC do not consider academic qualifications of leaders to be the source of faith, but leaders should be led by the Holy Spirit. In other words, it is not hermeneutical tools which drive them but the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, Mainstream may interpret that scripture from an intellectual point of view, using tools such as exegesis to preach. During the welcoming of boys from the initiation school, the Mainstream churches will pray and thank God for saving the boys during their times at the mountain and AIC will thank the ancestors who were with the boys during the initiation period and then acknowledge God in the process.

1.3 Research process.

This study is presented with four modules as listed by Maxwell (2005) which are looked and are used to create a journey of thinking this study, namely: (1) Experimental knowledge, (2) Prior theory and research, (3) Pilot and exploratory research and (4) Thought experience. In this study, all four modules are used to investigate the doctrinal, liturgical and cultural practices of the Mainstream churches and African Indigenous churches and attempt to create a new concepts, beliefs, expectations and theories.

.

1.3.1 Experimental knowledge.

Experimental knowledge helps me to cover three points which are interrelated and labels them as “Experimental data.” They are: (1) Personalbackground, (2) Personal experience and (3) Technical knowledge/gathered knowledge.

1.3.1.1 Personal background.

It is Maxwell (2005) who cites that separating research from the researcher’s own personal life cuts off a major source of insights and hypotheses, validity, and checks. This then brought subjectivity of the researcher into the research which traditionally is viewed as bias. Maxwell (2005) then deals with this “biasness” and says it is inevitable that subjectivity will always play a role in research, particularly when the research methodology is qualitative.

However, one must treat this very carefully so that the study does not become one’s personal biography, because it would lose its focus and its objective as a study of a specific topic. In other words, it must be managed so that it does not overly influence the results of the study and eliminate facts but in a way that ensures that the subjectivity and the fact- finding of the study work together.

It is my responsibility to be objective in my study and I will not allow emotions to run over my thinking. As such I will manage this situation of subjectivity in a way that I constantly remove my personal and emotional views from the research.

Apart from the data which is collected from the participants and the consultation of the relevant literature, my personal background of having grown up inside the Mainstream churches and AIC play an important role in this study because it is helping me to identify the differences in the doctrinal, liturgical, and cultural practices of the Mainstream and African Indigenous Churches.

1.3.1.2 Personal Experience.

.

I have observed that Mainstream churches and AIC use one Bible and preach from it, they take pastoral work such as visiting the bereaved families very seriously and they worship by singing different hymns to one and the same God. Despite these common shared things, their approach is different. It is one God who is served but still these two churches are different. For example, the singing in the AIC is more robust and traditional in nature whilst the Mainstream churches are formal and modern. My observation is that preaching and singing in the AIC are spontaneous and flowing whilst the Mainstream churches are formal, structured and written for example, the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (Mainstream church) uses hymn books with written songs and prayers and the Zion Christian Church do not have such, but they preach and singing spontaneously. I have also observed that due to the co-existence of the Mainstream and AIC, both churches have begun to complement each other by incorporating some of their songs and styles of worshiping on each other. For example, the AIC will sing hymns which are originally written by Mainstream authors and the Mainstream churches have begun to use drums and clapping of hands in their services, a practice originating from the AIC style of worship. Praying is also different, prayer in AIC will for example say "*Modimo wa Bo Nkgono le Bo Ntate-moholo*" (God of our grandfathers and grandmothers) and the Mainstream churches will say "*Modimo wa Abrahama-Isaka le Jacob*" (God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), (Matthew 22:32). Kindly note the hypocrisy here of the Mainstream by calling the names of the biblical forefathers as if they are not ancestors and secondly, how the Mainstream in Africa choose to respect forefathers foreign to them.

Most of the time, I found myself trapped in between the two churches. I would attend the Mainstream churches and come back fulfilled and equally so attend the AIC and the feeling will be thesame. I was and continue to be pulled by the worship spiritualties of both the churches and at times, it is confusing and conflicting. Conflicting because, for example, I would be in the liturgical Mainstream churches with their hymns and organised well written prayers and I would be singing songs and hymns with the chant and style of the AIC. What comforts me is that both the examples of the Mainstream churches and AIC, the liturgy and different approaches of worship, all falls under Christian Spirituality,

1.3.1.3 Technical knowledge/gathered knowledge.

I am observing and learning that AIC worship practices revolve around African cultures, beliefs,

.

and rituals to a much greater extent. Therefore, it can say that AIC are more Afrocentric, which according to Lebaka (2019:110), implies a system which places itself at the center of African cultural beliefs and involves the study of African people. Furthermore, Lebaka (2019:110) argues that Afrocentricity is a perspective that allows Africans to be subjects of historical experiences rather than objects of European interests. In other words, African should allow themselves for look at life and the world with African lenses not western lenses which are not imposed on them but are familiar and they can resonate with African world view.

Lebaka (2019:112) suggests that studies such as this one must be conducted within the African space with Africans participating from the beginning to the end because if a paradigm shift must be developed in this study, it has to be from the perspective or practice of ancestral veneration, which Africans are best suited to describe.

1.3.2 Prior theory and research.

Maxwell (2005) describes theory as "a set of concepts and ideas and the proposed relationship amongst them and it is also a structure that is intended to capture or model something about the world." In other words, it is bringing a newly developed concept which was constructed from looking at concepts, ideas, and assumptions from the word. In this study, such prior theories involving doctrinal, liturgical, and cultural practices differences about ancestral veneration by Mainstream churches and AIC are looked into and are used to construct new opinions.

A different but similar explanation of what a theory is, is given by Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (2010:9) as they describe both theory and research as a set of documents consisting of the topics, methodologies, and collection of data, analysing of data, reading, and writing up. The available literature on the topic of this study has been looked at and used in this chapter and the following chapters. My personal background, as alluded to in the background session of this research, is helpful because it contains oral history of the Mainstream churches and AIC. Furthermore, literature from both African and western scholars is being looked at and care is taken so that I do not overwhelm myself with lot of data, lest I close a sense of the true focus of this study.

1.3.3 Pilot and Exploratory Research.

.

Maxwell (2005) claims that most good research and valuable research projects had to go through vigorous process of going back and forth. In mathematics, piloting and exploration would be used to test and solve equations and in the field of science, they would prove scientific theories. This research focuses on dichotomies between Mainstream churches and AIC and in doing so, integrates doctrinal, liturgical, and cultural practices differences between the two churches with theological exploration of ancestral veneration.

Taking an exploratory approach includes listening to the views, the answers and the responses of the people involved in the research. In this case, responses came from participants and exploratory piloting was used in the framing of the subsidiary questions of the study to see whether they will yield what the study intends to achieve.

1.3.4 Thought Experience.

In trying to understand "thought experience," Maxwell (2005) describes it not as the predictions of the future but as the reality of the present future. Maxwell (2005) also uses the phrase "what if" as the key in understanding the work of thought experience. "What if" is in used biology and in social studies such as economics to speculate and make conclusions on theories presented in a study. In this study, "thought experience" is used to investigate practical theology which should help in making sense of the present realities of this world. It also helps me to come up with a conclusive finding. Meaning, I must answer whether there are doctrinal, liturgical, and cultural practices dichotomies regarding ancestral veneration between the Mainstream churches and AIC or not, in case there are, explain them in the research.

1.4 Theoretical framework.

1.4.1 Problem statement.

Whilst acknowledging the co-existence of the Mainstream churches and AIC, the dilemma of their doctrinal, liturgical, and cultural difference practices should not be ignored. Kamoso (2012:94) mentions that the word 'independent' distinguishes the AIC theologically from the rest of Mainstream churches because it needs to establish its identity as self-reliant and to stand as mission grounded. The Mainstream churches have not been entirely dependent because they were on the receiving end from the western influence which dictates how it

.

should do its mission.

Secondly, the AIC is renowned for symbolism in worship. Starting from music and dancing which is said to be "spontaneous emotionalism" (Kamoso, 2022:94). Olukayode, Fatokun and Abu (2015:5) cite that the spontaneous emotionalism is demonstrated by AIC as the clapping of hands, dancing, body movement, the noise generated and gesticulation during worship. Klomp (2011:7-8) adds that during worshipping, congregants feel the sense harmony with self, others. Their spirit of humanity becomes evident amongst them, and this becomes fulfilment of worship. This means the worshipping of the AIC is not structured,it is not controlled by time, it's not liturgical but it's spontaneous. This is different from worshipping in the Mainstream churches which is more structured, written and controlled by liturgy.

Thirdly, the worship of the AIC is holistic towards life. This means that AIC pray and thank God for body, mind, and soul and on the other hand, the Mainstream churches are more focused on the soul of the person and the rest are secondary (Kamoso, 2022:94). The AIC worship is regarded as pneumatological in nature; meaning there is traditional spirit possession within the AIC, whereas the Mainstream recognises the presence of the Holy Spirit but does not immerse itself in this spirit though its worship is also driven by the Holy Spirit (Kamoso, 2022:95).

Fourthly, Kasomo (2022:95) criticizes the AIC by alluding to the fact that, the AIC do not have any theological training and therefore, their definition of the Holy Spirit cannot be justified.

Fifthly, the AIC worship Christ from the perspective of the parent ancestor or the brother ancestor and the Mainstream churches worship with no reference to any ancestral title such brother or parent ancestor; Christ is recognises only in relationship with the Trinity (Kamoso, 2022:97). On the other hand, the Mainstream churches believe in the resurrection of the dead but believes in the soul and the shape of that resurrection is not important immaterial if the soul is with God.

It is assumed that the doctrinal, liturgical, and cultural practices in the AIC are influenced by many factors such as the formation of churches and how they pray, preach and worship. Masondo (2014) notes that one of the core theological and doctrinal difference is that the AIC are also called "*izinkonzo zomoya*" (Churches of the Spirit) or churches regarded as spiritual

.

churches.Masondo (2014) makes it clear that this constitutes a theological mischief because it presupposes those other churches do not have the spirit or need the Holy Spirit. This mischief cannot only be located within the AIC and there are other Mainstream churches and Pentecostal churches who also claim that they are "izinkonzo *zomoya*" (Churches of the Spirit).

Masondo (2014) continues to say that European missionaries and colonial administrators displayed their overtly demeaning attitudes towards the AIC. This lack of respect and appreciation for African religion has informed, in numerous instances, the way in which African forms of religious thought and experience are treated even in democratic South Africa.

In support of Masondo (2014), Molobi (2005:6) claims that the AIC lived in the shadow of past experiences imposed on them by western influences, reasons, and theories. They were forced to define their lives, identity, religious and cultural practices according to western values. Not only did they define themselves, but also protected their practices and worships against western theological reasons and theories.

The name Mainstream is also judged to be of western origin as Conradie and Klaasen (2014:15; 17) state that some terms applied to the Mainstream churches were settlers, colonial, mission, multiracial and ecumenical and these are terms which are associated with western colonies. Conradie and Klaasen (2014:21) further explain that the word "mainline" originates from a train line in the city of Philadelphia in the United State which separated the rich people from the poor people. The definition of the term "mainline" clearly emphasises the western 'privilege' form of the Mainstream churches and how the name has no African origins.

Therefore, on one hand, there are the Mainstream churches, which have a western designed liturgy and does not recognises African ancestors and their spirits. In some instances, the acknowledgment of ancestors is regarded as pagan or evil worshipping. On the other hand, there is the AIC whose practices are embedded in the recognition of ancestral spirits and ancestral veneration. This difference constitutes doctrinal, liturgical, and cultural practices differences in understanding of ancestral veneration. It is due to such a difference that a narrative alluded to in the background of this study where migration of members from and to Mainstream churches and AIC becomes relevant.

.

Clearly there are conflicting views and perspectives on how Mainstream churches and AIC understand ancestral veneration in their doctrinal, liturgical, and cultural practices. This is a problem because their understanding of ancestors and specifically, ancestral veneration leads to tension and dichotomies. It may appear as if both churches worship two different gods and sometimes both churches are at conflict with each other.

It is in the light of the above observations that this study seeks to explore the dichotomies between the Mainstream churches and AIC with theological exploration of ancestral veneration.

The main question in the proposed study is therefore: What are the main dichotomies in the worship practices between Mainstream Christian and African Indigenous Churches in South Africa?

Subsidiary questions.

- What are the main differences between the Mainstream churches and AIC?
- How can we look at Jesus Christ as the great ancestor?
- How can Christian denominations find synergy in how they approach ancestral veneration in their respective communities?
- How can Christian communities practice inclusive and contextual Christian ministry? (In other words, how should Christian communities' worship, praise, preach and pray in such a way that it speaks to the voice, needs and expectations of their members with specific reference to veneration?)

1.4.2 Practical Theology.

This study falls under the field of Practical Theology. Anderson (2001:12) compares practical theology to a divine partner joining us, walking with us, and stimulating our reflections and inspiring us to recognise the world we live in. In other words, it helps us to be aware of what is happening in our world and make sense of the challenges and the discoveries of our surroundings. On other hand, Swinton and Mowat (2006:3) state that "practical theology is a web, and a mixture of relationships where different disciplines are in a relationship with each other." practical theology is thus of assistance in analysing and finding ways to deal with

.

doctrinal, liturgical, and cultural practices of these two churches.

Park (2010:3) claims that practical theology has elements and processes which are significant when dealing with a study in qualitative research. Park lists elements of practical theology as:

- Transformational- the duty of practical theology is to engage with the subject at hand, wrestle, and converse with it with the aim of constructing an outcome which will be transformational to the society. One such topic is what this study is looking into, that is ancestral veneration (Park, 2010:3).

- Contextual and situationally related-practical theology is better understood when it deals with contemporary issues. Issues that affect society currently and have an impact on a situation. Situations change from time to time, and it is the task of practical theology to be in par with content, context, and situation. An example of this is how the bible should be read from its ancient writings but be preached from current times (Park, 2010:3).

- Experimental-As mentioned above about the world we live in and mixture of relationships in practical theology. Experimenting and testing ideas and formulas which are part of the world is important. In other words, getting involved in challenges, weaknesses and strengths of society is significant (Park, 2010:3).

- Interrogative- practical theology does not and should look at things at face value and come to conclusions without going deeper into things or subjects. A deep look is required. Therefore, an interrogation on the subject at hand should be done so that when an outcome is reached or an opinion if formed, the required academic and intellectual work will be done. (Park, 2010:3).

- Interdisciplinary- practical theology is (to use an apt simile) like a three-legged pot cooking all types of ingredients or recipes to produce the one good spelling food. In other words, practical theology attracts other academic disciplines and mend them into one product (Park, 2010:3).

- Analytical and Constructive- When a subject is identified for investigation and data is collected, analyses of the data must be taken to verify the strength, validity, and

.

authenticity of it. Furthermore, constructive measures also must take place to ensure that useful data is extracted (Park, 2010:3).

- Dialectical and disciplined-This is about finding the truth by investigating and discussing opinions. With many opinions out there in the world, practical theology uses dialectical and disciplined methods to find truth, constructively criticised known opinion so that new opinions can be formulated (Park, 2010:3).

Park (2010:4-5) again cites the practical theology process. I understand this to mean that, once the elements of practical theology have been identified, a process must take place and Park (2010:4-5) cites the process as follows:

- Reflective- The process of practical theology must reflective, meaning deep thought has to take place. This may lead to back and forth on the matter as long it is thought accurately.

- Critical- As alluded earlier, critical thinking is important in practical theology so that when an opinion is presented, all gaps and cracks in thinking will have been dealt with.

- Communicative- The process will flow easily when there is good communication.

- Interpretive- With clear communication, data will be interpreted easily.

- Hermeneutical-There must be evidence of a theory and methodology of biblical texts in the processes of practical theology.

- Correlational dialogue- The process also helps with the integration of data and views. A correlating dialogue between different literatures with different opinions must be established. All the above intends to bring new meaning and horizons to specific contexts that are of special significance.

Having mentioned the above, practical theology is therefore important in dealing with a South African context where the Mainstream churches and AIC form part of that diverse public with different opinions, challenges, and believes. Powell (1999:8) asserts that a pluralistic

.

perspective is broad and touches all areas of our being; meaning how we judge, define what is right and wrong. Ancestral veneration is one such topic about which people have different views, opinions, and conclusions.

1.4.3. How does this study fit in the field of practical theology?

There should be a relationship between theory and praxis and the two must work together interchangeably. As Anderson (1999:14) puts it, theory alone is useless without praxis and vice versa. In other words, the practical everyday lives of the people are reflected upon theologically and it must make sense as to why and how life presents itself within communities. In this study, doctrinal, liturgical, and cultural practices differences between Mainstream churches and AIC are investigated, using the elements and processes of Practical theology as mentioned earlier.

In as much as the study is centered on the church dialogue, there is a strong possibility that this study may influence the view of the community in which these churches are part of. In other words, the scope of the outcome of this study may also benefit the community at large as is consistent with the aims of practical theology. Dreyer (2012:511) supports the understanding of the task of practical theology which is beyond the pastoral actions but should be seen as an 'outward' movement within South Africa which involves societal, political, and economic issues. This is also in correlation with the fifth objective, which reads “To create a conversation between Mainstream churches and AIC on how awareness of the values embedded in their traditions and how they can advance to the social capital of the country.”

1.5 Purpose of the study.

Following from the discussion above, the main purpose of this study is to explore the theological dichotomies between the Mainstream churches and AIC denominations, with specific reference to ancestral veneration.

1.6 Aim of the Research.

The aim of this research is to explore dichotomies between Mainstream churches and AIC with special reference to ancestral veneration to create a better interpersonal and interconnectedness relations and contribute to ongoing conversations between the

.

Mainstream churches and AIC. The conversations will help to highlight and deal with some suspected tensions and problems as alluded to in the problem statement, namely:

- The lack of respect by members of the Mainstream churches to the AIC in terms of ancestral veneration.

- AIC accusing the Mainstream churches of being too western and Mainstream accusing the AIC of living in the shadow of the past and very primitive. Above all of this, the aim is to educate, bring awareness, change the worldview of congregants of the Mainstream churches, AIC, and the society, and encourage religious and doctrinal, liturgical and cultural practice tolerances and differences of ancestral veneration within the worship practices of both the Mainstream churches and AIC. 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 reads: "*We were all baptized by one Holy Spirit. It did not matter whether we are Jews nor Gentiles, slaves nor free people. We were giventhe same Spirit to drink. So, the body is one with many parts.*"

1.7 Objectives of the study.

The main objective of the proposed study is to explore the theological dichotomy with special reference to ancestral veneration by framing the dichotomies between Mainstream churches and AIC. To achieve the objective of this study, the following objectives have reference:

- To establish the theological and cultural dichotomies in ancestral veneration between the Mainstream churches and AIC.

- To explore how ancestral veneration fits in the worship and ministry practices of the Christian Mainstream churches and AIC.

- To engage the Mainstream churches and the AIC churches into a conversation on how to foster healthy mutual co-operation between them.

- To create a conversation between Mainstream churches and AIC on awareness of the values embedded in their traditions and how they can advance to the social capital of the country.

.

1.8 Research Methodology.

1.8.1 Qualitative research.

This study uses qualitative research which according to Swinton and Mowat (2006:29) does not have a fixed approach rather favoring number of different methods falling under the umbrella of qualitative research, all of which focus on involving, interrogating, and interpreting the subject at hand.

1.8.2 Narrative research.

This study uses narrative research to collect data. De Vos *et al* (2011:313-320) describe narrative research in that it assumes that the life and the world of a person can be best understood from his or her own account and perspective and thus the focus on individual subjectivity, understanding and experience of life. Narrative research can help the researcher to allow the person interviewed to narrate his or her story in terms of his or her own perspective and experience. Life stories must be always viewed subjectively.

S**emi-structured** interviews (*see Appendix B*) with 24 participants representing the Mainstream churches and the AIC will be used to collect research data. Mouton (2011:342) describes semi-structured interviews as focusing on areas of a particular interest, while still allowing considerable flexibility in scope. De Vos et al (2011:343) describe an interview as an attempt to understand the world from the participant's points of view, to unfold the meaning of people's experiences and to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanation.

A set of four subsidiary questions will be posed to all 24 participants in a language preferred by participants and at a location preferred by participants. This will allow the participants to answer questions, and this will help the researcher to gather data. The interview questions focus on ancestral veneration between the Mainstream churches and AIC. Participants will then be expected to answer open-ended questions in such a way that they are not led or misled by the researcher but can comfortably give accounts on their own perspectives.

.

De Vos *et al* (2011:343-346) lists some of the techniques to be used by the researcher when conducting interviews such as:

- That the participants be asked one question at a time. This will give the participants enough time to focus and answer without the pressure of many questions.

- That the participants be asked truly open-ended questions because this will make participants to be free in how he/she answers questions without any limitation from the researcher

- That the researcher must avoid awkward and sensitive questions which will make the participants feel uneasy

- That the researcher must pose and direct the questions but not lead the participants to an answer. Participants must be the ones doing 90 percent of the talking in the interviews.

- That the researcher asks clear, brief, and straight to the point questions. This would have been informed by the set of questions available for participants. A follow up question from the researcher should also be clear, brief, and straight to the point.

- The researcher must create a safe space during the interview which will enable the researcher and the participants to ask questions when they do not understand. Questions of clarity may be asked.

- The researcher must ensure that time of the participants is not wasted by not keeping time. The researcher must remember that participants are helping him/her with their time, it must be respected. A suggested reasonable time may be (30 to 45 minutes).

- The researcher must remember that he/she is the one wanting data from the participants. Therefore, researchers must not act as if giving a lecture or show off because that may scare the participants and them to feel uncomfortable, in the worst scenario the participants may abundant the interview.

- The researcher must follow up with the answers and make sure that correct information is captured. Again, if need be, follow-up questions may be asked.

.

De Vos *et al* (2011:313-314) put the following as guidelines in the procedure for conducting narrative research:

- Select one or more people who have stories of life experiences to tell and spend time with them gathering information using sources of information. *This becomes a personal moment where the researcher interacts with the subject and listens attentively to the story. The researcher may note the points and probe to get the full details of what is being narrated.*
- Collect information about the context of these stories to situate them in a clear personal, cultural, or historical context. *Once the story telling is completed, the researcher can solidify, locate and put data in its correct position.*

- Analyse the stories with the aim to "re-story" (the process of reorganising the story into a new framework). *This becomes the "officialising" data, making sure it becomes academically accepted.*

- Negotiate and incorporate the relationship between the researcher and the researched to capture the story of "individuals unfolding." *The relationship between the researcher and the researched is now at the stage of incorporation and the assumption is that the researcher has gathered data and captured the story to the best of his or her ability to translate data into findings.*

On the other hand, Babbie (2007:92-94) list the following three purposes in dealing with narrative research:

Exploration- in other for the researcher to find and write about a topic, an exploration has to take a place where a researcher familiarise himself/herself with the content and surroundings of that topic. Exploration is useful for:

- The researcher satisfied his his/her curiosity and the desire for better understanding. Like the De Vos *et al* (2011:313-314) where the researcher interacts with the subject, here also a better understanding is important so that topic is written down for studying and investigation, proper due diligence has been conducted.

- To test the feasibility of understanding a more extensive study. The researcher must

.

ensure the possibility of the study and the desired outcome. Especially when dealing with a topic which is complex and difficult.

- To develop the method employed in any subsequent study. Once the researcher is clear on the topic and feasibility for doing such study is positive, then an appropriate study method will have to be chosen.

Description- descriptive studies answer the questions of what, where, when, and how. It is these questions that the researcher must wrestle with in his/her journey of the study.

Explanation- lastly, having explored study and its data and identified the study method, having dealt with the questions in the descriptive sections, the researcher turns into explaining why this process was taken and what good will come out of it.

Babbie (2007:308) further postulates that in the research, the researcher must:

- Think comparatively- in the current study, a comparison is made between two churches, and this help the in avoiding biases of one church over another church.

- Obtaining multiple viewpoints- consultation with different participants, consulting with range of different literature relevant to the subject is important.

- Periodically step back- research must be careful not to run to conclusions but now and then step back to reflect on the data collected in information from it.

- Maintain research skepticism- observe and tread all data with cautionary eye. The researcher should not believe all that is written and allow interrogation on the collected data.

1.8.3 Sample.

Purposive sampling **is used** in this research. De Vos *et al* (2013:392) describe purposive sampling as a sampling where the researcher must think critically about the parameters of the population and then choose the sample accordingly. In this study, purpose sampling helped in guiding to choose and to identify characteristics and attributes of the population which was going to serve the purpose of the study best. Whilst identifying the characteristics and attributes, it is therefore easy to focus on the study and not get lost along the way and find

.

myself outside the mandate of the research topic.

On the other hand, Etiken, Musa and Alkassim (2015:2) describe purposive sampling as the deliberate choice of a participant due to the qualities the participant possesses. It is a non-random technique that does not need underlying theories or a set number of participants. This means, the researcher is given an opportunity to take time and find the correct participants to fit the study intended.

The advantages and disadvantages of purposive sampling as per Rai and Thapa (2015:2) which are relevant for the purpose of this study:

Advantages of purposive sampling	**Disadvantages of purposive sampling**
Wide range of sampling techniques: the researcher is provided with a few techniques to use for the research. *In this study, one technique of one-to-one interview will be used*.	Samples can be highly prone to the researchers biased. The researcher is also prone to make weak judgments and take bias decision and findings. *In this study, the researcher must make sure that he/she does not get too personal with the subject, and end up being bias.*
Offer researcher with justification to make generalisation of data being studied: researcher can justify that there are theoretical, analytical, and logical of the data. *In this study, all the three justifications will be investigated.*	The subjectivity and non-probability-based nature of unit selection: it means it can be difficult to defend the findings of data. *In this study, the difficulty may rise from presenting with facts the findings from the data, particularly because the subject is rather sensitive and personal to some people.*

.

The researcher can draw from a wide range of non-probability sampling techniques: a topic or situation is first looked at and assessment is done whether it can be researched or not. *In this study, the* t i t l e *has been identified and found to be relevant to be researched.*	The knowledge of the population may not be fully known therefore, the methodcannot be used. *The study at hand will not have a problem with knowing the population because it is identified as two types of churches and denominations*.

1.8.4 Research Sample.

The participants in this study consist of the following:

Mainstream churches:

- Methodist Church of Southern Africa (4 participants) - two clergy and two lay leaders. Located in Mocoseng village near the city of Mafikeng, North-West Province, South Africa.
- Lutheran church (4 participants)-four clergy. Located at Montshiwa location in the city of Mafikeng, North-West Province, South Africa.
- Anglican church (4 participants)-four lay people. Located in Montshiwa location in the city of Mafikeng, Northwest Province, South Africa,

African Indigenous churches:

- Church of Christ Assemblies (4 participants) - one clergy and three lay people. Located in Motlhabeng Village near the city of Mafikeng, North-West, South Africa.
- Zionist Christian Church (4 participants) - four lay people. Located in two places, two participants in Unit one location in the city of Mafikeng and two participants in Lotlhakane village near the city of Mafikeng, North-West Province, South Africa.
- Ethiopian Church of South Africa (4 participants)-four lay leaders. Located in Magogwe village, near the city of Mafikeng, North-West Province, South Africa.

Rai and Thapa (2015:2) state that sampling is used:

- When the researcher must collect information from a wider area- in this study for instance, some participants were able to come the central place of the interview venue, but others had to be fetched by a car or be interviewed at their homes.

.

- The population is homogeneous in that the group of people to be interviewed share the same views more or likely and background. The population in this study are all Christians, they share six different Christian denominations in one city of Mafikeng.

- The study chooses qualitative research which is subject, and this makes it impossible to possible to adopt the census method where all members (in this study) of six identified churches will be interviewed.

1.8.5 Data Collection.

In this proposed study, data collection can be described as "experiment." Hox and Boeije (2005) say "the researcher has full control over participants and can manipulate one or more independent variable so as to obtain a representative sample and the validity of the responses from the participants." 24 participants from different churches within the Mainstream churches and AIC are going to be interviewed and participants will be given enough time to independently respond, and it was from their responses that data was collected.

1.8.6 Data Analysis and interpretation.

De Vos *et al* (2011:411) describe coding as "abbreviations of key words, colors dots, numbers-the choice is up to the researcher." Saldana (2013:17) states that the researcher can do pre-coding by circling, highlighting, or underlining significant words or sentences. Babbie (2007:400) states that coding is important when analysing and classifying data in qualitative research because it makes data to be orderly and the researcher can retrieve a particular set of data when needed. Saldana (2021:5) defines coding as "word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language- based or visual data." In other words, in the collection of data, coding is used to capture important words, keys, sentences, phrases that are important to be highlighted throughout the study.

These words are the ones who will shape the direction of the study. De Vos et al (2011:411) further state that researchers must start the coding process whilst they are collecting data and suggest these questions to be asked:

.

- What are people doing? What are they trying to accomplish?
- Exactly how are they doing it? What strategies are they using?
- How do they talk about, characterise and understand what is going on?
- What assumptions are they making?
- What is going on here? What do I, as a researcher, learn from these notes? What strikes me?

On the other hand, Smith and Davies (2010:155) argue that coding does not constitute the totality of data analysis, but it is a method to organise the data so that underlying messages portrayed by the data may become clearer to the researcher. This means that coding may not all be inclusive of data. There may be areas of information not captured by coding, hence it should be used as a method.

The other dimension about understanding coding is that of Mohajan and Mohajan (2022) as they describe coding as the pivotal link between data collection and explaining the meaning of the data. A *code* is a descriptive construct designed by the researcher to capture the primary content or essence of the data. In the proposed study, two sets with coloring of blue and yellow for coding were used. Blue represented the coding of the answers from the Mainstream church participants and Yellow represented the coding answers from the African Indigenous church participants.

Mouton (2001:108) asserts that data analysis includes the process of breaking up of the data into manageable themes, patterns, trends, and relationships to see whether there are any patterns or trends that can be identified or isolated or established as themes in the data. The aim of data analysis is to understand the various constitutive elements of one's data through an inspection of the relationships between concepts. From all interviews to be conducted, the relationships, patterns and similarities of the stories helped to analyse and interpret the data efficiently.

This view of data analysis by Mouton (2001:108) is further supported by Osmer (2008:4) who puts it that the researchers can draw on theories in the literature to explain why the patterns in the results occurred. De Vos *et al* (2011:402) give tips on how to manage data analysis and say the researcher should:

.

- Keep a diary to note the re-occurring words in the interviews.
- Critically evaluate the meaning of the words
- Identify themes coming from topic discussions.
- Read and re-read text and replay the audio recordings.

Patterns, trends, and the recurring themes are recorded so that data analysis can be factual and clear. This helped in compiling an inclusive and well-researched topic.

1.8.7 Ethical consideration.

De Vos *et al* (2011:114) describe ethics as a set of moral principles which is suggested by an individual or group. This is the ability of a person to identify and differentiate between right and wrong. Therefore, ethical considerations will be the preamble of every interview so that all always remains transparent. The following points should be observed and highly maintained:

- Ensure the integrity of the participants is not going to be harmed at all.
- Provide the participants with the choice to participate or not to participate.
- Ensure that consent forms are provided to the participants throughout the interviews.
- Ensure that the participants' privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality are not violated but protected at all times.

Mouton (2001:243) lists the right to privacy as:

- Have the right to refuse to be interviewed: Any participants have the right of choice to be interviewed or not. *Respect will be given to those who might have agreed to participate and then change their minds later.*
- Refuse to answer telephonic or e-mail questionnaires. *Other than the fact that telephonic and email interviews are not personal, it is still the right of the participants to refuse answering using telephone and email.*
- Refuse to answer any questions: *Participants will have the right to not*

.

answer any questions if they feel uncomfortable.

- Should not be interviewed at mealtimes: Lunch times are private times for people to eat and refresh. *The participants have the right not to be disturbed by interviews during that time.*

- Should not be interviewed at night. Some people use night-time as the time of rest and to be with their family. *The right to refuse to be interviewed should be respected.*

- Should not be interviewed for long periods: *The time which the participants have forthe interview needs to be observed and respected*.

Babbie (2007:67) adds that anonymity and confidentiality are important in the professional relationship of the researcher and the participant. This is the clearest protection of the subject at hand, all people involved in the study. At all times, the research must protect the identity of the participant if permission is not given to publish it.

1.9 Limitation of the study.

The interviews are done on six churches covering three AIC and three Mainstream churches, interviewing four participants in each, which will equal 24 samples of data. This limited the study from further exploring other denominations views on ancestral veneration and how they worship.

1.10 Definition of terms used in this study.

1.10.1 Mainstream churches.

Mainstream churches, also known as mainline churches, is a term used to describe the main traditional Catholic and Protestant denominations in the United States as differentiated from and on the theological left of evangelism. These denominations are viewed as having adopted more liberal theologies and open stance to the new ideas and societal changes while maintaining traditional practices regarding their public gathering and church polity. They tend to be influenced by higher biblical criticism, increasingly open to the ordination of women and less dogmatic regarding issues such as homosexuality and abortion. In general, they are more

.

focused on doctrine (Theopedia, 2011). Therefore, from the definition provided, one can conclude that Mainstream churches are originally foreign to African soil.

1.10.2 African Independent Churches.

African Independent Churches are also known as African Indigenous churches and African initiated churches. They are defined as “one which has been founded in Africa by Africans and primarily for Africans” (Chitando, 2005)**.**

1.10.3 Faith.

Different authors explain faith in different ways given their context and understanding of what faith is. For example, McGrath (2001:238) describes faith in its nature as firm commitment to a belief, which is not adequately justified based on the evidence available. It is concerned with how things of God may be known and how salvation may be grasped. Faith is that center that holds believers’ existence as a people of God.

1.10.4 African Spirituality.

Harvey and Adogame (2012:109) describe African Spirituality as a way of living by traditions and cultures by African people, which has been taught and preserved throughout generations. Harvey and Adogame (2012:109) further stated that “African Spirituality is embedded in the living traditions and cultures of African people in a way that it relates to other spiritualties in the world without being measured through or by them. African Spirituality provides a guide for the search of emerging African traditions in the study of African religions in the myths, rituals, and human agents who undergo ritual apprenticeship like priests, diviners, herbalists, kings, chiefs, and artists.” It is the type of spirituality where Africans can identify and find themselves as a community and people. Du Toit (1998:47) adds and brings the elements of the Holy Spirit and says that African Spirituality as expressed by black theologians is the experience of the Holy Spirit moving and communities to be life giving and life affirming. People celebrate spirituality in songs, rituals and symbols which show the energizing spirit animating the community to move in response to God.

1.10.5 Christian Spirituality.

Christian Spirituality can be defined as “disposition or internal condition of people when in

.

such a state as prepares them to recognize and fully appreciate spiritual realities, and such true spirituality is ultimately the result of the in-working of the Holy Spirit." It is shaping, empowering, maturity of the "spiritual person" that is a person who is alive to be responsive in the world of God (Tan, 2011:362-363). The source of Christian Spirituality is the Holy Spirit, which in the works of the Trinity, plays the role of the sustainer. It is in the gospel of John chapter 14:16 to 30 where Jesus promises his disciple that he will not leave them alone but with the Holy Spirit which will sustain them (The Holy Bible, 1971).

1.10.5 Christian Ministry.

The term ministry is derived from the Latin word ministerium which means "service." Therefore, Christian ministry becomes the service designated for bringing God's word to his people (Kolb, 1993:276).

1.10.6 Tradition.

The indigenous word, which is aboriginal or foundational, handed down from generation to generation, upheld and practiced by African even today.

1.10.7 Metropolitan.

Belonging to or typical of a large busy city (Cambridge Dictionary, 2019).

1.10.8 *Covid*-19.

Covid-19 is the disease caused by a new coronavirus called SARS-Cov-2 and the World Health Organization first learned of this new virus on the 31 December 2019, following a report of a cluster of 'viral pneumonia' in Wuhan, People's Republic of China (Departmentof Health, 2019).

1.10.9 Anthropology.

The study of human societies, cultures, and their development and the study of human biological and physiological characteristics and their evolution (Cambridge Dictionary, 2019).

1.10.10 Metropolitan.

Belonging to or typical of a large busy city (Cambridge Dictionary, 2019).

1.10.11 Hypothermia.

.

Exposure to extreme cold leads the body to shiver, and this can cause bacterial infections like listeria, pneumonia, and urinary tract infections (Cleveland Clinic, 2023).

1.11 Practical considerations.

Proper consultation with participants, agreeing on the venue and time for the interviews. The participants will not be forced to spend money to attend the venue and a safe, convenient place for both the participants and the researcher will be identified and agreed upon.

1.12 Conclusion and Recommendations.

1.12.1 **Conclusion.**

This study explores theological dichotomies between Mainstream churches and AIC with specific reference to ancestral veneration. In doing so, the main question of the study together with a set of four questions were developed as part of the qualitative research methodology. This study has identified a problem which has and may still have detrimental implications on Mainstream and AIC churches and if not dealt with, the problem will continue to cause attention to the churches and assumable to other denominations outside the scope of this study.

.

Chapter 2: Practical theological framework.

Park (2010:1) states that within practical theology, a framework can be identified which is an essential tool in the discovering, interpretation, transforming experiences and construction of Christian norms. It is a tool that is used in looking at contextual narratives and social constructionism and practical theology to obtain meaning from events and or situations and to construct preferred realities. Practical theological framework, as mentioned above, consists of narrative and social constructionism, amongst others. Park (2010:4) explains them:

Narrative is the journey told by looking into daily lives and circulating stories amongst the society. More-over, a narrative is also influences by the evolving human behaviour, actions, rules and opinions of the current times. Out of these narratives, can be collected and a new meaning of life can be constructed. Furthermore, the narrative is the main tool that helped us to discover ourselves and to begin seeking new ways of relating not only to one another but also to our mainstream churches and AIC, especially about ancestral veneration. It is part of inculturation.

Social constructionism, Park (2010:6) puts it that it "plays a role in all that humans do and think." It is a postmodern project which helps in managing the rapid pace of clashing realities in the current world. It encourages people to think critically alone but thoughts are better when collected. When these thoughts are grouped together, they can construct an epistemology which focuses on how people interact, modify, and maintain what their holds to be true, real and meaningful. Social constructionism id further discusses in chapter three of this study.

There are many different explanations about what practical theological framework is. The explanation by Magezi (2019:115) came close to what this study intends to achieve. Magezi (2019:115) asserts that practical theology is a committed tool to be used to live up to religion of living a life of faith, rather than the international intellectual or disciplinary reflections. Magezi (2019:119) continues to describe practical theology as an attempt to make sense of the life of faith in the world. Also, practical theology involves an attempt to bridge the gap between faith and God, and whilst doing so, deal with the realities of the world.

.

Therefore, chapter two intentionally looks further into the doctrinal, liturgical, and cultural practices between Mainstream churches and AIC's. In doing so, a brief definition of the **Churches identified** in this study is given, **relevant literature** is presented, and a **Theological exploration** of ancestral veneration is presented.

2.1 Details of the six churches identified in the research.

2.1.1 Methodist Church of Southern Africa.

According to the World Council of Churches (World Council of Churches, 2023), Methodism arrived in Southern Africa with British soldiers in 1806 but the mission began in 1816. It was from there where the missionaries spread the gospel throughout the country with different missions, opening the small churches and proclaiming the gospel. Africans were converted into Christianity and the church grew to where and what it currently: one of the biggest churches in South Africa with an estimated membership of 1700 000.

The MCSA has its mission statement stated as "God calls the Methodist people to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ for healing and transformation." It also has its vision stated, "A Christ-healed Africa for the healing of nations."

The MCSA (Yearbook 2019:3) states that "Mission- God's work" is at the center of the church's existence and hence it developed five mission pillars which are:

- **Spirituality** which deals with all spiritual activities in the church such as praying, preaching, meditating, visiting the sick at homes and hospitals, and responding to prayer requests from the community and members of the church.

- **Christian and Education formation** which deals with education of children and adults, schools visiting, career exhibitions and updating of the congregation about new policies of the church.

- **Economic and Human Empowerment** which deals with empowering members with different skills. Its focus is on youth unemployment, job creation and business start-up.

- **Justice and Service** which deals with evangelising to the community and doing

.

community work.

- **Evangelism and Church** growth which deals with evangelizing to the community and inviting community to be part of the church.

Theologically, the MCSA has four beliefs, which are the cornerstone of its understanding of the doctrine of Salvation. They are: (1) All people can be saved, (2) all people need to be saved (3) All people know that they can be saved and (4) All people can be saved to the uttermost (Methodist church in Ireland, 2019).

The people called Methodists believe in the inclusive church where "ALL" are welcome. None should be excluded except those who desire to exclude themselves. Some may refuse it, but all are offered it, because God has no favorites, the *"Imago Dei*" (the image of God*)* understanding of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa encompasses the knowledge of equality of all before God and the sense of belonging to it.

With regard to the title of this research, the MCSA with its conference resolutions attempted in my view to address the issue of ancestral veneration and the worshipping practices by crafting a resolution which reads *"The Methodist Conference resolved to encourage local circuits and societies to give greater priority to the ministries and services of healing and to, in greater depth by which this vital aspect of Christian Ministry may be exercised within our Connextion in a manner that is scriptural, contextual, inclusive andholistic. In this vein, it is our hope that healing wisdom inherent within African Spirituality be further explored to foster ministries of healing that are authentically rooted in a spirituality that is both deeply Christian and deeply African"* (MCSA 2019:78).

2.1.2 Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa.

According to the ELCSA (2023), the church originates from Germany formally known as the Hanoverian Evangelical Lutheran free churches mission which was founded in 1892 and is now known as the Lutherische Krirchenmission. It can be found in more than ten countries in Africa, and it trains its ministers in its own seminars where it focuses more on training and teaching of liturgy for order of services.

Theologically, the ELCSA, like the MCSA has many teachings, believes and theological theories.

.

One noticeable of this, is the theology of sanctification which according to Scaer (1985; 181-195) has ELCSA believing in confessions such as the Augsburg confession and the Small Catechism of Martin Luther. These two books deal with the subject of sanctification in relation to justification.

The vision of the ELCSA is stated as "liberated by God's grace a communion in Christ, living and working together for a just, peaceful, and reconciled world (LWF, 2023).

The values of the ELCSA are stated as those derived from Lutheran identity. They are a deeply rooted response to God's grace as revealed through Jesus Christ. They are:

- **Dignity and justice**- Each person is created in God's image, is gifted with talents and capabilities, and has dignity, irrespective of social statues, gender, ethnicity, age, ability,or other differences.

- **Compassion and Commitment**-Inspired by God's love for humanity, we seek to show care and compassion towards people who are suffering- the poor, the vulnerable and the marginalised, and minority populations and the faiths, who experience discreditation, violence and hardship in different contexts.

- **Respect for diversity**- Difference amongst us express the richness of God's creation. As a global communion of churches, we value and seek to understand our differences in culture, history, and context.

- **Inclusion and participation**- We are committed to being inclusive and enabling the full and equitable participation of women, men, people of all ages and the people with disabilities.

- **Transparency and accountability**- We are responsible stewards of the resources and the responsibilities that God has entrusted to us.

Regarding the title of this study, in particular the ancestral veneration part of the title, Nurnberger (2007:150-168) helps by identifying the following terminologies within the ELCSA theology:

- **Sola scripture**: the claim of Yahweh eliminated ancestor veneration from the biblical

.

tradition.

- **Solus Christus**: God is accessible in Christ and needs no ancestral mediation.
- **Sola gratia**: all conditions of acceptance are suspended.
- **Sola fide**: faith is trust in God's promise of the redeemed life.

Moreover, Nurnberger (2007:150-168) continues to warn that when dealing with ancestral veneration in the church, we ought to listen to African spirituality, biblical witness, the ecclesial tradition, and modernity. At all times, we must remember that there is a supreme being in which African spirituality is inclined to.

2.1.3 The Anglican Church of South Africa.

The origins of the Anglican Church in England are traced by Howe and Pascoe (2010:1-2) they emphasise that it was King Henry the VIII who created the Church of England as an ecclesiastical convince in the sixteen centuries. The Anglican Church seeks:

- To be anchored by the love of Christ.
- It is committed to God's mission.
- To be transformed by the Holy Spirit.

Like the MCSA, the Anglican Church has spread itself in most of the countries in Africa, particularly in Southern Africa led by the archbishop (The Anglican Church of Southern Africa, 2023).

Theologically, the church believes in one God who exists eternally in three Persons - Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit (The Anglican Church of Southern Africa, 2023).

2.1.4 Zionist Christian church.

The church was founded by Engenas Lekganyane and it is regarded as the largest church in Southern Africa. It has its roots in Africa and its membership is overwhelmingly African. It has its ideology assimilated into African culture and therefore believes in interpreting the scriptures in an authentic language. The church has its polity in its hierarchical system from both society and its mother church, the Apostolic faith mission (Moripe, 2023).

.

Kruger and Saayman (2014:27-38) put it that the ZCC members undertake yearly pilgrim to the mountain of Moriah in the province of Limpopo in South Africa. The purpose of this journey or pilgrim is to achieve seven motives which are:

- Spiritual fulfillment
- Inner peace
- Inner healing
- Faith exploration
- Congregation togetherness
- Personal fulfillment and
- Religious participation

According to Madise and Lebeloane (2007), the ZCC has predominantly a less well- educated membership in terms of literacy and therefore oral history becomes important to them. The church mission is simply "Gospel is transmitted to the people by the ministers" and this is not documented anyway. Similarly, the mission of the church is and will now and then be outlined by the leader of the church. It is also my view that the seven motives may not be well articulated by members, but they would come back fulfilled from the mountain.

Lebeloane and Madise (2007) continue to mention the following about the ZCC:

- Seating arrangement - because the ZCC is patriarchal, men and women do not mix and they sit differently.
- Dress code - different colors accruing to the church organisations such as men's league, women of union and others. Different colors for different "*manyanos*" (church organisations).
- Mpogo - is a common and favorite singing in the ZCC which can take two to three hours non-stop.
- Mokhukhu - this is the famous men's choir.

Theologically, the ZCC believes in adult baptism only and "*metsi a makgwetha" (*Holy water*).*

.

Regarding the title of the study, particularly the ancestral veneration, De Visser (2011:3-10) concludes that most of the members of the ZCC do recognise and venerate their ancestors even though the church prohibits such beliefs. In other words, ancestors are not mentioned or spoken about in ZCC.

2.1.5 Church of Christ Assembly.

Typical of the AIC, the CCA relies on oral history and not much has been documented on it. It is believed that it was founded by Mother Catherine Nqcelwane who dreamt at night and was instructed to start the church. Mother Catherine Nqcelwane continued to lead and serve the church and gave it identify, order or service and blue and white attire/uniform until he passed. She forever leaves in the heart of her followers in their thanksgiving praises. Currently the head office of the CCA is located at the city of Rustenburg in the North- West Province, South Africa.

Twice a year, members of the CCA undertake a pilgrim journey to Rustenburg as per instruction of Mother Catherine and there, they praise and thank God and spread the gospel. It is also twice a year where the CCA performs rituals of "*dihlabelo*" (burning sacrifices). This is the Old Testament ritual (Leviticus 17:11) to mention and it is still relevant because the order of service and the language and tiles used in the services of CCA is that of the Old Testament. For example, the congregants are called Israelites, the preacher is called Levite and the senior minister is called Priest. These are the titles used in the Old Testament.

The church can be classified under the umbrella of the "M*apostol*a" (Apostles) with their blue and white uniform and the drum beating tradition, but one minister of the church refused to be associated within the family of apostolic churches as available in South Africa. CCA has branches in less than three provinces in South Africa namely, the North-West, Gauteng and part of the Free State Province.

Theologically, the CCA believes in dreams and rituals, and it preaches the Gospel of Christ as the savior. Regarding the title of this research, CCA recognises and appreciates the existence of ancestors and part of their rituals is to venerate ancestors. Mother Catherine is regarded as one of their great ancestors. One minister narrated and said "moruti*, ha re rapele badimo, re rapela Modimo. Re etela mabitla, re eme godimo go ona. Mabitla ke pulpit ya rona, re*

.

*leboga badimo, mme re rapela Modimo (*We visit graveyards and give thanks to ancestors; graveyards serve as our pulpit where we pray God.) In my opinion, CCA regards ancestors respected, departed, elders of the clan that tradition should respect and uphold.

2.1.6 Ethiopian Church of South Africa.

Like the Anglican church named after the country of England, the Ethiopian Church of South Africa is named after the country in the east of Africa called Ethiopia, which, due to its Islam dominancy, is classified under the Arabic league with countries such as Egypt, Tunisia, and others in East Africa. The Ethiopian Christian church was the only church in the so-called Arabic league which resisted the pressure of Islamic invasion which was aggressive and oppressive in nature. Christians were subjected to heavy taxes and slavery, lest they convert to Islam (Azumah, 2014).

The Ethiopian Church in South Africa, like the original Coptic Church in Ethiopia, was formed in retaliation of White missionaries which wanted to impose their Eurocentrism ideologies and undermining the authentic African way of preaching. Much as the church is regarded as the oldest Christian church in Africa, ranking as the same age as the Orthodox Church of Egypt and others, in South Africa, it was established in 1892 by Mr. Mangena Mokone, who was originally a Methodist from Pietermaritzburg.

Theologically, the ECSA believes in the Holy Trinity (sallese), it believes in the feast of Epiphany and Eucharist as the most important ceremonies (Ethiopian Church of South Africa, 2023). Cobley (2009:356-371) adds that black people in South Africa had to deal with the painful struggle of the new economy, and different social and religious values brought by the white missionaries, and it was from that era that the "Ethiopian movement" was established against the friends and foes of missionaries. In respect to the title of this research, particularly the ancestral veneration, the ECSA as mentioned by Pollitzer (1984:126), has allowed its members to venerate ancestors as part of their African heritage.

2.2 Literature Review.

Literature that was relevant to this specific study was consulted. The title of this research suggested nine topics of literature: (1) Dichotomies, (2) Ancestral veneration, (3) Mainstream

.

churches, (4) African Indigenous churches, (5) Christian Worshipping (6) African Worship (7) African rituals and practices (8) Christian rituals and practices and (9) Land. Literature showed re-occurring trends of differences in defining what ancestral veneration was and the theological differences between the Mainstream churches and the AIC.

The main research questions and the subsidiary questions are investigated and are being used as navigating tools in identifying gaps and cracks in the literature review. This helps to collect, interrogate, analyse, interpret and summaries data from different authors so that the purpose of this research could be reached. Caution is exercised when writing, so that over or under literature reviewing is not done, as such all the topics are followed to the latter.

The main question of this study was what are the main dichotomies in the worship practices between Mainstream Christian and African Indigenous Churches in South Africa?

2.2.1 Dichotomies.

A dichotomy is a division or contrast between two things that are represented as being opposed or entirely different. This can imply two subjects which may have one direction but go opposite of each other (Britannica.com, 2023). There are many subjects in both the qualitative and quantitative (it may be in the field of theology or science) where a subject can be looked at, data from that subject be compared, contrasted and the differences be put on the table to contrast a new theory. Dascal (2008:293) writes that dichotomies by nature are ubiquitous in deliberative thinking and in decision making by people. They are also helpful in arguing in all spheres of life. Dascal (2008:293) cautions that it will be wrong to stick to and believe in one dichotomy in a debate or argument because that may lead one to unnecessary disagreements. In other words, dichotomies need to be looked at holistically and be interrogated to find something productive out of them.

In quantitative research for example, be it in science or mathematics, numbers and tables can be used to explore dichotomies and determine and make conclusions from those dichotomies identified. In qualitative research such as this one, dichotomies are to come from data collected from participants and other reading material. What is further important is to know what to do with information that arises from dichotomies. This is a matter which will be discussed in chapter five of this study.

.

Life is about perceptions, expectations, and perspectives. These things make life to be both difficult and yet dynamic at the same time. This is because of the complexities in how one looks at perceptions, for example. In the same way, dichotomies then help in resolving these complexities because we can differentiate views, that is, separating between what is wrong and what is right. It is by looking at dichotomies that people can make sense of what is happening around them. This study looked at dichotomies within the space of the church where two different churches believe in one God, but their worshipping practices, teachings and theologies are different and at some point, fight with each other. The point in case being that of understanding ancestral veneration. Seven types of dichotomies were identified throughout the study. Some were identified from the literature review, and some were from the data collected from the interviews. They are listed in the summary of literature review.

2.2.2 Ancestral veneration.

When looking at Ancestral veneration, Bae (2023) gives the debate on what is ancestral veneration: Is it a cult or worship? Bae (2023) defends the use of worship instead of cult by saying there is no evidence of apotheosis (the elevation of someone to divine status) of the ancestors. Additionally, Ro (1988:7) dismisses the word 'cult' in defining ancestral veneration.

As Bae (2023) attempts to explain and defend the definition of ancestral veneration, Nyamiti (1984:38) brings along another view of ancestral veneration by introducing ancestral veneration as a way of Africans looking at ancestors as intermediaries and mediators but become controversial by referring to God as an "impersonal God." Impersonal God is explained as the God who always supreme, albeit far removed from ancestors and the living.

Still on Ancestral veneration, Mokhoati (2018:3 & 4) adds to the debate by bringing the relationship between Jesus, ancestors and the living people and calls Jesus as "Brother ancestor" and addresses ancestral rituals and the significance thereof. Later, Molobi (2005:6) takes a biblical view and calls God as the Parent ancestor. These views will be partnered with the biblical books such as Galatians 3 verse 28 "*There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus*" (The Holy Bible, 1971).

Two arguments on ancestral veneration are presented by Geller (2012:18) when arguing that on Ancestral veneration and provides a narrative of two arguments. The first one being the

.

ancestral identity. By this, Geller (2012:18-19) presents an argument that not everyone gets to be an ancestor and moreover, there are different categories of the dead. The poor are categorised under “special dead” and the others then fall under “ancestors.” This argument by Geller (2012:18-19) is questionable as it contains conclusions which are insensitive to the reader.

On the other hand, Lim (2015:109) asserts that Ancestral veneration presents a conflict to the Christian church with its moral cultural implications. Part of this conflict is that of asking whether Christians can develop Christ centered communities that honor their ancestors without being prejudiced by non-Christians or other Christians who do not believe in ancestors. Molobi (2005:15) adds to the debate on how ancestral veneration carries spiritual responsibility amongst members, especially the AIC. Equally so, there is present literature on Mainstream and AIC which will form part of the literature review and be consulted.

Molobi continues to say that ancestral veneration carries a spiritual responsibility and a sense of unity, and that most members of the AIC view it as significant. For instance, true spirituality, to AIC, involves respect for parents, fighting for justice, coping with sickness, misfortunes, and witchcraft, as well as appeasing the ancestors. Breugel (2001:260) adds to this debate and brings the phrase “moral evil.” With it, Breugel (2001:260) argues that people are sometimes pushed into believing in things which they do not resonate or agree with. This is where ancestors are used as monsters to threaten others if they are not appeased. Again, ancestors are used as a scapegoat in responding to some current questions. Breugel puts it that it is wrong for those practicing ancestral veneration to continue quoting history in defense of their actions “*si ife tidayamba zimenizi, ndi makolo, tosno ife sitingaleke xa makolo athu*” translated as “we cannot abandon what they (ancestors) started.”

All South African languages has African name for ancestors. However, Setiloane (1988:77) goes further to give ancestors titles such as: “kinsmen, relatives, family, roots, and progenitors and …” and asserts that this was one of the ways in which the AIC opted to recognise and venerate the ancestors. Another part of this recognition is how the Holy Spiritis used by AIC in its theology which helped in Africanising Christianity. I understand this to mean that the AIC accepts that there is Holy Spirit but that the Holy Spirit has to speak to the African context and African worship. The Holy Spirit must be relevant to Africa. This statement, however, has the

.

element of pushing the debate on whether ancestral veneration is evil or cult or worship?

In responding to the above question, Anderson (1991:37) provides a Christians' view of ancestral veneration. In doing so, he cautions Christians not to be ambitious around this ancestral veneration which is complex and dynamic in nature. Anderson continues to say, before declaring ancestral veneration evil or cult, Christians need to locate the origins of ancestry and those origins are found in African, then a conversation must erupt for better understanding.

Furthermore, Anderson (1991:37), agrees with some of the findings of the study, especially around the ZCC stands on ancestral veneration. ZCC believes that ancestors in general are evil spirits and cults which must be confronted and rejected. Mtukwa (2023:6) disagrees with Anderson and argues that ancestors cannot replace Jesus as the mediator between God and people, and that they should be left to rest. The irony of this is that this research has found out that some members from the AIC including the ZCC, leave double standards because they attend church and obey the rules and teachings of the church regarding ancestors, but privately in their own families and clan, they do venerate and perform ancestral rituals.

Mtukwa further recites a prayer of the Bantu in Zimbabwe which prays to ancestors "*We cry toyou Nehanda our guardian angel, yes you are to us(x2). Please guide our steps in struggle until we return to a liberated Zimbabwe. We appeal to you Chaminuka, you are our ancestral spirit(x2) guard and protect our cadres in the field, and the victory will pave our journeyhome. Please protect them until they come back home.*"

In this prayer, Nehanda and Chiminuka are ancestors of the people of Zimbabwe who should protect soldiers or cadres who are at the battle of liberation. There is no mention of God at all. This is regarded as ancestor cult where people pray ancestors instead of praying God.

On the other hand, ancestral veneration should also not be confused with ancestor worship. It is for this reason that scholars like Nyirongo (1997:87) when dealing with ancestors, suggest that veneration is the correct word to use rather than worship because there is no evidence of ancestors begin higher than God who is worshiped." Khathide (2003:314) argues that although there may be clear evidence that ancestors are venerated nor worshiped, there are unresolved issues regarding ancestors in that in some contexts, ancestors are feared and that

.

brings the possibility of being revered as God who is feared and respected and at the same time viewed as a cult because in its nature a cult is feared.

In differentiating between cult, worship and veneration, Zahan (2000:13) cautions that although worship is clear in that it is geared towards God only, there are services such as erecting of altars (particularly in the AIC spaces), where ancestors are recognised and, in those services, worship takes place and that equates to ancestor worship and cult. Binder (1970:31) highlights the danger of cults or cults in that they evolve over time.

The visit of Paul to the city of Athens (Acts 17:16-34) is referred to by Binder (1970:30) where Paul found people worshipping and praying at many different monuments and assumes that the scripture is a demonstration of cultic behavior. Binder (1970:31) continues to locate the journey of such cults throughout the centuries and asserts that modern cults are "something new" or something which will arouse new interest, and it must be attractive.

These new modern and dynamic cults are experienced currently in South Africa with the emerging and mushrooming of new churches with some fake pastors doing shocking activities in their churches with an intention to attract people and make money.

2.2.3.1 Ancestral worship, praying and cult.

Having dealt with ancestral veneration, this study had to also deal with ancestral worship, praying and cult. This is important if we are to do justice to the research question, subsidiary questions, and the title of this study. A deep comparing and understanding between ancestral veneration, worship, praying, and cult must be made.

There is a thin line of interpreting veneration, worshiping, and praying, especially in Sesotho and IsiZulu languages, and if this is not explained, it leaves the readers vulnerable to confusion. In Sesotho for example: to venerate is to "ananela," (to acknowledge).

To pray is to "rapela" (to pray) and to worship is to "rorisa" (to worship). All these three words can be classified and be used in one definition of what a prayer is and how to pray; in IsiZulu for example, to venerate is to "hlonipha," (to respect) to pray is to "khuleka" (to pray) and to worship is to "dumisa."(To praise) Again, all these three IsiZulu words cannot be separated if one defines elements of a prayer.

.

In other words, focus must be on contextualisation when using these words; where are they being used, how and to whom are they being used, and for what purpose are they used for. Interpreting these words in Sesotho and Isizulu and not limited to other South African languages, will help this study in further identifying dichotomies between Mainstream churches and AIC.

It is my assumption that part of the dichotomies which brings tension between the two identified churches is the use of vernacular language in translating these words: ancestral veneration, ancestor worship and ancestor praying. Another example which is closer to ancestral veneration is this one:

In Setswana language, African medicine is called “ditlhare tsa Setswana, (African medicine)” and this has two interpretations, which are at war with each other. Firstly, ditlhare tsa Setswana means, herbs planted in the gardens and those growing in the forest that Africans fetch and boil to make medicine for any diseases. The second interpretation of ditlhare tsa Setswana is that when someone is found to be a witch and accused therefore of witchcraft, he or she will be accused of using “ditlhare tsa Setswana” (African medicine). It is therefore important that this study encourages caution and care in how English words are used and translated into vernacular and vice versa.

2.2.2.2 Ancestral worship.

Hwang (1977:343) describes ancestor worship as specific actions performed during the rites relating to the propitiation of deceased relatives and or ministration of their needs. In other words, this is no longer veneration but worshipping and hence ancestor worship is a wrong word to use in the context of understanding worship as an act to God.

2.2.2.3 Ancestral cult.

Machovec (1989:9) gives the word “cult” three meanings, namely, (1) formal religious veneration or worship, (2) a system or community of religious worship and ritual and (3) a system of religious worship; devotion or homage to a person or thing. Machovec further argues that the definition of a cult cannot be limited to what he mentioned but cult is a matter of degree and question of definition because someone else can look at the practices and rituals of a cult and come up with a different definition from what has been mentioned.

.

What is common about cults is that in different types of them, there is a negative vibration in that their intended existence is that of hate, revenge, and harm. Machovec (1989:10) mentions some of the cults as religious, political, psychotherapy and personal growth. They are most of the time secretive and have membership with codes as points of access and entrance which justifies the allegation of being hateful and harming nature.

One of the popular cults in the world is that of "Satanism worship" which can be done by one persons or group of devoted followers of a satanic church. Machovec (1989:21) asserts that Satanists call their place of worship a temple like Christians do, and it is believed that their rituals and practices are that of anti-Christ and blood is their central symbol. It is believed that part of the rituals of some cults such as Satanism is to drink blood of animals and people, encouraging teenage killings and suicide as an act of sacrifice. Worshipping in the dark, wearing dark clothes and performing acts of having sex with animals. Machovec (1989:118) adds more of these rituals such as animal cruelty, sexual abuse, physical abuse, human sacrifice, magic power and emotional dynamics to mention but a few.

Having defined what a cult is and what ancestral veneration is, it should therefore be argued that a cult is not ancestral. There have been sayings or suggestions that witchcraft or witches "baloyi" is a form of cult. This is where people gifted with ancestral gifts are using them to harm others, but this theory has been contested mainly because there has not been evidence to support it. Furthermore, ancestors are "badimo" (ancestors), people of God for them to hate, revenge and harm others. They are mediators between people and God of love and could not have time to be cult.

Moreover, Machovec (1989:28) describes cult as having a term of secret societies as alluded to. This is in contrast with the concept of Africa as a community. Africans live with one another, they support each other during cultural events, even appeasing and sacrificing ancestors is performed openly with a feast and dancing. Therefore, cult is a foreign concept, and it is my assumption that there is no such as ancestral cult or African cult.

2.2.3 Mainstream churches.

One of the identified problems between the Mainstream churches and AIC is that of Eurocentrism as notified by Adamo (2001:13,14 and 15) and he writes that it frames Europe

.

as the engine of all and is to be followed by the world and Afrocentrism (cultural and political views and approaches done and initiated by Africans not by the Western). Chukwuokolo (2010) describes Eurocentrism as an attitude which made Europeans to subtly manipulate Africans to view the world from European perspectives in all spheres as social, political, developmental, technological, scientific etc. This view is also expressed by Marumo (2019:4) who accuse missionaries to have arrived along with colonial powers of Europe with a sincere Christian belief but culturally misguided, wanting to change Africans from what they regarded as primitive, idolatrous natives from their ignorance of true religion and their lack of civilization.

Adamo (2001:13, 14 and 15) accuses **Mainstream churches** of being in competition within itself for membership, its participation in the ecumenical movement which sometimes undermines the existence of the AIC, its struggle to cut loose the European mentality and its fear of realising the loss of members to the AIC.

The Mainstream churches are Eurocentric. For instance, the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA):

"*The Methodist hymn book has hymns translated into African languages but are written in England, predominately by Charles Wesley. The MCSA Sesotho hymn page 227 has a prayer that recognises King George (VI) and in IsiXhosa, page 240, there is a prayer for Queen Elizabeth. This is a clear indication of what Eurocentrism has done to Africa and more specific to the religious sector and the church*."

2.2.4 African Indigenous Churches.

The AIC are described by Daneel (1999:4) as having three distinctive purposes or forms which are:

- Ethiopian type or non-prophetic churches. These are the churches which lay no claim to special manifestations of the Holy Spirit and whose patterns or worship resemble those of western mission churches from which they originated.

- The spirit-type church, mainly Zionist and Apostolic movements which share a special emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit, manifest in speaking of tongues, prophetic

.

activities, and faith in healing.

- Messianic churches with strong meditation functions and abilities. This type can be located within the ZCC where they revere the iconic figure.

This view of these three purposes is supported by Oosthuizen (1997:9) who claims that there are three types of African Indigenous churches in South Africa, namely: Ethiopian, Zionist, and Apostolic in origin. Oosthuizen further claims that the Ethiopian cluster of churches was inspired by similar churches in the United-States over the centuries, especially the African Methodist Episcopal church. It is the Ethiopian as alluded earlier, which took a stand against what they perceived as ecclesiastical colonialism. As a result, they made a significant contribution to the establishment of the African liberation movement in response to the political oppression at that time. It is the smallest cluster in all the AIC.

Zionist churches on the other hand, according to Oosthuizen (1997:9), emerged from the contact with the Catholic Church which was based in Zion city in Illinois. This is evidenced by the fact that "Zion" appears in 80 percent of the AIC churches. In South Africa, there is several AIC churches which bear the name Zion and in terms of this study, this includes the biggest name in South Africa AIC which is the ZCC.

Finally, Oosthuizen (1997:9) speaks less of the apostolic church but rather partners it with ZCC in that they both assimilated more of the traditional African culture and religion. This is in contrast with some few AIC which did not want to use the name Zion as definition because they assume that Zion turns to push away the Christian theological values.

Agboyin and Ishola (2022) wrote three chapters (1, 2 and 3) on the problem of terminology, the emergence, and the chrematistics of the AIC. This material was investigated in this study. Once again Molobi (2005) adds to discussion on the establishment of the AIC and says that one of the objectives of the AIC was to find a way to interpret the bible by relating it to its African worldview and its culture. For instance, Molobi (2005) defines ancestors in Sesotho as "*Badimo,"* IsiXhosa- *"Izinyanya"* and IsiZulu- "*Amadlo*zi" and introduces the term "the living dead" in the worship practices of the AIC.

On the other hand, Appian-Kubi (1979) defines the AIC as the African Independent Churches

.

which is the church founded by Africans for Africans in the unique African context. Membership is purely African, including its leadership. Founded as a reaction to some features of the Christianity of missionaries, Daneel (1999:20) puts it that the AIC could label those origins of the AIC as protest movement against the racial segregation and the oppressive social-political conditions of colonialism of that time. Once again, the negative role of the missionaries is highlighted in this study. In this instance, it provided courage to Africans to remain resilient in their beliefs, and AIC was then formed.

The theological implications and imperatives of the AIC could not be discarded as Bae (2008:45) asserts that it is imperative to consider the theological implications of the relative ease with which the AIC have managed to assimilate and Christianise beliefs and customs related to ancestor veneration. Bae continues to mention that the traditional notion of ancestor veneration has been remolded and reshaped by the AIC. Nxumalo (1981:314) supports this by claiming that AIC has managed to overcome the fear and the dread of ancestors by inculcating the notion of love. This is very true, when I grew up, the idea of passing alone at the grave was scary. This was due to the traditional fear of the dead bodies and the ancestors. Currently, passing at the graveyards is a pleasurable moment because one does feel the sense of being in the presence of loving people who are asleep.

Not withholding the possible reality that ancestral veneration may not only be practiced by Africans, meaning that there may be other tribes in the universe who may also recognise and practice their ancestral veneration. Ramatheta (2008:226 to 241) supports Lebaka and brought in this study three aspects around African theology: Indigenisation of the church, Inculturation of the Gospel, and the Democratisation of Africa.

2.2.4.1 Indigenisation of the church.

This refers to how do the church deal with African rituals, religion, myths, prayer and worship. As Ramatheta (2008:226) comments, indigenisation is about looking inwardly and outwardly into African rituals. How does the church deal, practice and approach them? Data from the interviews revealed that there are so many dichotomies in understanding what indigenisation means. It must be looked at how the church in Africa looks at the Bible, at the worshiping methods and practices and merge them into already existing African practices and worship. As it is currently, some churches such as the Lutherans are finding it difficult to accept the

.

usage of drums in the church service because it is not their liturgical western way of doing church. Much as the Mainstream churches are western indoctrinated, it does not remove the authenticity of being an African. Therefore, indigenisation becomes important in holding that authenticity together.

2.2.4.2 Inculturation of the Gospel.

Antonio (2006:29) proposes inculturation as a term which does not necessarily have one definition and therefore no definition can be disqualified to define it. Furthermore, inculturation is to attend to the structures of meaning and to form a content of ritual practice in this or that culture. Depending on what culture it is, influenced by time and context thereof. Therefore, inculturation is a flexible wave that can adjust itself with time.

In this study, culture is looked at, raising questions such as how and when does culture change and evolve, whose culture is it, and is it African culture or Western influenced culture? Morality - what is the right or the wrong thing-who determines what is wrong or right? Ethos - what are the principles and the consistence which governs the gospel and the people? Taboos - what are the unspoken and hidden things? Theology and Praxis - what is the theology and how is it practiced? (Ramatheta, 2008:227). In this study, ancestral veneration is looked at as an aspect of culture and how it can merge and be enculturated into the gospel.

Inculturation should not be confused with indigenisation. Inculturation is about looking at African culture, rituals and practices and protecting the ways of that culture - protect them from foreign cultures which may disturb those rituals and practices. I believe a dichotomy can be established in as far as Mainstream churches and AIC practice and rituals are concerned regarding inculturation. Mainstream churches are allegedly struggling with inculturation due to its western ideologies and its historical existence as the recipient of Christianity, wrapped in the western envelope. On the other hand, the AIC maintained their authenticity and remains rooted in inculturation because it involves culture, and this can also be said about indigenisation of the two churches.

MCSA (2019:7), through its DEWCOM meeting introduces to this study the difference between inculturation and enculturation and puts it that the process of contextualising the church is captured between two concepts of inculturation and enculturation. Inculturation is the

.

adaption of Christian teachings into different indigenous cultures across the world and on the contrary, enculturation is the process through which an individual or institution adapts norms and values of a culture in which they are immersed. MCSA continues to say that in the African context, the inculturation-enculturation journey involves two patterns or movements: Christianisation of culture and the Africanisation of Christianity.

Inculturation as christening culture from faith to culture involves at least four interconnected practices.

- Challenging culture- this means that in every context, the gospel and culture enter a rigorous dialogue marked by contradictions, connections and opposing factors.

- Purifying culture-based on the belief that every culture has good and bad habits or practices; it is therefore important to separate the acceptable and acceptable practices of culture in Christianity.

- Enlivening the culture- this involves the neutral enriching or positive customs of the culture with the Christian leaven, such as integrating Christian elements into African liturgies and practices and customs.

- Unearthing the riches of culture- this involves theological work of (to use a metaphor) cooking theology in African pots. Allowing the presence of the eternal "*Logos"* to emerge in the substance of culture and structures of life.

2.2.4.3 Democratisation of Africa.

This aspect looked at the socio-economic justice, that is, how it has changed the culture and how people view their ancestors, development - people moving from rural to urban areas, the paradigm shift of the move, the rule of law, governance, constitutionality and transparency - how does the constitution of South Africa protects the understanding and the participants toward ancestral veneration, how does the good governance and transparency prevail within the church with regard to the right to religion and belief association? (Ramatheta, 2008). The subject of how people look at ancestors and how the migration of people from city to city and rural to cities has been covered.

.

South Africa's constitution is regarded as one of the best in the world. It is observed that that constitution has gaps and omissions particularly around the freedomof religion. The influx of Pentecostal churches with some fake pastors had contributed negatively to the stability of the AIC. Some members left the church only to join fake churches who most of the time rob them of their money. This is not to say that all Pentecostal churches are fake but the point being made here is that democratisation of Africa has its positives and negatives.

2.2.4.3.1 Black church and white church.

The present reality of our church is that it is divided by race and culture. The white and black churches in South Africa standing far apart. This is important because one way or another, the white church has had influence in how the black church views ancestral veneration. Douglas and Hopsen (2001:95-113) define the black church as the most enduring black institution and one of the most enigmatic. It can be useful for social change and at the same time, it can be stubbornly antagonistic to that change. It is indeed enduring, and this was seen during the era of apartheid and even before that, how it tolerated the missionaries without their misplaced teachings about Christianity. One is bound to say, this endurance led to the demise of some of Africanism and our current situation of dichotomies pays homage to that.

Douglas and Hopsen (2001:95-113) continue to mention that the stubbornness of the black church and its eagerness to be the engine of change can appear simultaneously to different issues. For example, the Ethiopian church became the first AIC to resist the influx ideologies of the missionaries and remain authentic to the belief on how to worship in the African way. At the same time, the Ethiopian church is also resistant to change in as far as patriarchy is concerned. The church remains the family church in terms of leadership succession, and this does not contribute to social change.

This point of the resistance of the black church is further echoed by De Gruchy (1986:42-43) confirming that the black church, especially in the AIC, was during apartheid confronted with suffocating choices of practicing religion following the dictates of the white apartheid regime. The black church was faced with three dynamics. Firstly, it had to be part of the so-called mission church which was wholly black but wholly controlled by the white church, secondly it had to be part of the British missionary again under the white supremacy and thirdly it had to be part of the multiracial churches. All these choices meant that a black church could not stand

.

on its own and was subjected to a theology which does not recognise African Christian worship and practices and ancestral veneration.

On the other hand, there is a white church. It is worth noting that white here refers to the color of people attending the church and at the same time, white may also mean languages such as English, spoken by some Indians, people of color and of course English and Afrikaans spoken by English speaking and Afrikaans speaking people.

Case study: *Carrington Methodist church situated in the middle of a town of Mafikeng in the province of North-West in South Africa. It is named after the street name "Carrington Street." As early as the 1980s, it was a white only church and a well-to-do church, owning land and money. The birth of democracy in 1994 saw a change of attitude when black ministers were then integrated into white societies and slowly but surely, white people left the church. Currently, Carrington Methodist church does not have white people but only blacks who prefer to worship in English as white people used to do. Again, these are the results of western indoctrination of their whiteness supremacy that still exists.*

Furthermore, there are churches around the town of Mafikeng which were predominantly white, but currently, no white people can be seen or found there. Bracey and Moore (2017:22-282) put it that white churches are an institutional space of religion in which demographics and religion cultural norm of operation privilege whites only.The explanation of white people leaving the church when blacks arrive, is typically the example of whites who are intimidated by change and having their privileges tampered with. Bracey and Moore continue to highlight some major differences between the black and white churches such as; preaching style, length of service, music, structure of the service, dress code, political and community activities and theological emphasis. These differences are like those mentioned earlier in the differences between Mainstream churches and AIC.

2.2.4.3.2 Dominance of Mainstream churches and AICs in South Africa.

Census 2001	South Africa total	% Christians	Total
Mainline churches	14 259 664	39.9	31.8
Pentecostal/charismatic	2 625 830	7.3	5.9

.

Other churches	4 275 942	12.0	9.5
African Independent Church	14 598 922	40.8	32.6
Total: SA Churches	35 760 358	100	79.8
Other faiths	1 706 547		3.8
No religion/ not stated	7 352 875		16.4
Total SA population	44 819 780		100

(Hendricks 2005:28).

Statistics South Africa

5 Religion

Tables 5.1 to 5.4 show number and percentage comparisons between the censuses of 1996 and 2001, for main religious groupings by population group and gender.

In 1996, approximately 30,0 million people were classified as belonging to a Christian religious group of one kind or another, compared to 35,8 million in 2001.

Approximately 4,6 million persons reported having no religious affiliation in 1996, compared to 6,8 million at the time of Census 2001.

Amongst those for whom the question was answered, 11,7% stated that they did not belong to any religious group at the time of Census '96, **compared to 15,1% at the time of Census 2001.**

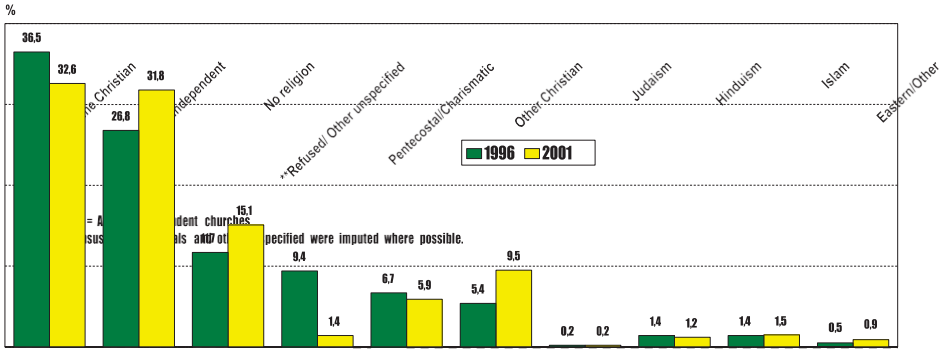
Figure 5 shows broadly defined religious affiliation. In both censuses, approximately one-third of the population indicated that they belonged to conventional or mainline Christian churches. The mainline churches include reformed churches, Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches and the United Congregational Church of South Africa.

In 2001, a further third of the population indicated that they belonged to one of the independent churches. This group includes Zionist churches, iBandla lamaNazaretha and Ethiopian type churches.

Primary tables: South Africa

.

Figure 5
Distribution of the population by religious affiliation
Census 1996 and 2001



The above table and the graph with percentages demonstrate the dominance of the Mainstream churches and the AIC in South Africa. They contain old data, from before 2001 but I want to put it that the situation has not changed currently. These two churches are still strong and visible in their respective spaces. Their domination is vividly evident, once a year during the Easter celebration where congregants meet in large numbers to celebrate the death of Jesus. The ZCC members for example undertake a long trip to the Mountain of Moriah in the province of Limpopo to celebrate their Easter. It is believed that over 500 000 people meet at the same time to celebrate. On the other hand, the MCSA attracts people from other denominations during Easter because of its brilliance in singing and preaching what is called the "seven words of the cross." Most of the times, community halls, massive tents and stadiums are used by both churches to accommodate their followers.

2.2.5 Christian Worship.

It is Luther who said that "nothing else be done in it than that our dear Lord Himself talk(rede) to us through his Holy word and that we, in turn(reden) respond to him in prayer and song of praise" as quoted by White (2000:1–5). In simpler terms, White says Christian worship is an

.

outward and visible form of appreciating God in worshipping. Furthermore, White uses the word from German language "Gottesdienst" which has seven meanings to interpret it but the nearest one being "God's service and our service to God." Worshipping is therefore the time when Christians call God into the massage parlour and with song, prayer and gratitude massages God for God's service which is never ending. The psalmist describes this unending service as "the lord who does not sleep nor slumber" (Psalm 121:1).

With God in worshipping, one must be careful in words and in explanation, lest words are too difficult because it is an experience in which some theological people may see and feel the grace of God and apply and respond to that grace in the redemptive way. It is not a human invention, rather,it is a divine offering where God offers humanity personal relationship and people respond to that offer. We do not see God in person, nor talk to God, but we are able to feel the presenceand touching of God through worship. It is my observation that when people come for worshipping, they come because they are accustomed to every Sunday worship for example. They do not come with a clear intention of connecting with God. The connection with God happens now and action of worshipping.

2.2.5.1 History of Christian Worship.

"***I received from the Lord" and "passed on you***" (Corinthians 11:23)

The History of Christian worship is located by Stringer (2005:1) within the archives of the compilers of church history, a group called the "church orders", who assert that Christian worshiping was part of the Jewish tradition: the tradition which was dominant in the thinking of Christians. Worshipping took form and was influenced by Jesus' teaching and way of life. If this is the whole truth about Christian Worshipping, it therefore means, it became a tradition which cascaded over the centuries and influenced many generations. Again, we may argue that long before Christian worshipping existed, Africans who were never Christians before the invasion and the era of missionaries had their way of worshipping, but later were pushed into this western style of worshipping. It is worth noting that during the current 21st century, the evolution of technology and 4th Industrial Revolution had a great influence on the worshipping of Christians. Social media, television and radio are being effectively used to do worshipping.

The Covid- 19 pandemic also played a role in the history of Christian worshiping. It presented

.

Christians with a painful era where social and communal gatherings were restricted and the warmth of community gathering in worship was temporarily lost. At the same time, people began to think outside of the box about how they can continue to worship. A new paradigm-shift occurred in the minds of the people and that was a family unit worship. This is where families who ordinarily would not sing and pray together but relied on going to church, will make time to worship together now and then.

2.2.5.2 The purpose of Christian Worship.

Segler and Bradley (2006:5) believe that the purpose of Christian worshipping is that of quickening the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with God's truth, to use the beauty of God to purge one's imagination, to open one's heart to receive the love of God and to devote to the will of God. Worshipping then becomes a person's intention to grow in love with God, to immerse in the grace of God and to continually strengthen his/ her heart with God. Worshipping does not require any hard labor because it can be done at any given time and in any given space. One of the misleading ideas of worshipping is that one must be in a specific place like a church to be able to worship. This should not be the case as worshipping can be done in a car, at home or on the street. For instance, my father was labelled "mad" because he would be caught talking and singing alone. In his response, he would say *"ke mo Modimong*" (I am in God). By that, he meant he was in the worshipping mode.

Looking at Christian worship, Plantinga Jr and Rozeboom (2003: 3-4) write "worship is going on at all times in heaven, and when we worship, we are joining that which is already happening", in other words, the purpose is to continue with something which does not end and which we did not start, and we will never end. They continue to say, "we worship in the spirit, and as we do so, we are taking our part amongst angels, archangels and all the company of heaven…heaven is not a long way away."

It is in worshipping where Christians can pray in adoration, in thanksgiving, in confession, in intercessory and praying for oneself. It is also in worship that a personreconnects with God. Both the Mainstream churches and AIC worship God differently at their own times and spaces.

.

2.2.5.3 The spirituality of Christian Worship.

At the center of worship is the Holy Spirit in which all Christians – Mainstream churches, AIC and others, direct worship. It is understanding the Holy Spirit which then leads to one immersing in this phenomenon called spirituality. Linman (2010:3) points out that there is a difference between spirituality and religion, suggesting that a person can be spiritual but not identify with a particular religion. Linman further states that worship and spirituality are intimately related, and one leads to another. Linking spirituality and worship serves a deeper understanding of the experience of worshipping.

In support of the statement of spirituality and religion, Dyrness (2009:8) concludes that most of the Christians, especially the youth, are more comfortable to relate to spirituality rather than religion. Dyrness (2009:8) then brings the element of scripture into the context of worship and asserts that the scripture is fundamental to worship. I understand this to mean that worshipping is scriptural because all the types of worshipping we do emanate from the scriptures in the Old and New Testament. For example, every Sunday in my church, we sing and pray the Lord's Prayer as the "call to worship."

Spirituality is personal to people and when worshipping, people can be found to be fully vulnerable to the moment. This may be in prayer, in meditation, singing in both the Mainstream churches and AIC. The feeling is the same. Some people would during worship literally cry, others burst into loud prayers while others will kneel and pray. This happens during worship by immersing in spirituality. Spirituality is beyond color, ethnicity, religion, or type of a church. During funerals as alluded to in the problem statement of this research, both the Mainstream churches and AIC come together to console the bereaved family. Worship does take place, led by any of the two. Even there, spirituality takes over and all churches find themselves in spirituality.

There are however noticeable and observed dichotomies in spirituality between the Mainstream churches and AIC. In the Mainstream, when congregants are "*moyeng*," (in Spirit*) they* turn to control themselves very well. Congregants will, as mentioned above, cry, sing, kneel and pray, and the leader of the service is able to manage the situation using time as a tool. His or her presence in front of the church brings order.

.

In the AIC however, the situation is different because congregants are normally led by more than one leader in the service and it is the same leaders who, should they lose control of the service and become vulnerable to (in spirit), then the congregation follows. Most of the time, it is women who become "disorderly" in that they will literally jump up and down, fall - as if they are suffering from hypothermia, or "*amafufunyana-bolwetsi ba badimo," (*sickness of the ancestors*)* scream out and "*ba mata terese.*" (Running in circles during the church service. This will take place without looking at time and it can go on the whole day, possibly. It remains a mystery to me as to why women in the church are the ones who are "attacked" by "*amafufunyana-bolwetsi ba badimo,*" *(sickness* of the ancestors*)* first and mostly, but it does happen.

2.2.5.4 Elements of Christian Worship.

Both the Mainstream churches and the AIC use the same Bible which places God as the supreme and above all. Elements of Christian worship is drawn from the bible and Cobb (1950:410) identified the five elements from the bible as follows:

Singing: As mentioned earlier, the argument has been made that singing is worshipping if not the dominant elements in worshipping and therefore it becomes an act of worship. Act 16:25 tells a story of apostles singing whilst in jail and salvation happened. Singing happens everywhere and it can take form at any time. It is my observation and view that singing is such a powerful act of worship to a point where some people called "artists" have taken advantage of this element of worship to make money by creating music. For example, there are famous artists who were successful and when things do not go their own way financially, they turned into pastors and preachers just to make money. In other words, they have opted to commercialise this element of worship to benefit themselves financially and defeat the purpose of worship. This is done using both the Mainstream churches and the AIC Christian songs.

Prayer: "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5: 17). Paul reminds and instructs his audience about the value of praying as an act of worshipping. Some people kneel like Muslims completely kneel when praying. Others stand up, others sit, and others retire to their private space, while *I* pray *through reading of the scripture. In any way of praying, the end results are that of worshipping*.

.

Lord's Prayer: When Jesus was asked on how to pray, he taught his disciples the Lord's Prayer (Mark 14: 22-25). This is a common prayer which in the olden days, schools used to teach learners and it remains the tradition of both Mainstream churches and AIC, except the ZCC. According to Lebeloane and Madise (2007), the Lord's Prayer is not popular in the ZCC, and it is rarely sung in the church.

Giving: Some of the Mainstream churches have previously and continue to be accused of sucking money out of their members. The MCSA for example was taken to the CRL commission for requiring pledge money from its members during funerals. Giving in the context of worshipping is about giving thanks to God for all the opportunities given. It is done as spiritual exercise from members. Congregants can give according to their hearts and that is defined as worshipping (2 Corinthians 9:6-8).

It is also true that "giving" as an act of Christian worship has been abused by some fake pastors with fake churches. Most people have been left broke with no property, no investment, and no pension funds due to unscrupulous fake pastors who lure them into thinking that giving to their own pocket serves the world and that they will be rewarded accordingly. The concept and the work of giving as an act of Christian worship got distorted in the process.

2.2.5.5 Christian worship in Old Testament.

Some of the worshipping styles and some practices for the AIC (Church of Christ Assembly as a case study) reflect the picture of the Old Testament context (from the attire of the high priests to burning sacrifices of animals). In other words, some of the AIC churches draw their worshipping from the Old Testament. Bechtel (2008: 11) puts it that the Sabbath day in the Old Testament was a sacred day in the journey of the Israelites from Egypt, but as time went by, Sabbath day became the moment where people of God gathered for worship. People will use psalms of confession and thanksgiving as worshipping on the Sabbath day.

Furthermore, Bechtel (2008:30) draws our attention to worship as a tool for justice in the Old Testament in that, when people have gathered on Sabbath day or any other day, time will be allocated for people to look at their neighbors as part of worship. Those who are most in need will be assisted in any way that brings glory to God. This then means, worshipping in general shouldnot be construed to space, time, and elements of worship only, but it should

.

also be practical. Doing justice by helping the needy, troubled and the vulnerable should be an act of Worship.

2.2.5.6 Christian worship in the New Testament.

Dunn (2010:8) notes that in the New Testament, worshipping has its roots from the Greek word "proskynein" which has direct Hebrew translation of "shachah" and it means bowing down, prostrating oneself, making obeisance; and it is an attitude or gesture of one to complete dependence or submission to God. Dunn continues to add that the New Testament is explicit in its understanding of worshipping in that, it is God and only God who is worshipped. This is somehow in contrast with the Old Testament because the Old Testament has high priests and burning sacrifices and animals as a process of worship.

This information is important when establishing dichotomies between the Mainstream churches and the AIC because an assumption has been made that the AIC is Old Testament inclined and one can then assume argument that if that is the case, it means the Mainstream churches are New Testament inclined. This assumption is supported by the fact that AIC are patriarchal in nature and seem to be inclined to their leaders before God. In the ZCC for example, Bishop Barnabas Lekganyane is the person they look at before looking at God, whereas the Mainstream churches do not have a middleman. Worshipping is towards God only. De Visser (2011:1) says "The ZCC is led by Bishop Barnabas Lekganyane. He plays a very important role in the faith and life of the church and his followers. Wherever the Bishop goes, he is followed by large crowds of followers. His picture adorns the walls of many homes. His name is used in the prayers of his followers. His spiritual power is believed to be enormous."

2.2.5.7 Common Christian Worship.

Three common forms of Christian worship, which took center stage in the fifteenth centuries as per Stringer (2005:1-2) were identified during the era of the beginning of the printing revolution. It was a continuation of worship at thelarger scale, and it was beginning to involve the societal discourse. In other words, worship was no longer "a church thing" but it was touching the people and the communities.

Singing, praying and Eucharist were these common forms of Christian worship, and they

.

continue to exist. All three of them take form in different ways regarding the Mainstream churches and AIC. They are practiced differently by different churches and different religions for that matter. For example, the understanding of the Eucharist in the Roman Catholic Church is different to the MCSA in that, the Catholics' administrative Eucharist has been viewed selfish and discriminatory by others, yet they continue with it because they have a different theological understanding of Eucharist. This difference of theological understanding does not demise the commonality of Eucharist as an act of worship amongst Christians.

In terms of prayer, it was over fifteen centuries that liturgy was developed, and people found ways to create liturgy which will accommodate and speak to the current situation. For example, the MCSA has a hymn book which has all types of liturgical prayers ranging from baptism services to marriage services.

It is my view that the society we live in is united due to the history and the tradition of social cohesion, but what continues to divide the society, communities and the world is the church which continues to fight itself using subjects such as ancestral veneration, worship practices and religions as tools. For example, when there is a funeral in a location, the community, friends, and neighbors of the deceased attend the funeral service without knowing which church or denomination is leading the service because that is not important. What is important is to show sympathy to the family and to gather as people. It is sometimes leaders of the church who would bring the issue of church name, theology, and tradition to the attention of the people.

2.2.5.8 Places of Christian worship.

Places of Christian worship may mean a lot of things but buildings, spaces and shelters where people come together to worship. Collinson and Miller (1981:23) locates the Christian worshipping within the walls of the church for almost all the churches. Here, they refer to the building where people converge mostly on Sundays to worship. This location of a building as a place of worship lacks diversity because the Old Testament gives guidance that worship cannot be located only in churches, temples, or synagogues. In fact, worshipping can happen everywhere. A family unit, workplace, neighbors, and chieftaincy meetings in the rural areas can be used as places of worship. Currently, the fourth industrial revolution has introduced humanity to social media where some worshipping takes place, through radio, television, and

.

any other media platform available.

2.2.5.9 Universal worship.

The universality of worship points people to the understanding that no one can claim ownership of worship. Parrinder (1961:11) cautions different faith-based organisations and religions not to be delusional and think that worshipping is somehow their own making and property. Parrinder (1961:11) asserts that worship is done by all religions; from Hinduism, From Hinduism, and Buddhism and to Christianity to mention the few. Even some of those religions called cults have some worship in them. All types of worship are geared towards one whom that religion sees as supreme to it.

2.2.6 African Worship.

The definition of worship has been alluded to earlier and most scholars could give their definition of worship. Mbiti (1970:178) gives the simplest definition when saying worship is people's act or acts of turning to God. These acts may be formal and informal, regular, or extempore, communal or individual, ritual or ceremonial, through word or deed. In other words, worship can take place in any shape as long as it is towards God.

2.2.6.1 Sacrifices and offerings.

In Africa, there are different beliefs regarding sacrifices. The first belief is that sacrifices are for God and God alone. The second belief is that sacrifices are for God, spirits and the departed, while the third belief is that sacrifices are for spirits and the departed who are considered intermediaries between God and people. In all the three beliefs, one notes that God is a central figure, and no sacrifice can be detached from God. Mbiti (1970:178-179) continues to mention four theories about the function of sacrifice which are:

Gift theory, where people collect different types of gifts and give to God as sacrifices and offerings; Propitiation theory, where God is appeased by singing and praying; Communion theory, where sacrifices are not individual but communal or collective, and thank-offering theory, where sacrifices are done to God as thanksgiving. This may be by money, animals and or assets.

Mbiti (1970:178-179) says "sacrifices and offerings are acts of restoring the ontological

.

balance between God and man, the departed and the living. When this balance is upset, people 'experiences' misfortunes and sufferings, or fear that these will come upon them."

2.2.6.1.1 Sacrifices and offerings to God.

This is done to restore the balance and the relationship spiritually, emotionally and psychologically between people and God. They also act and on occasions as renewing contact between people and God.

2.2.6.1.2 Sacrifices and offerings to the departed.

They are a symbol of fellowship, a recognition that the departed are still members of their human families, and tokens of respect and remembrance to them. The departed members are also labeled as chiefly recipients of the sacrifices and offerings from the family group.

2.2.6.1.3 Sacrifices and offering of slaughtering of animals.

After a child is born, during the naming of child ceremony, including circumcision and weddings events, as well as funeral services, slaughtering happens. This can be a sheep, goat or a cow, and it is a belief that sacrifices and offerings are made towards the ancestors and in honor of the event of the day.

2.2.6.2 Prayer.

Examples of African practices were given earlier and the re-occurring word in them is that of acknowledging the Supreme Being in all of world activities, especially the African rituals and practices. Mbiti (1970:194-195) comments that in Africa, sometimes, sacrifices cannot be done without prayer, but prayers can be done without any sacrifice. Prayers are addressed to God, and some of the living dead, divinities, or other beings, many of whom serve as intermediaries. The difference between Christian prayer and African prayer is that Christian prayer is clear in that, only God is mentioned and there is no other name that is revered in prayer.

In African prayer, however, objects such as animals, sun, trees, and spirits such as the living dead become part of the journey of the prayer. This is because of the belief that everything is under the supremacy of God as psalmist says, "the earth and everything in it belongs to God," (Psalm 24). This way of praying is somehow confusing and adds to the tension between some

.

Mainstream churches and AIC regarding ancestral veneration. This way of mentioning ancestors in a prayer may be interpreted as people praying ancestors first before God or putting ancestors and God on the level which is distorted in understanding or view.

"O *sun, As you rise on the east thought God's leadership, wash away all the evils I have thought and thought-out the night, bless me so, that my enemies will not kill me and my family…*" this is a prayer the father in the village called Abaluyia who starts by either calling God the son or informing the sun that it exists because of the leadership of God (Mbiti J. S., 1970).

2.2.6.3 Veneration, fear, and praise.

It is in the context of African worship to revere God, to praise and to fear God. Fear in this context should not be viewed as horror but as respect to God. It is esteeming God in all angles of worshipping. Africans through respect (fear), they call and see God as the Father, Creator and Giver of Life.

2.2.6.4 Music, Singing, Dancing.

As mentioned by Cobb (1950:410), music, singing and dancing are elements of Christian worship, which also exist in African worship. Through music, singing and dancing, Africans find better expression and communication with God.

2.2.7 African practices and rituals.

Let us recall that the title of this study has a main question which reads "What are the main dichotomies in the worship practices between Mainstream Christian and African Indigenous Churches in South Africa? Having located the Mainstream churches and AIC churches in the context of South Africa, the subject of African practices and rituals becomes important in establishing the dichotomies between the two churches regarding the theological exploration and understanding of ancestral veneration.

A ritual is described as a religious or solemn ceremony consisting of a series of actions performed according to the described order, while practice is described as the actual application or use of an idea, belief, or method, as opposed to theories relating to it (Bibletool.org, 2023). Mbiti (1975:131) describes a ritual as a set form of carrying out a religious action or ceremony. It is a means of communicating something of religious

.

significance, through word, symbol, and action. Mbiti (1975:162) continues to mention that throughout the ages, traditional rulers, ruled with knowledge of the existed of God. In other words, tradition always knew and gave space to Godship and to an extent, it is understood that putting traditional rules into position is by God's appointment not of their own strength.

2.2.7.1 Family rituals and practices.

Each family has its own ritual and practices which are performed at any given time decided by the family. Some of the family rituals and practices are intertwined by community rituals and practices.

Case study: *when a young boy from a family goes to "entabeni," (at* the mountain*) there are private rituals and practices done by the family to call "Ingcibi" (*traditional doctor for the boys at the mountain*)* to come and perform muti on the boy so that he can be strong and survive the bush. Upon returning from the mountain, the ritual is no longer the family but the community at large.

These family practices and rituals can be in countless activities done by a family because each family, each clan has its own practices and rituals. Here, Setsiba (2012:23) locates the family rituals and practices at the time of the family bereavement and he states that upon hearing the notice of the passing of a family member, immediately, the family gathers. In some families, the windows are painted with white ash and in other families, mattresses are removed from the base of the bed.

In this ritual of the family during bereavement, I have observed that during the funeral, where there is a family and the church, there is a time when the church gives a family time to bid farewell to their loved one, handing him/ her to the ancestors and ancestral veneration occurs as one of the elders will call-upon ancestors to welcome their child. After this ritual, the church then takes its place of preaching (Christianity).

2.2.7.2 Community ritual and practices.

Using the bereavement as the tool again, Mkhize (2008) puts it that once the family and the relatives have done their rituals, then the neighbors and the community will send one person to come and hear what has happened "ukuzwa" (to hear) in IsiZulu and "go itlhoboga"(to

.

accept sad news) in Setswana. This then becomes the process of the communal mourning in which I alluded to in the background of this study. As the community comes together, they are united in pain and there are no Mainstream churches or AIC. The worshipping is one and only God is praised.

When there is drought due to scarcity of rain, the local chief will call the villagers and it willbe agreed that some young girls will have to go and steal “lesokwane” (pap stick) from another village, resulting in a fight between two villages, and it was believed that in good spirit, it will rain. Setiloane (1975:74-75) comments that upon the pouring of the rain, old people will ascend the nearby hill or mountain to thank the ancestors. It is believed that they will worship the Lord of their ancestors who permitted the ancestors to open the showers of heaven. This story is once again, a demonstration of the conflict, confusion and or the sameness of Christian practices and worshipping and the African worship and practices, because the story contains a mixture of spiritualties which are different but can be used at the same time to achieve a common purpose.

Bopape (1995) asserts that this mixture of spiritualties is seen working together within working together of the African communities. In an event that a member of the community has passed on, the family and the community will know, and eventually the church which represents the Christian religious factor. This is supported by Selepe and Edwards (2008) who recorded that grief within the “Mapostola” (Apostles) is a shared community experience.

2.2.7.3 Event-rituals and practices.

The last ritual to be mentioned is “ukuphuwa kwe thwasana.” (The coming out of the initiate) This again is the family and community rituals and practices. It involves a lot of processes and on the day of the coming out, it becomes a collective ritual. This is one ritual which has very controversial practices and there is ongoing debate about it. It is expected that the initiate must take a spear and kill the goat and suck its blood at the point of its death. Others have called it a ritual of animal cruelty and an act of vampirism or barbaric nature.

2.2.8 Christian practices and rituals.

Pauw (1960:146-147) makes distinction African and Christian practices to defend Christianity in what is accused of labelling African practices and rituals pagan activities. In doing so, Pauw

.

(1960:146-147) focuses on the literal practices and rituals that take place in the church and mentions a few of such practices and rituals. Moreover, Pauw (1960:146-147) mentions that practices and rituals of this nature are non-magical because Christianity is not magical, but it depends solely on God.

2.2.8.1 Rite of baptism.

This is a church ritual which is performed when welcoming a child into the community of Christianity. It is a symbolic representation of an inner cleansing, and it is not magical. But if it is believed to have a beneficial influence, whether spiritual or physical in nature, then it becomes magical. In my observation, particularly in the mainstream church where I served, the ritual of baptism is not regarded as a practice or ritual, but most of the times, it is parents who just want to baptise their children and get over and done with it. To parents, it seems like it is a burden to have an unbaptised child and therefore, sometimes, other parents just attend church to baptise and then leave the church thereafter.

2.2.8.2 Petition prayer of healing.

This is a religious activity done in the church with the expectation that God will hear and heal people upon their requests. Pauw (1960:146-147) puts it that it is done with the expectation but also with the realisation that God may grant or not grant healing if He so wishes. However, it is also believed that prayer must necessarily result in favor towards the request and the argument will be, is it magical or is it by faith that God responded. After all, the final word should be attributed to God in the whole process of healing. In other prayer it is a practice and ritual within the space of the church and the Christian religion. Praying happens every day to people, individual and collective as a church and encompasses many characters.

2.2.8.3 Prayer for the bereaved.

Upon the death of a person, the family will notify the church leadership and an announcement will be made in the church. Usually, the practice is that the congregation will stand and observe a moment of silence, or it will remain standing and one of the members will lead in prayer. Arrangements will be made for pastoral visits, right up to the day of the funeral where the church uses different resources such bibles, hymnals, and prayer books to conduct the funeral. Burial rites, prayers and symbols of ashes will also be performed during the funeral.

.

2.2.8.4 Christian calendar.

The Christian calendar which has been standard for many years and observed by Christians every year, may be regarded as practices and rituals. Parrinder (1961:225-227) refers to the Christian calendar as festivals which are observed every year.

2.2.8.5 Advent.

This is four Sundays before Christmas, and it is a celebration of the coming of Christ in his incarnation and it looks forward to his Second Advent in glory. The climax of this festival is on Christmas day which is the most popular festival followed by Easter.

2.2.8.6 Lent.

This is forty days before Easter. It begins with Ash Wednesday, leading to Palm Sunday, then Holy week and eventually Easter weekend which includes Good Friday and Resurrection Sunday.

2.2.8.7 Pentecost.

This is an important period in the liturgical year because it marks the end of the official calendar and the days after it are counted towards the Advent.

2.2.8.8 Holy Communion.

A service in church where bread and wine are shared in remembrance of Jesus. This is done to remember the events of the upper room leading to the death of Jesus. It has deeper meant in that every time when people come to the table of the Holy Communion to receive the element, it is believed their sins are forgiven. The Roman Catholic calls it “Mass celebrations” and the other churches call it “Eucharist.”

2.2.9 Anthropology and land.

2.2.9.1 Anthropology.

This is the study of human societies, cultures, and their development, as well as the study of human biological and physiological characteristics and their evolution (American Anthropological Association, 2023). Newell (1976:1) suggests that in all animal species, it is only humans that are aware that each living specimen is relayed in terms of a common origin.

.

By this, Newell suggests that humans can trace their ancestry origin, although limited.

The concept of anthropology is important in the subject of ancestral veneration because people can identify the genealogy of their ancestry. The book of Genesis, chapters one and two, can be used as biblical anthropology because the two chapters' deal with the making of the human being. Newell (1976:2) brings the term "traditional anthropological interest" which he calls the present ancestor worship. This was important to note because the study aimed to find how churches venerate their ancestors; whether they venerate-respect-acknowledge or to some degree worship their ancestors. In the field of anthropology, one is introduced to other spirits other than known spirit of humanity.

Adamo (2011:4) mentions that there are other spirits conceived anthropomorphically as they are abstract beings. This means, other than spirits of ancestors, saints and living, there may be other spirits that are unseen in the cosmos. This is supported by Mbiti (1970: 232) who posits that there are two kinds of spirits, the ones that were once human beings and those that belong to the spirit race. Of course, those who were once humans are ancestors who according to Mbiti (1975b: 70), are intermediaries between God and people. Mbiti continues to say that other than ancestors, there are other spirits believed to have been created by God, such as nature spirits, sky spirits, earth spirits and ancestral spirits.

2.2.9.2 Land.

Ancestral veneration is about acknowledging the dead who are buried in the land they lived in. That is why land becomes one of the integral parts of the study. Stavrakopoulou (2010:3) posits that graves should be understood as the unchanging specialised place of dwelling and resting.

Graves are built on land and therefore, land and ancestral veneration cannot be separated. Stavrakopoulou (2010:59) argues that the biblical story found in Deuteronomy chapter 32:48-52 "the death of Moses on top of the edge" was a direct punishment of "Yahweh" to the disobedient nation. Moses led them for 40 years through the desert to the Promised Land. His death happened at a stone's throw away from being able to view land, and thus he was denied entry into that land. This should have punished and hurt the people. Currently, there are AIC churches such as the ZCC and the Shembe whose dwelling places are

.

in the mountains. Some of the apostolic churches still prefer rivers as their baptismal places. They still see land, mountains, and rivers as an integral part of their practice and worship.

In some parts of South Africa, especially in the provinces of Kwa Zulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape, there are villages where people are not buried at the graveyards but within the yard of the house. This is significant to the bereaved family because they believe that their dead family members do wake up to check them during the night. They believe that the dead people will get angry if they are buried in the land they do not know. Ngubane (2019:119) adds and supports the burial land in the African context in that burial in the house yards and or graveyards are to Africans manifestation of demonstrating respect to the ancestors and it is also a gate way to them.

The subject of land in relation to house yard does not end with graves within the backyards of the houses, but it extends to the living arrangement of a family or a clan. McCall (1995:259-260) reports that to respect or venerate ancestors, some families or clans would acquire land and build family compounds of different children of the deceased or in line with the lineage of that ancestorship.

Below is an example of such a family where most of the time, there is shrine or tree in the middle of the compounds which is called the ancestral tree. Meetings are held under that tree because their belief is that ancestors are residing under the shelter of that tree. Furthermore, it may be that whilst alive, ancestors used to sit under that tree, so further continue with the teachings of the ancestors, the living venerate under the tree.

In some parts of the rural areas of South Africa such as Kwa-Zulu Natal, Eastern Cape and many other parts, villages are named after the surnames of families. For example, Kwa Mkhize, Kwa Dlamini, Kwa Mthembu and so forth. If one looks closely at such services, one realises that most of the inhabitants of that specific village bear the surname of the village. In other words, they are a family or clan of the great ancestor who founded that piece of land a long time ago. Eventually, all the people carrying that surname will be buried in the same land.

The sad story about land in South Africa is that of how in some areas, the commodity called land has been removed from its organic status of being a place where ancestors are venerated, culture and customs are preserved but have been turned into the political fights and an

.

opportunity to gain money. Ubink and Amanor (2008:27-31) concur and say this problem of land being used for political and economic gains has spread from central Africa to most of the countries in Africa where the land which was called the title deeds of the ancestors has been taken away by legislations of the governments.

In South Africa, a classic example of such a problem is that of "Ingonyama trust." This is a trust founded to manage the land of the Zulu nation, given to them by their ancestors. The Zulu people were supposed to benefit financially from the proceeds of this land, but the trust has become a war zone between the Kingdom or the Zulu nation, the government and the business sector renting and leasing the land. "Minister appoints new Ingonyama Trust board amid reported rifts within Zulu monarchy" (News24, 2023).

McCall (1995:259) further reports that the land must have farms for food production, where the elders will introduce their children to the way of life, as taught by their ancestors, and instill in them the believe that even in the fields or farms, ancestors are hovering and looking after their crops, chasing away evil spirits such as drought and insects that could kill the crops. In other words, the moral of teaching these children about the ancestors in the fields is that ancestors care about life. I assume that at the time of good harvesting, the living will again take children to the field where praise and gratitude will be expressed in veneration of the role played by the ancestors for good harvesting.

Case study.

Currently in Mafikeng, people living in the town come from the far areas surrounding the Mafikeng and they eventually settle and build house and homes, upon their death, their wishes are normally to be buried at their villages where their ancestors sleeping. Meaning at the land of their ancestors. Their belief is that it will be easy to re-unite with ancestors other than having to spiritually travel from town to the land of their ancestors when they want to spiritually connect with them. This has posed a problem to pastors who stays in Mafikeng and having to travel distance for burial.

The above case study shows that there is an existing relationship between the living and the ancestors, and that land becomes a meeting and a connecting place for the two. Land again

.

becomes the passage in which the departed wishes to use when crossing to the other side of the spiritual world.

2.3 Summary.

In this section of the research, data, and information on the provided relevant literature was looked at, analysed and interpreted. Comparisons were done between worshipping, rituals and practices of the Mainstream churches and the AIC. A brief definition of the selected churches was given, and six topics were formulated to answer the research questions. Herewith are essential findings and discussion from the literature review:

2.3.1 The church prior to the 1994-democratic dispensation in South Africa.

2.3.1.1 Role of the church in the apartheid era.

In making sense of the role of the church during apartheid, Chikane (1992:118-122) claims that the role of the churches during apartheid era was amongst others, to identify themselves with those suffering in distress of oppression and therefore, the churches' doors were open in solidarity with the oppressed. Churches played a vital role in representing the Kingdom of God in the past and continue to do so in the current times, characterised by the pandemic of diseases and crime. The Mainstream churches and AIC were the custodians of social cohesion in their respective spaces, and collectively acted in solidarity against the evil apartheid regime during the pre-liberation South Africa.

The solidarity demonstrated by these churches was quintessential for the survival of vulnerable and brutally oppressed black communities in South Africa. Chipkin and Nqgulungu (2008:61) defined social cohesion as that which holds a nation together, '… a situation where citizens of a state share feelings of solidarity with their compatriots, and act on the basis of such feelings.'

The oral history tells of black women who owned shebeens and turned their houses into hiding places for young people who were fighting the apartheid soldiers. Equally so, the ministers from the Mainstream churches and AIC would open their churches to be used as strategic meetings to the regime. Some churches were used as preparatory meetings to take young and wanted people across the country for survival.

.

Perhaps an argument can be formulated in respect of the role of two churches in that the Mainstream churches may argue that it was at the forefront in fighting apartheid system and to some degree, this may be true. A counter argument can also be made by the AIC to say, long before apartheid came into effect, the AIC resisted the western invasion which contributed to the birth of apartheid. This is the truth, and the point has been re-emphasised a couple of times in the research paper.

If churches were used to host people fighting for liberation and justice for other people, we then need to ask about the role of the church of today regarding the socio- economic challenges that people are presently faced with. Perhaps one must formulate a new mandate of the church of today, and in doing so, firstly look at what the church is doing, right or wrong, and then come up with ways to formulate the mandate. This research paper is underpinned by the pain exercised from the church regarding the practices and worship of ancestral veneration, that is, education and dialogue should probably be the starting point. This pain is historical because of the effects of colonialism and Eurocentrism.

2.3.1.2 Colonialism.

The invasion of colonisers in the form of "missionaries" was detrimental to the life of the church in Africa because it brought confusion and division on the worship practices of the Africans. Lamola (1984) asserts that it was during the nineteenth centuries where this division occurred, and the AIC rose soon after that with its radical affirmation of "African humanity and Black self-hood". This was a fight back from what missionaries taught them about the bible which was a distortion of their worship practices. Mokhutso (2022:4) supports this by saying that the influx of missionaries in the 19th centuries interacted with the African indigenous communities by observing their way of life but at the same time, concluded that Africans are barbaric, backward and heathen. For these missionaries went out of their way not only to convert Africans into Christianity but packaged that Christianity into European culture.

It was during that time, when African culture, practices and rituals were under scrutiny and under pressure that the Zionist Church stood its ground against what seemed to be the death of Africa. Pfeiffer (2002:179) argues that the AIC in their Zionist attitude represented a form of "spirit resistance" to the "structural predicament" of the peasant-proletarian in the political

.

economy of apartheid. This means that AIC did not only fight against western ideologies but had to confront the depressing economic conditions of apartheid era which cannot be separated from colonisers.

Colonialism cannot be discarded in this study because it played a negative role in the approach and existence of both the churches by dividing and destroying the way Africans worshipped. For example, Africans were made to feel inferior on how they dressed, spoke and how they gave names to their children and the houses they lived in.

There is also oral history traced to the oppression in the pre-liberation era where some black people's surnames were changed because white people could not pronounce them. For example, "*Phiri*" was changed to Wolf, "*Mthimkhulu*" was changed to *Grootboom* and "*Makhetha*" was changed to "Magrath." English names were referred to as Christian names as if having vernacular whereas African names, was not regarded as Christian. Mtuze (2003: 10) who spoke against the impact of Western influence in the early church says: "To become a Christian was to become westernised, to live in square houses, wear Western clothes and participate in the colonial economy." Similarly, Mtuze (2003:10) and Marumo (2019:4) claim that missionaries arrived along with colonial powers of Europe with the sincere belief that is culturally misguided, attempted to save these primitive, idolatrous natives from their ignorance of true religion and their lack of civilisation. The primitives refer to the Africans who already had their way of practicing and worshipping God.

The division did not stop and produced what is now known as Mainstream churches and AIC churches. Whilst the Mainstream churches and AIC continue to co-exist, the effects of the work of colonisers have left the two churches far apart with doctrinal understanding and their worship practices towards ancestral veneration.

On the other hand, Bediako (1993:7) contends that "Christianity has become a non-western religion, but it has become a universal religion, adding that Africa has played a significant role in that process." As much as missionaries brought Christianity and undermined the African way of doing things and worshipping, Africans have managed to turn the tables and are able to do Christianity in a contextualised African way. In this regard, Christianity has been merged into African cultures and thoughts and it is no longer a stand-alone sector or ideology. The

.

word "*Ubuntu*" (humanity) emerged in the fusion of Christianity and Africanity, this to make sense of the fellowship and the ways of worshipping by Africans.

2.3.1.3 Eurocentrism.

The Mainstream churches which according to Mtuze (2003:10) were influenced by the missionaries with their western colonial tactics opted to be predominantly western in its worship practice. The word "predominantly" is used carefully so that an impression is not created that the Mainstream churches are completely western. That is, as much as Mainstream is western, Africans attending the Mainstream services whilst recognising their Africanism as such, preaching, singing, and praying, are not done in western languages but in African languages.

The resilience of the AIC as captured by Pfeiffer (2002:179) and Chipkin and Leatt (2011) is also acknowledged by Adedibu (2018:1) by mentioning the refusal by the AIC to change its African ways of worshipping and doing church that the name "African Independent Church" was formulated in defiance to the colonisers. This means that when colonisers arrived in Africa with their Eurocentric tactics of doing church, the AIC refused to be changed and be westernised. As such the AIC then remains authentic to how it had been worshipped prior to the arrival of the colonisers. It is that resilience which made worship practice of the AIC to be predominately ancestor venerated.

This view of worshipping and venerating ancestors by AIC is further supported by Adamo (2001: iii) in his book "Reading and Interpreting the bible in Africa" that the AIC opted to be Afrocentric in their worship and practices because Afrocentrism does not deny or degrade other people's approaches. This was in contrast and in rejecting the Mainstream churches with their Eurocentric theological approach. Adamo claims that one of the roles of the AIC was to resolve the crisis of identity which the western missionaries came and confused African people with, through their Eurocentric theology. The crisis here was that of colonisers coming up with the theology which undermined African people, thus robbing them of their identity. As mentioned earlier, people were given English names and were called Christian names as if African names were demonic and un-Christian. Unfortunately, most of Africans fell into that trap and hence the AIC quest to resolve the identity crisis.

.

2.3.1.4 Religion during apartheid.

Even though the church struggled during apartheid era, religion had its fair share of problems with the same common enemy of colonialism reigning havoc. However, Chipkin and Leatt (2011) state that from the beginning, South Africa has always been a religious society even at the start of apartheid. Apartheid was so forceful that Christianity was politicised and the Dutch Reformed Church was a custodian of the theology of oppression. It is apartheid which further damaged the relationship of black people against each other in all spheres of life including religion. Therefore, if there are dichotomies in worshipping and practices regarding ancestral veneration, apartheid had contributed to that. Furthermore, if there are tensions between different religions in South Africa, blame should also be put on the oppressors who used apartheid as a tool to divide the people according to race, culture, and religion.

2.3.2 The response of the church to apartheid prior to 1994 in South Africa: Social cohesion- "Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu."

The Mainstream churches and the AIC were part of the oppressed people and part of the confession because they existed and are still part of the same society, they continued then as they continue now with their different denominational practices. It is worth mentioning that the concept of "*Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu"(*I am because you are*)* was and is not a concept initiated by the church. It may have emanated from the cry of the oppressed people. In other words, long beforethe existence of the different churches, the concept existed in the way people relate with each other and so forth.

An example of this social cohesion will be at the funeral. People will come and help where they can with money, cooking and arranging the funeral. It was during the services of these churches where the concept of "*Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*" *"(*I am because you are*)* was realised and practiced during difficult times that black South Africans went through. An argument can be made that the proclamation and practice of "*Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu"* (I am because you are) *was* a public witness or confession of oppressed.

Mutebi (2005:953-955) contributes by saying that social cohesion and participation helped the community to find themselves against all odds by allowing people's high level of participation in problem solving and arriving at the intended outcomes. For example, in some

.

villages, in South Africa, the problem of accusations of witchcraft continues to be resolved by social cohesion of the villages and their active participation in dialogue. Therefore, if ancestral veneration posed a problem within the churches and the community, active dialogue driven by the spirit of social cohesion should be a solution. After all, “simunye.” (We are one).

2.3.3 African Spirituality.

African spirituality can be seen as the umbrella, or the mother body of all spiritualties found in and moving in Africa. Du Toit (1998:47) argues that African Spirituality as expressed by black theologians is the experience of the Holy Spirit moving communities to be life giving and life affirming. People celebrate spirituality in songs, rituals and symbols which show the energising spirit animating the community to move in response to God. The study looked at the dichotomies within the Mainstream churches and AIC which has a mixture of all races. The understanding of African spirituality was helpful in navigating amongst others the gaps, cracks, differences, and similarities the Mainstream churches and AIC have.

It was easy to maneuver around the establishment of the AIC because in their nature the AIC are African and spiritual, whereas Mainstream churches present a different outlook on African spirituality. Again, it was easy for me to detect a dichotomy the conversation around ancestral veneration was easy and flowing. Within the Mainstream, one was confronted with western history before the subject of ancestral veneration could be addressed.

2.3.4 Traditional African Spirituality (TAS).

There is an understanding of the TAS which expresses that Africans were never meant to have prayer and hymn books in their worshipping styles. Mbaya and Cezula (2019:430-431) mention that this is because Africans are controlled by authentic spirituality and therefore are intensely spiritual beings. Prayer, singing, and dancing are central to African worship in remembrance of the ancestors who serve as intermediaries/mediators. It is in the TAS where the worship and practice produce holiness, cleanliness of the heart, purity, faith, joy, trust, thanksgiving, and confidence in God. This information was important in this study because it helped in understanding how the AIC immerse themselves in African spirituality when worshipping and how that is different from the Mainstream churches.

.

It also presented a dichotomy in the two churches by highlighting that the AIC does not have printed or hard copies of hymn books. At least they have printed hard copies of the Bible. On the other hand, Mainstream churches have printed hard copies of hymn books with different sections such as hymns and liturgical prayers of different occasions.

2.3.5 African Traditional Religion (ATR).

Parallel to TAS, is ATR which, Awolula (1976:42) describes as indigenous religious beliefs practices of Africans available to sustain and preserve the faith of our forebears. Awolula(1976:42) continues to say, it is the religion which no person can claim to be written in any paper but in the people's hearts, minds, rituals, shrines and religious functions and based on oral transmission. Awolula further states that ATR has worshippers who are loyal and whose roots are embattled in indigenous religion. ATR is about Africans discovering what they know, think, and believe about the world they live in.

As alluded to in the introduction of this study, the colonisers with their misplaced theology undermined what and how Africans worshipped and labelled with inferior and degrading names. Awolula (1976:44) also asserts that the ATR was not saved from such labels. Awolula mentions that ATR was called: primitive (old fashioned-simplicity of old times), savage (violent-rude-uncivilized), animist (attributing a living soul to inanimate objects and natural phenomena), idolatrous and pagan (worship of false gods). Moreover, Ikwuagwu (2007: 16) submits that ATR has no founder, and no one can claim its originality, but it should be viewed as the religion of all Africans within themselves. ATR therefore should also be seen to find themselves and remain firm to their culture amid the missionary's invasion. This is echoed by Awolula (1976:42) who defines ATR as a response and coping mechanism of Africans in their own experiences in and about the world and the Africans responses to remain traditional and indigenous in their beliefs and practices.

Mbiti (1975:17-19) supports the above statements and defends ATR. Mbiti (1975:17-19) puts it that there have been wrong ideas about Africa and African religion in general, arguing that this was perpetuated by scholars and writers, some of whom have never been in Africa. Many derogatory words were said to the point that Africans began to believe what was said about them:

.

- That African religion is wrongly called ancestor worship. This is wrong as indicated earlier that Africans worship God and not the departed.

- That African religion is wrongly called superstition. Superstition is readiness to believe and fear something without proper grounds. ART has shown that more than beliefs themselves, there are much deeper spiritual experiences and reflections for it to be called superstition.

- That African religion is wrongly called animism or paganism. The recognition and acknowledgment of the existence by Africans should not constitute paganism because this is only a portion of African beliefs. It is further an African view that God is considered supreme and all spirits and everything are under Him.

- That African religion is called magic or fetishism. It is wrong to equate ATR with magic because their belief is that there is super force in the world in which those who know how, can tap in it and use it. Indeed, some people can use that in good and in evil (witchcraft). In any case, witchcraft, and sorcery feature much in the traditional life of African people.

2.4 Biblical context of the ancestral veneration in the Old Testament and New Testament.

2.4.1 Old Testament.

The reading of both the Old Testament and New Testament gives an indication of the role of ancestral veneration. One of the methods used by God to identify Himself in the conversation with Moses (Exodus 3 is in verse 15b) “Lord of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob...” The mentioning of these names was to remind Moses of his ancestors and compel him to venerate.

2.4.1.1 Deuteronomy 18:9-18.

According to Tucker (1987), the writing of the book of the Deuteronomy can be traced 600 years after the death of Moses and at the time where false prophecy was high. This made the

.

readers to be doubtful of what they read given their state of prophecy then. However, Tucker (1978) mentions two points about the book, which are of importance to this study. He says, the book of the Deuteronomy presents to the readers the evidence of God speaking face to face with the people. Secondly, he says "chapter 18:15-22 gives a catalogue of prohibited activities, specifically identifying them as abominable practices of other nations." The literal reading of Deuteronomy 19: 9-18 is about giving the law to the people which Tucker (1987) supports. Schmidt (2002:242) agrees with Tucker (1987) about giving of the law and asserts that Deuteronomy 18 carries the weight of Moses' last instructions to the Israelites about not forgetting their rituals, lest they get swallowed by sinful practices of other nations, in this case the Canaanite cultures. Gorospe (2016:15) highlights that:

- The objective of the law in the ancient Israel was to lead them in their spiritual direction as a nation.
- Promised Land entrance was therefore a sign of carrying the law and be motivated by the law.
- This law related to the Israel story of deliverance from slavery, both politically and religiously, and warns against being enslaved.

It is from the view of Schmidt, Gorospe, and Tucker (2016:16) that chapter 18 of the book of Deuteronomy is about giving the law to the Israelites when they arrived in Canaan. There is a list of what to do and what not to do. One of the laws in verse 11 reads "No one should be found amongst you who casts spells, or who consults ghosts or spirits, or seek oracles from the dead." Verse 12 reads "for whoever is found doing those things, will be driven away." It is the law given and people were expected to abide and follow that law. Here, with the law which prohibits consultation with spirits-ancestors and other spirits, law against any form of ritual other than those written in the law.

2.4.1.2 Samuel 28: 3 to 25.

Chapter 28:3 to 25 has been read and interpreted differently by some scholars. For example, Kent (2014:3) asserts that the text addresses and reveals a "vibrant cult" of the ancestor worship at some places such as "Ugarit" in the ancient Israel, and he continues to mention that

.

there has been an ongoing battle throughout Israel's history between the normative Yahwism and the practitioners of the death rituals on the then popular religions. I understand this to mean that in as much as part of this study deals with the battle of understanding the ancestral calling, this battle has been there before, and it is not confirmed within African cultures only.

The Israelites, according to Kent (2014:4), have also been faced with different views and perceptions regarding ancestral beliefs and practices. Kent (2014:4) continues to say the text displays Saul's vulnerability to fortune telling and uses the words "bringing up" as words used to bring Samuel from the dead to speak to him. Mulaudzi (2013:3) argues that only God can bring someone up as narrated in 1 Samuel 2:6. In other words, Kent (2014:3) is of the view that the woman who helped Saul was not real but demonic and used illusions to fool Saul.

On the other hand, Mulaudzi (2013:4) reads the text and points out that Saul was faithful to God by keeping Moses' laws. Saul continued to keep the Deuteronomy-Mosaic law which pleases Yahweh alone. This is by chasing the mediums and witches away as recorded (Deuteronomy 18:10-11). However, Mulaudzi (2013:4) continues to say that Saul was desperate to speak to Samuel for advice on the upcoming war and Saul found himself having to break the very same law, which he embraced for many years. In other words, Mulaudzi (2003:4) seems to be agreeing with Kent (1987:3) but justifies the "sinful act of Saul" of consulting with the witches/mediums.

Kiboko (2010:2) approaches and looks at the text and defends the medium woman who helped Saul by recognising the gift she possesses even after she was threatened and chased away. What Kiboko (2010:2) does not do however, is to make his side clear on whether he agrees with the notion of a medium or not. In other words, the question is does Kiboko (2012:2) recognise the ancestral powers which exist or not? This approach disputes the views of Kent and Mulaudzi. Kiboko looks at the woman and the pain she has suffered already because of her gift of talking to the dead and he identifies that woman with his grandmother, mother, and aunt. Kiboko concludes by saying "Samuel 28:3 to 28 is an example of biblical passage that calls for a fresh reading, one that will address the situation, which Christ faces in Central Africa."

The story of Saul and the medium brought up in this study provides the activeness of the ancestors in people's situations. The story of the Transfiguration in Matthew 17 is about

.

Moses and Elijah who in the eyes of Jesus, Peter, and John, died long time ago and are ancestors to them. Moses and Elijah are seen communicating privately with Jesus by the three disciples.

2.4.1.3 Isaiah 8:16-23.

The book of prophet Isaiah, with its 66 chapters, is one of the longest books in the Old Testament. Chapter 8: 16-23 is regarded by Whitley (2009:28) as one of the difficult passages of language which leads the reader to no conclusion on what it wants to say. It uses the language which historically has sparked the debate amongst theologians on what God wanted to say. However, it can be summarised in that it is a passage in which God presents God self as the only line or channel of communication.

In this passage, people are questioned as to why they believe in ancestors when there is God, and why is there a need to ask help from the dead people. Ancestors are forbidden in this passage. God appears to be angry at people who are perceived to put God and ancestors (dead people) in the same level of power and knowledge.

2.4.1.4 Leviticus 20: 6, 27.

Leviticus is found in the Old Testament within the first five books which start the bible. Its name originates from the first word which starts the book “wayyiqra” which means “and he called.” This is explained by Wenham (1979:3) who further states that, that was then turned into Latin Vulgate translation in the early Greek times. It was from that time where it was found that the book should be part of the Pentateuch (books of the law or the Torah), Wenham continues and argues that the book of Leviticus should not only be seen as Priestly matters because there is more to it like how laity got involved in the worship.

In both verses 6 and 27, ancestors are dismissed, and those following them and have received the spirit of the dead are to be killed. Both the Isaiah and Leviticus scriptures can be questioned in terms of their historical background, but the point of this study is to show how ancestral veneration was viewed in both the New and Old Testaments.

2.4.2 New Testament.

2.4.2.1 Matthew 17.

.

Like other three Gospels in the New Testament, the book of Matthew has Jesus at the center of the document. Erdman (1936:12-16) tells of the purpose of the book of Matthew which is to proclaim salvation to the people. Furthermore, Jesus is the King, the Messiah and the rejected one. What comes out with Matthew in comparison with Gospels, is his emphasis on the returning of Jesus.

In Matthew 17, (Jesus is communicating with dead Moses and Elijah) therefore has similar event with the story of the medium in 1 Samuel 28 (medium who can communicate with dead Samuel). Here we see in both the Old Testament and the New Testament scriptures, biblical evidence of the communication of the living and the dead (ancestors). What was more interesting about the story in the book of Samuel was that it is not only the story of the ancestors but also the story of those gifted with "spirits" such as the ability to speak with the dead, which is ancestral spirit.

In this story, Peter says "let us build three tabernacles, one for Moses, one for Elijah and one for you Jesus and stay here." Peter is venerating the living (Jesus) and the dead (Moses and Elijah) at the same time. Peter is expressing that appreciation. Erdman (1936:155) brings the picture of the appearance of Moses and Elijah to Jesus as those coming to prepare him for his death. What Erdman argues is the evidence that dismisses some views of some people who believe that death is the end of the soul and that there is nothing more to get from the dead person.

2.4.2.2 Galatians 1:13-16.

The greetings of Paul to the Galatians have the same rhythm as other greetings he made to other churches, but what is important about this one in relation to this study is how he greets and traces what he has done before and continues to do, as ancestral tradition. In other words, Paul tells the Galatian church that whilst he is the follower of Christ and he has met with Peter, the apostle, he has obeyed the practices and rituals of his ancestors. In other words, being the follower of Jesus and being Christian does not take away one's roots and cultural identity. What may be contested however, is when some rituals and practices clash with the principle of Christianity. For example, if a ritual and practices are performed in such a way that the supremacy of God is undermined, then that should be forbidden.

.

2.4.2.3 Hebrews 1: 1-7.

In this chapter the author brings Jesus as the Son whom God has given to the world to communicate directly with him. In doing so, the author acknowledges ancestors and makes comparisons of communicating methods of God to the people "long ago, God spoke many times to our ancestors but now He speaks to us directly through Jesus, His Son." As much as ancestors are acknowledged here, their role is discarded, and Jesus is then brought as the ultimate communicator.

2.4.2.4 Luke 16:19-31.

A Gentile and medical person (as recorded in the book of Colossians 4:14), gives Luke a symbol of a calf (Barclay, 2001:3). Barclay further indicates that the book of was written to Theophilus to give a picture of what it looks like to be closer to God which both of them, never saw.

In chapter 16, a picture of dead people being carried up by angles to the bosom of Abraham is given. The second picture is of communication between the dead (Lazarus), the saint (Abraham) and the rich man. So, there is evidence of communication between angels, saints and the dead (ancestors).

Having looked at the ancestral veneration in the Old and New Testaments as well as the gaps and cracks in how the ancestors were used and viewed differently, perhaps there is a need to reconcile and affirm the place of ancestral veneration in both Testaments. It is important because the bible is the tool used by Christians and by theology to make sense of God.

Becken (1972:48) helps in these reconciliation and affirmation of the place of ancestral veneration by putting some African names of God to stand in between Old and New Testaments. Here are some names of God and their meaning.

- Mwari is a Shona name which means The Supreme Being
- Muwari is a Congolese name which means The Strong One
- Mulungu is a Zambian name which means The Creator
- Nkulunkulu is a Zulu name which means The Great Great One…

All of the above names and meaning encapsulates the titles of God in the Old and New Testaments. In other words, before the bible was introduced to Africa, an understanding of

.

the Supreme One amongst the people already existed.

Both the Old and New Testaments presented different views about ancestors and ancestral calling. As indicated, a counter argument on the historical background of these texts, passages and verses is welcomed. However, that should not dismiss the evidence of the conflicting views regarding the ancestral calling in the bible. It is my assumption that the bible therefore becomes one of the books in which dichotomies regarding the belief in ancestral veneration are identified.

2.5 Identified dichotomies between Mainstream churches and AIC.

2.5.1 In house dichotomies.

2.5.1.1 Individual dichotomies.

The interviews conducted had mixed views regarding the dichotomies between the Mainstream churches and AIC. The expectation was that it was going to be this church against that church, fighting about different doctrines and theologies, on ancestral veneration. Watts, Nye & Savage (2002:29) urge caution around individuals who attend different types of churches at the same time. This, they say, has the potential to confuse and destroy their ministries. This threatens their doctrinal, liturgical, cultural practices and doctrines and their understanding of God. This is true because in as much as churches pray and worship one God, the approaches, rituals, and practices are different, which is why this study is conducted in the first place. One of the participants in this interview was a wife belonging to the Mainstream churches and her husband belonging to the AIC. It was going to be an interesting interview should I have been given the opportunity to interview both. The husband belongs to the church which prohibits the belief in ancestral veneration and the wife belongs to the Mainstream churches which is accommodative of ancestral veneration.

2.5.1.2 Family dichotomies.

The family set in the modern world is that of members of the family with the right to freedom of religion as enshrined in the Bill of Rights, chapter two of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, 2023). For example, in a family of four; mother, father, son and daughter, all of them could belong to four different

.

types of churches. The father could belong to the Mainstream churches, mother to AIC, Son to Pentecostal and daughter may choose to belong to any church.

This then illustrates that dichotomies cut across churches, individuals, and organisational structures. It is possible that the son and the daughter can belong to the church which does not recognise ancestral veneration whilst parents do. In some cases, some members of one family will not participate in the family rituals such as “mpha-badimo” (ceremony of food and drinks as a gift to ancestors) and they will choose to stay away because of their church teachings and beliefs. This may pose a family conflict especially if the father who is regarded as the head of the family is the one initiating the ceremony. It can be viewed as disrespectful to the father who ancestrally represents the ancestors.

2.5.2 Traceable dichotomies.

2.5.2.1 Historical dichotomies.

Both the Mainstream churches and the AIC are part of the country that has painful but resilient history. Starting from the invasion of the settlers to the democratic dispensation and current socio-economic and political challenges. It is believed that prior to missionaries, Africans understood that there was a supreme being which was worshipped. It is the course and the event of history which brought the division in understanding that Supreme God. Over time, the African rituals and practices were replaced by modern teachings brought by westerns and at the end, African churches and African people view each other with different eyes. Therefore, there is an overall conclusion that Mainstream churches is western, and AIC are home grounded-African. Mainstream churches is more flexible and accommodative on the discussion of Ancestral Veneration and in the AIC, majority do recognise the ancestral veneration except the ZCC. Whilst Mainstream churches are flexible on the discussion, there is still taboo around Ancestral veneration. This means if no one brings the Ancestral veneration for discussion, it will not be brought on the table for discussion.

The dichotomies between the Mainstream churches and the AIC can also be traced from the different church attires they wear. Mainstream churches identified in this study wear uniforms which is western designed. It is believed for example that waistcoat jackets of the Young Men Guild originate from the British soldiers and the Women organisation uniform originates from

.

the housemaids in Britain. On the other hand, the uniform of the AIC identified in this study are colorful African colors made in Africa. The ZCC men for example, wear white boots/shoes made from the crocodile skin which is a revered reptile in Africa.

2.5.2.2 Materialistic dichotomies.

The observation is that the Mainstream churches is served by well-educated ministers who came from different theological colleges and have academically been trained in most of the work they are doing. These ministers are predominantly employed full time by their different churches. Moreover, there is a spirit of democracy in the systems and structures in Mainstream such as policies that govern the running of the church. In terms of assets, the Mainstream seems to possess big buildings called mega churches and most of them have proper buildings. The Mainstream churches have protocols, processes, councils, synods, and conferences which govern their daily running.

On the other hand, the AIC do not have a record of theological and academic seminars where they are trained. There is also a lack of democracy in terms of running the church whereby some of the churches are run and controlled by family members and the level of patriarchy is high. It can be argued that some AIC such ZCC and Shembe Nazareth church have billions of assets in their possession, but much of the AIC do not have proper buildings. As such, their services are held in the zinc houses and their major events are held in the mountain or open spaces. It is some of these dichotomies between the two groupings of churches which in some cases, cause friction, undermining and disrespect between them.

2.5.3 Christian-Spirituality-dichotomies.

Smith (2007:7-8) asserts that Christian Spirituality is often looked at from the point of doctrine or experience but he encourages that Christian spirituality be looked from the intellectual point of view where knowledge and experience are put together for better understanding of God. In simpler terms, Smith suggests that Christian Spirituality should be a platform to understand God's awareness and transcendent. This understanding of God can be done individually or collectively.

Having said this, we should note that the churches identified in this study are Christian churches with others leaning in African theology and others in Western theology, but both are

.

driven by Christian Spirituality as the base of their faith. It is Nurnberger (2007:83) who highlights that African tradition with its rituals and practices does fit in the realm of Christian Spirituality if there is nothing done which contradicts Christianity. An example of such would be a cultic behaviour of drinking animals' blood as a ritual for strength.

2.5.3.1 Spiritual dichotomies.

The noticeable dichotomy between the Mainstream churches and the AIC is how they handle spirituality during their services and outside the services. For example, the Ethiopian female members and other AIC churches wear white or green "doek" throughout their lives as a sign of their commitment to the spirituality of their church. The white or green doek has a spiritual meaning that keeps them close to the Lord. The ZCC also has the badge that is bearing a star or the dove, which is worn or inserted on the side of their heart everywhere they go. This is not just an identification symbol as it further expresses their spirituality to the church.

Secondly, the ZCC members do not eat certain foods, commonly "pork meat" because they reference it to the Matthew 8:28-38 where Jesus removes the evil spirit from the man and threw it in a group of pigs. It is from there, where pigs were regarded dirty and ZCC considers pork impure and dirty. ZCC's stand about pork is a spirituality issue to them. Furthermore, the Church of Christ assembly locates its spirituality whilst on the pilgrimage to their headquarters where every year in February and September. To them, altars and sacrifices are their sense of spirituality.

This is a different in the Mainstream churches. Their uniform is, as mentioned earlier, inherited form the colonial tradition, and is very expensive and has no spiritual significance. They do not believe in pilgrimages other than celebrating Easter. Mainstream churches locate their spirituality only in the bible, in prayer and worshipping and their liturgy which as indicated, are western inclined. MCSA for example, is governed by the Wesleyan tradition, which derives from John Wesley, who originates from England.

The AIC activities during the service include lot of dancing, burping, screaming, preaching, and praying out loud. It can be chaotic as it is sometimes as "holy chaos" because that is how they soak themselves in the spirituality. On the other hand, the mainstream is rigid, formal, and liturgical in nature.

.

2.5.3.2 Rituals and practices.

Due to its African traditional nature, the AIC is notorious with rituals and practices whilst the Mainstream churches pay no particular attention to rituals and practices. However, there are common rituals between the two, albeit with different approaches. The common rituals and practices are singing, praying, and worshipping. Both the churches do every moment of their gathering to the point of them being rituals and practices.

However, there are other rituals and practices which are dichotomic in both. AIC believe in the slaughtering of animals and burning them as a sacrifice and thanksgiving to their ancestors. Secondly, AIC believes in built alters, mountains and rivers as places of worship. Some of the AIC still practice their baptism at the rivers. All rituals and practices of the AIC are deeply African. On the other hand, the Mainstream churches do necessarily have rituals and practices within their practices but have normal order of services written in their hymnal book which were translated from English into the African language being spoken.

2.5.4 Academic dichotomies.

We have already discovered that the AIC do not have formal seminaries or colleges where they are trained and most of their pastors do not possess any form of theological qualification. Their sermons and preaching are from their head and heart and controlled by the spirit.

This is different when coming to the Mainstream churches because there is evidence of seminaries such the Seth Mokitimi Methodist seminary and the Lutheran church college. Pastors are taken to such institutions for a period not less than three years. Upon completion of their academic studies, they still had to undergo further training up until ordination. This may take six to seven years of full training. Moreover, there are refresher courses now and then to keep pastors relevant in their education.

It has been observed as a painful and burning issue where congregants undermine each other because of the level of education their pastors have. Of course, the Mainstream churches will brag about education and their response, the AIC will defend about God who welcomes all regardless of their status.

2.5.5 Theological and doctrinal dichotomies.

.

2.5.5.1 Ordination.

Having gone through the rigorous process of academic excellence and formation, the Mainstream minister qualifies for ordination. Ordination is a rite for the dedication and commissioning of ministers. The essential ceremony consists of the laying of hands of the ordaining minister upon the head of the one being ordained, with prayer for the gifts of the Holy Spirit and grace required for carrying out the ministry (Britanicca.com). Ordination is in one sense at least like the academic degree. Once you are ordained, it cannot be reversed or be taken away even at the point of one leaving the ministry. In the MCSA for example, ordination is a sign of being received in full Connextion. Full Connextion emanates from the apostolic succession within the church history where after the death of Jesus, apostles multiplied to serve the Lord. It is Harvey (2017:105) who postulates that within the services of the church, it is only the ordained ministers who are qualified to administer Eucharist and baptism.

There is no record of the AIC pastors going through the process of ordination of the actual ceremony of ordaining a minister. Regarding Holy Communion and baptism, ministers of the AIC do not provide Eucharist but do participate in baptism.

2.5.5.2 The Bible.

The seminary training of the ministers of the Mainstream churches becomes helpful in dealing with the Bible. They can explore, interrogate, contextualise, and apply it to fit the current challenges facing the people. It is in the Mainstream churches where the Bible studies are conducted with intense exegesis of the bible. The AIC have no records of such bible studies and the bible is read and preached literally as it is.

2.5.5.3 Baptism.

Both the Mainstream churches and AIC recognise infant and adult baptism. The Mainstream churches conduct baptism inside church whilst AIC prefer out-door baptism, most of the times, at the rivers. Mainstream churches baptise once as sign of welcoming a new member in the community of Christ, whilst some AIC such as ZCC believe in re-baptism. In other words, when one joins ZCC from another church already baptised, ZCC will baptise the same person again.

.

This re-baptism of members from one church to another is also a hot potato within the congregants of these two churches. ZCC is seen as undermining the value and the significance of the first baptism and the authority of the other church to baptism.

2.5.5.4 Music.

The Mainstream churches has music which is western composed with notes with clear theological lyrics. The message in the hymns is that of adoration, confession, thanksgiving and, intercession. Music is used to pray, worship and to heal during the services of the church. The AIC do sometimes copy some music from the Mainstream churches and sing it in their own worshipping styles of drums and clapping of hands mainly. The AIC does have some songs which they have composed but most of them are those who revere their leaders other than God. More the same as the Roman Catholic Church which sings to St Mary as the passage to God, so is the AIC singing to revere their leaders as the passage to God.

2.6 Theological exploration of Ancestral Veneration.

2.6.1 Ancestral veneration in Ecclesiology.

The church is a place where believers come together to worship God in any form. It is understood that Jesus is the sole owner of the church and whatever takes place in the church should be what Jesus commanded. Nkurunzisa (2007:1) defines the church a sacrament of union with God and unity amongst all people. The nature of the church is understood with specific reference to Christ which then makes a church to be a place where we experience the vital dynamic encounter with the God of our salvation. Bujo (1992:92) indicates that Jesus cannot be separated from ecclesiology because he is seen as the founder of a new community, the community of faith.

An event of the church such as Holy Communion is a celebration of breaking bread and drinking wine in remembrance of the death of Jesus and his instruction to “do this in remembrance of me” (Luke 22:19). This is done in a gathering of believers sharing together the bread and the wine in prayer and worship.

Furthermore, Mosothoane (1973:92) postulates that it is at Holy Communion moment where God is not only in communion with the believers, but also with the departed or ancestors. Mosothoane further says, Holy Communion should therefore be a platform which should

.

encourage ancestral veneration. The suggestion is that churches should provide special rooms where after worshipping and praying God, people can take time to venerate their ancestors in the provided rooms. Mosothoane (1973:92) suggests that true ancestral veneration can be done during the celebration of Holy Communion whereby those eating and drinking can name out or hail names of their ancestors as a way of venerating them.

I do agree with Mosothoane95) (1973: in this statement, however, there are complexities around the idea of a church opening rooms for ancestral veneration. Earlier in this study, I indicated that the subject of ancestral veneration is still a taboo in some churches. Data collected revealed that some churches do not believe in ancestral veneration and therefore to make such a general statement of allowing people to venerate ancestors within the space of church may be problematic when implemented.

Bujo (1992:94) makes a contrast between Holy Communion celebrated in a gathering with the ancestral meal event and claims that Holy Communion should be seen as proto-ancestral meal.

“Mpha Badimo” (ceremony of food and drinks as a gift to ancestors) is where people gather to share African beer and food in venerating ancestors. Therefore, culturally, if this contrast is made, one could assume that the church in a sense becomes “ntlo ya badimo” (House of ancestors). However, we should not be carried away by the ancestor-ship of the church and run the risk of creating a co-ownership of the church by God and Ancestors. God is supreme and even the sacrifices done in the church, worship and praying are done to revere God. A church is a body of Christ - interconnectedness of human beings - relationship between ancestors and the living.

This interconnectedness of God, ancestors and the living in a form of a church is further explained by Nkuruziza (2007:55) when saying that Africans continue to be thirsty for communion with a vital greater vital force to find fulfilment in the church. This means a church should make space for an encounter with the visible - the living, and the invisible - God and ancestors, which in turn makes people to realise that there is a visible church of the living, and the invisible church of God and ancestors which co-exist.

This study is faced with the reality of painful dichotomies experienced in the church; dichotomies which continue to harm and divide the people of God. Nkuruziza (2007:57) adds

.

that these divisions or dichotomies are caused by history and cultures to mention but a few, and these continue to pose a theological challenge to the church in Africa. Nkuruziza (2007:57) further suggests that diversity in unity may be key in resolving the crises of the church and puts it that "*Üna sancta, Catholica et apostoloca ecclesia,*" reminding the church that it is one, Holy catholic and apostolic in nature, and that its extra standing of being a community of communities, family of families, clan of clans and a symbol of communion with the ancestors.

2.6.2 Ancestral veneration in Christology.

Christology is about the study of Jesus Christ. As Akijar (2000:10) puts it that the term Christology is derived from the name of our Lord Christ. It is the systematic reflection on the person, being and doing of Jesus Christ.

Bujo (1992:80) quotes the washing of the feed in John 13 and demonstrates that Jesus is seen as the brother ancestor or proto ancestor. Bujo suggests that Jesus gathered his disciples for the last time as he was about to die and gave them the last instructions. This act is like the African way when an elder is about to die and will call his/her children together in his/her room and begin to give them instructions on how to live without him/her.

There is biblical evidence that even though Jesus was divine, he was also incarnated and became a human which then qualifies Jesus to be an ancestor. Nyamiti (1979:50) contends that God could directly be the great ancestor, but it was in God's wisdom to bestow his son to the world through incarnation which deepened his ancestor-ship. It should be clear that the ancestor-ship of Jesus should only be in his humanness. Once we combine Jesus's humanness and divinity, we ran the risk of complicating his death and his resurrection. Secondly, Jesus is not equal to any ancestor because ancestors never rose from the dead, but Jesus did. Moreover, ancestors were born out of human beings through sexual intercourse, and Jesus was born from God through the Virgin Mary.

Nyamiti (1979:51) further clarifies and answers a question not yet asked in this study. The question of personal relationship of the dead and the living. This refers to how ancestors relate to the living through family-mother-father and so forth, through clan and tribe. In all the mentioned, blood is the central tool of relationships. Nyamiti then answers to say, some cults would argue that ancestors are through blood, therefore Jesus is not of African blood. The

.

ancestor-ship of Jesus over humanity cannot be compared or subjected to blood relationships but God incorporation of all humanity through incarnation. Therefore, Jesus is the world's greatest ancestor through his sacrifice on the cross.

Lest we forget that it was Jesus' blood that was shared to reunite humanity with God, to save humanity from death and sin. This act of Jesus is itself evidence enough of his ancestor-ship because ancestors care and love.

The superiority of Jesus over ancestors and the living is important to dismiss all ideas, some coming from cults and arguments observed in this study whereby ancestral veneration is equated to people worshipping ancestors instead of Jesus. Nyamiti (1979:46-48) makes the following distinctions between ancestors and Christ:

- Human ancestors give only part of their substance and life, God communicates His entire being to His son.
- Human ancestors become so after death, in God there is no transition from one kind of life to another.
- Human ancestors usually have several descendants; the son is the only divine descendent.
- In God, there is not a before and after but in human ancestors there is.
- The living communicates with human ancestors through rituals, God and son communicate through nature and life.

Bediako (1995:216-218) argues that the question of whether ancestors are worshipped or venerated should be avoided because that casts ancestors in the role of rivals of Christ. The death of Christ, his burial, resurrection and eventually his ascension has itself made us to believe that he is an ancestor but not just and ancestor but a supreme ancestor. Bediako (1995:216-218) continues to argue that Christ is one who is supreme, and ancestors are supreme, hence Christ is the judge of the living and the dead.

Furthermore, Stinton (2010:75) puts it that the incarnation and inculturation of Jesus was and is important if Jesus was to be understood and accepted as an ancestor firstly, and secondly,

.

be understood from the African point of view. Jesus had to be accepted into the culture, the language, called by the local names and in line with the ways of people for his good news to make sense. Africans do not venerate foreign ancestors but local, known ancestors who lived amongst the people. Jesus provides that picture of the ancestor who lived with the people and as one amongst the people. That picture has been helpful in how Africans can easily approach Jesus and relate to him.

Siebeck (2022:111-112) supports this and puts it that it was the earthly knowledge of Jesus by the Jews which made it possible for him to be called Healer and Preacher and through his interaction with people, the message of the imminent coming of the Kingdom was understood. Siebeck further expresses the humanity and the works of Jesus by painting a picture of how Jesus' presence caused a conflict amongst the people regarding his Messianic expectations from the Jews, in which the Pharisees eventually dismissed and led him to his death. In this expression of Siebeck, the vulnerability of Jesus is placed on the table in that he was loved and hated by people and that is nothing unusual to people, particularly those in leadership.

Stinton (2010:76) further puts it that names such as Redeemer and Saviour given to Jesus in the New Testament bear no fruit for, they contain no notion of African spirituality. Rather names such as Healer, Elder brother, Chief, great ancestor are better understood by Africans and related to the language of ancestors. Therefore, we should be careful when giving Christ names and titles in the context of African Spirituality. In addition, Bediako, informs that ancestral veneration is embedded in Christology, in how Africans worship and pray, as well as the understanding of healing and deliverance.

2.6.2.1 Prayer and worship.

Earlier, I disagreed with Brueghel's (suggestion about God giving ancestors power to take care of the living and God focusing on other things. I argued that God may be seen as irresponsible God. Stinton (2010:76) supports that argument and puts it that ancestors receive their powers from God which is limited and reserved because ultimate power comes from Christ in the ancestral hierarchy. In other words, the highest form of reverence is reserved and exclusive to Christ only. Again, this supports the statement that ancestors are venerated, and God is praised and worshipped. This difference must be clear to avoid confusion.

.

2.6.2.2 Healing and deliverance.

It is in Luke 4 verse 18 where Jesus announces why he came to this world. Stinton (2010:77) adds that one of the central tasks of Jesus on Earth was to heal and deliver people from bondage of sin, sickness, and death. The New Testament has many scriptural references to that effect. This role of Jesus in the bible coincided with the concept of African spirituality where when there is a sickness in the community, poverty and death, Africans would venerate their ancestors with the knowledge of them having power from Christ and as mediators between the living and Christ. The prayers of Africans to Christ and their veneration carry one goal when faced with socio-political-religious and spiritual challenges, the goal is for healing and deliverance.

2.6.3 Ancestral veneration in Eschatology.

Vos (1973:1) states that Eschatology is the doctrine of the last things. It deals with the teaching or belief that the world-movement, religiously considered, tends towards a definite final goal, beyond which a new order of affairs will be established. This means that beyond the end of things or time, new things will come to life.

Revelation chapter 21 introduces the reader to the spiritual world where material world is fading away, and new things happen in the eyes of John. He can see old things and old people passing away, and a new life begins with new approaches. The understanding of ancestor-ship is that of the dead elevated into a new world, the spiritual world where a new song is rendered, new worship and praise is heard and all people who died, starting with Abraham, are seen in the table with God. In this image, which is in the book of Revelation, Eucharist happens but this time not as the foretaste of the Holy banquet, but as God with those who died with him.

The understanding is that all those who died are ancestors from the African spirituality point of view. Of course, not only Africans die but all other nations which may not be labelled ancestors. Two questions should then be asked; first being, how does heaven separate ancestors from non –ancestors, from the African perspective? And secondly, is there a place where ancestors stay apart from heaven where they stay and can communicate with God and the living? These questions may not have answers yet, but this study wants to put it that ancestral veneration can be detected within the space of eschatology.

.

Eschatology means the end of times or end of things or last things, and I want to add the beginning of new things. Ray (1976:140) asserts that the ancestors continue to be involved with the living beyond. That there is no vision of a culminating "end" between the relationship between ancestors and the living. This means that eschatology does not become a wall which prevents the communication between God, ancestors, and the living. It means within, behind and beyond eschatology; ancestral veneration has space, and the living are still able to venerate their ancestors. In fact, Ray seems to suggest and point out that eschatology provides a journey from the moment a person dies up to the final stage where a person is prepared for his or her ancestor-hood role.

This journey that is preparing the dead for ancestor-hood is further emphasised by Gooder (2011:92) when mentioning that there is a resting place after the moment of death where the dead rest and are prepared. Once ready, there is a general resurrection done by Christ and life after "life after death" happens. This is when ancestor-hood becomes effective. In addition, Nyamiti (1979:46) points out that death does not end humanity nor ends relationships between the dead and offspring, but all what death does is to initiate another mode of being, but humanity remains new qualities. Death changes statues without destroying humanity and communion of the living and the ancestors. Bujo (1992: 24) concurs with Nyamiti and points out that communion of ancestors and living has an eschatological dimension which recognises the spiritual world which is not this world where there is an active involvement and participation of the ancestors.

2.6.4 Ancestral veneration in Holy Trinity.

The concept of the Trinity is complex and beyond human comprehension. It is difficult to grasp, and it has allowed itself to be undermined and criticised by some religions such as Islam. It is however a symbol of a relationship between three inseparable entities being: God the father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. It is understood that all three entities are equal and parts of a unitary whole, but each has its distinctive feature. Father is the creator; Son is the redeemer, and the Holy Spirit is the sustainer. Nurnberger (2007:304) states a simple definition by defining the authoritative relationship between the three entities in one - "God is present in Christ; Christ is present in his Spirit."

.

Chapman (1978:123) contends that the problem with understanding the Trinity is that people approach it wrongly, via the intellect. Whereas Trinity should be approached in a manner of imitating and believing that there is supreme God who give humanity reason to exist. Imitating God will then produce partnership in sharing the love of God and active participation and involvement of people in the Holy Trinity itself.

2.6.4.1 Father.

It is that relationship of the Trinity which according to Nyamiti (1979:48) becomes the descendancy of the Son related to the Father and the Holy Spirit-to the Father as proceeding from Him to the Spirit, because it is Him and through Him that descendent communicates mystically in love with the Ancestor, and thus fulfils His ancestral duties. In other words, there is a communication between the Father and the Son through the Holy Spirit who represents the mutual love according to Nyamiti. As indicated, Trinity is a complex concept but this communication between the Father (Godhead) and Son (Sonship) through the Holy Spirit, may not be an ideal definition of explaining the equality of the entities within the Trinity, but it brings this study to show how God continues to show signs of Ancestorship even at the level of Holy Trinity. As said, ancestors communicate with the living from the higher ranking than the living and ancestors are not greater than God. Meaning, God is greater than the ancestors and the living.

The other scriptural symbolism of the ancestorship of the Father in the Trinity is that of Jesus on the cross communicating with God. Twice Jesus cries to the father “Why have you forsaken me” (Matthew 27:6). This is typical of ancestral veneration because Africans do not only venerate when there are blessings but also when things are not going right. The belief is that when things are wrong, ancestors are angry and not happy. So, when Jesus cried to the Father in agony, it was the living crying out to the great ancestor for intervention. Secondly, Jesus is heard saying “Father, in your hands I commit my spirit” (Luke 23:46). Again, this is synonym with African story of an elder who is about to pass over, that the elder will call the offspring and inform them that he/she is passing over to the world of the departed.

2.6.4.2 Son.

.

Nyamiti (1979:50) further commands that God was intentional to use Jesus to demonstrate God's ancestorship through his Son through incarnation. For a person to be an ancestor or be related to ancestors, a person must have participated in the history of living in the world and died. Jesus went through all that process except for Him resurrecting to heaven before the living.

This history of Jesus is further reported by Chapman (1978:65-66), calling Jesus an elder brother because he lived, grew up and perhaps committed some mischief like any boy or girl and died and resurrected. No other dead person has ever resurrected on earth before. Again here, the complexities of the Trinity should not bring confusion in that Jesus and Father are one person and equal for us to begin to have a question on which ancestor between Father and Son is greater than the other. Rather we must remember the distinctive features of the Father and the meaning of the title father and meaning of the title on son in the context of ancestral veneration or African family. If we do so, we then eliminate confusion but bring the order and hierarchy within the African family. Nurnberger (2007:96) shows some differences between Jesus and the ancestors:

- Becoming an ancestor is a passage to the past with ancestors having power over the past and the present. The resurrection of Jesus is the passage to the future with the given power over the past, present and the future, in other words, power over the power of the ancestors.

- Our ancestors belong to the genealogy of the first Adam. This is the Adam who succumbed to sin and death, Jesus belongs to the understanding of the second Adam, sinless Adam who replaces the first Adam, completely glorified and perfect.
- Ancestors stand for authority, whilst Jesus stands for freedom and responsibility.
- Ancestors stand for ethic traditions inherited from the past, while Jesus stands for God's vision of comprehensive and universal well-being.

- The supervision of the ancestors is limited to their descendants and family members - Jesus's supervision covers the whole humanity that keeps its members on track.

- The ancestral spirit is the spirit of the clan and family tree - the Holy Spirit is the spirit of Christ that permeates the body of Christ, a spirit that liberates, motivates, and

.

transforms.

At the centre of the above difference between Jesus and the ancestors is the incarnation which God bestowed His son to us. It is incarnation that displays the humanity and the divinity to the world and all beings including ancestors recognise this incarnation. The work done by incarnation was perfect and no one can do better than that hence Jesus remains the brother ancestor - great ancestor and God.

2.6.4.3 Holy Spirit.

Not much can be derived from this entity as a symbol of ancestral veneration but plot on the mountain of Bethany (John 14:26) is that of elder brother Jesus departing the living and communicating that he does not leave them alone but with the Holy Spirit. It is believed that the living people are not alone. Firstly, there is the Holy Spirit which guides, helps and protects and secondly, there are ancestors who speak to the living through dreams and are watching the living.

On the contrary, the plot is about Jesus being taken high into heaven by a cloud into the world of the departed. The literal way of burying a person is taking the body not high but down the soil-grave. This is done so with the belief that the soul which was inside the body has been taken invisibly so to heaven. These two contrasts of Jesus taken high in the clouds to heaven and the lowering of the body of the departed are again the example of the exceptionalism of the ancestry of Jesus as compared to other regular ancestors.

2.6.5 The ethics of ancestral veneration.

Ethics refers to knowledge of what is wrong and what is right, furthermore, if something is wrong about ancestral veneration, who is saying it and from which context and perspective. In this study, the ethics of ancestral veneration are looked at from different angles such as history, practices and rituals and the Christian point of view.

2.6.6 Western Missionaries.

Much of the influence of missionaries to the African way of doing things have been dealt with but it must be brought back in this discussion. Becken (1993:335) states that ancestral veneration is not only an African term but is also western and in western language - it refers

.

to the quasi-religious act of solemn commemoration of late relatives. Becken (1993:335) continues to cite that white people used to waste money buying expensive tombstones and flowers to decorate the graves of their loved relatives and that was normal. Yet when Africans venerate their loved relatives, it is then declared ungodly, evil and ancestor worship. It cannot be correct that white people will come together and have braai and beer in celebration and remembrance of their loved ones and yet when Africans slaughter a cow to do the same, then it is regarded as animal brutality.

It is believed that western missionaries damaged the understanding of God amongst Africans upon their arrival (Setiloane 1977:144-147). Before they arrive, Setiloane (1977:144-147) argues that Africans had an image of God which they were able to always resonate with. Resonating may mean a God which understood their language, their culture, and their tradition. Their names and surnames which had ancestral history and relationship. Western missionaries came with their education about God and the mainstream churches gain momentum and a new face and image of God emerged which undermined the original African image of God. Setiloane continues to say, missionaries tried and were successful on the battle of baptizing all spiritualties, cultures which they found operating into their idea of Christ.

This view of the western image of God is further rejected by Knighton (1999:120-127) when he asserts that the word God cannot be described and explained by any language, no culture, and no cross-mission culture. An attempt can be made to express God based in situations and contexts of that time and the meaning of that attempt will always be different. Knighton (1999:120-127) notes on how missionaries declared unrighteous for Africans to attempt expressing God in the African way. This then brings the earlier mentioned paragraph of missionaries changing African names into English biblical names because to be Christian was to have English names.

Mndende (1998:115-124) adds that diluted Africa continue to exist even after the birth of democracy where some black people opted to be “chameleons” in that for them to fit in so called “white spaces,” they had to speak English and change their African names to those of the colonizers. Yet when they returned home, they were normal black people. They understood that they were African and had to follow the systems that raised them up before western mentality.

.

This research has highlighted the role of missionaries more than enough, from their invasion, their Eurocentric approach and their legacy which currently is still felt within the spaces of the mainstream. It must be said that this caused a damage to the authentic African spirituality, which understood the spiritual needs of African people. This was observed and identified through interviews to be undermining of some members from mainstream church as well as members of the AIC should be contributed the diluting of African religion.

2.6.7 Morality of ancestors.

It has been discovered that ancestors are mediators between God and the living, and they play an important part in mending the broken relationship between God and the living and amongst the livings themselves through family meetings, clan meetings and community meetings. Ray (1976:146-147) contends that whilst ancestors do not have supreme powers, God is able to delegate them into dealing with the moral wellbeing of people on earth. For the most part of it, ancestors act as the official guardian of the social and moral order**.** What does this mean?

If God is not active in the daily life of social and moral life of the living, does that mean God has cut His power and love which created the earth? Morality deals with wrong and right which leads to sin. It is only God who can judge and forgive, not ancestors. If ancestors are the guardians, who then judges? God or ancestors? We cannot assume that ancestors are guarding and then go and report to God when sin has been committed. If so, then why do we have God with omnipotent and omnipresence features?

Bujo (1992: 33) makes it clear that God is not completely absent from moral thinking, and it is through prayers directly to God not to ancestors, through which people ask for forgiveness from their immoral acts and thoughts. Nurnberger (2008:304) supports Bujo (1992:33) and further makes it clear that ancestors fulfil their mandate of keeping families and communities together and giving moral guidance, but they are not in the same league with Christ in terms of authority. Nurnberger continues to say the ultimate power and authority is with God.

Care must be taken in looking into the duties of ancestors in relationships to God and the living, I put it that the moral and social behaviour of the living rest in the shoulders and judgment of God ultimately.

.

2.6.8 Understanding life.

God is the creator and giver of life. As in the words of Stinton (2010:79-80), life is understood in relation to God, who is the originator and the sustainer of the human community and the cosmos. This community has three dimensions which are the dead-ancestors, the living and the yet to be born. All these dimensions are controlled by God as the giver of life. It is required of a person to please God so that leaving in harmony with the three dimensions can be attained. Except for the not yet to-be-born, a testimony can be presented that their lives depend on the mercy and the love of God. Bujo (1992:21) states that life is unity which must be understood in a mystical, or metaphysical sense. In this life, there are role players such as God and ancestors who had laid laws, rules, and standards to follow in this life.

2.6.9 The significance of a community.

It is in the nature of Africans not to leave alone or in silos but to leave in a group or in a community. This is also echoed by the Wesleyan spirituality as captured by Harper (1995:121) that no one can develop a mature spirituality, and no one can claim a vital spiritual life alone apart from others in service from Jesus Christ.

The significance of a community is that of sharing in love of God and sharing with each other about life. Jesus was the first ancestor to demonstrate this significance. Before his death, he gathered his disciples, sat on the table, and share bread and wine (Luke 22:19). Breugel (2001:100) highlights the role of the community in the village when there is death of the loved one, that the community gathers and communicate the sad news to each other and some village rituals in support of the family. In other words, the community comes together to share the pain of the bereaved family. It is Nyamiti (1979:58) who further explains what sharing is in the community and says, members participate which comes from the Latin words “pars and capere,” translated into sharing or taking part in some reality.

Ancestral veneration consists of two worlds – the physical world and the spiritual world. In both worlds, there are communities. We have dealt with the physical world but the book of Hebrews chapter 12 verse 1 to 5, then introduces us to the community and named it the “cloud of witnesses’’. These are the departed who are active in the spiritual world. Their task, although invisible, is the same of the community in the physical world. Nurnberger (2007:88)

.

reports on Hebrew chapter 12 and says that in as much as there is “cloud of witness” consisting of both ancestors and saints, they are not just a cloud, but they are hovering over us, looking at us and what we are doing. Their witness is based on the past faith which is present to our current afflictions.

2.6.10 Ancestors v/s Saints.

Much of this study have defined and mentioned the nature and the character of ancestors and many authors have defined them as Gill (2015:183) declared that they are theologically not idolatrous, in practice they are not religious, and culturally they fit a communitarian worldview. What has not been discussed is saints and the relationship between God and saints and ancestors if any. Bae (2008:183) explains that the saints originate from the Latin word-Sanctus/Sancta and the Greek word-Hagios/Hagia. Moreover, there is the “communion of saints” which is not a biblical term but derived from the Apostle’s creed which developed over centuries. Both the Roman Catholic and the Protestants churches recognise the Apostle’s creed and many of the Protestant – Mainstream churches, the Apostle creed is a part of the liturgy of the services.

On the other hand, Pato (1980:25) describes saints as those separated from the world by baptism and now live according to the gift of God’s grace. If we are to take Pato’s description of saints, we will get the sense that Pato does not put saints in the same level with ancestors because he refers to saints to those baptised but not dead. I put it that this is debatable because the Apostle creed as written, presents saints as those departed and are with Jesus Christ in heaven.

Whilst on the matter of saints and ancestors as departed, Bae (2008:182) brings another dimension in this matter by announcing that some African theologians have attempted to equate the Catholic notion of the saints. I find this announcement or statement awkward because it presupposes that saints are not equal to ancestors and saints are higher or powerful than the ancestors.

However, Bray (1988:152) agrees with Bae in that the communion of saints is a catholic doctrine which expresses the belief that the living and the dead are part of the body of Christ

.

and therefore when ancestors are worshipped, prayed, or venerated", that will disturb the envisioned entry of the church into heaven.

Here are similarities between saints and ancestors which make my awkwardness justifiable and some of these similarities are the following:

2.6.10.1 Communion of Saints- Community of Ancestors.

This term is an explanation of a group of people of saints together. Just as indicated earlier, that Jesus gathered his disciples and enjoyed the Holy Communion as a community or group of disciples and here again, communion of saints expresses that. This is like the nature of ancestors as indicated earlier in the book of Hebrews chapter 12 that ancestors are cloud of "witness," we also noted that it is in the nature of ancestors to be communal, same as the saints.

Pato (1980:35) introduces the term "sanctorum communion" referring to the communion of saints and describes it as fellowship of Holy persons through participation in holy things. Fellowship cannot be done in isolation, but it becomes effective when done in a group or in community. Pato continues to cite that communion of saints in its biblical interpretation, has to do with the body of Christ as written in Roman 12 verse 5. That all people, living, ancestors and saints belong to this great body of Christ where we all share in the love of God. Both the saints and ancestors are communal in sharing the love of God who is supreme and above all. Chua (1988:321) supports Pato (1980:35) and says communion of saints is a Christian reality of profound relationships between the triune God and between the living and the dead. These relationships are headed by God from God's grace and by extension, to the cosmic family at large.

Bae (2023) indicates that saints have three components which are of hierarchical authority, integrity, and divinity of the individual. Ancestors on the other hand are by their virtue, respected elders, "leaving in the spiritual world." This means both the saints and ancestors should be viewed in a unique way because they are not with us physically and they possess some spiritual powers gifted by God which we do not have.

2.6.10.2 Venerations.

.

There is both ancestral veneration and saint's veneration, and according to Bae (2023), saint's veneration was done as an immediate response of respect to the martyrs because there was a belief that when they die, they are transported straight into heaven. Secondly, saints are venerated because they were crucified because of their faith and belief in Christ. Similarly, to the ancestral veneration, tombstones would be unveiled in memory of the departed, rituals and practices were developed to honour them, care was taken not to confuse the prayers in their church to God and veneration to the saints. Both the prayers and veneration were done in the church, at different times.

Furthermore, Becken (1993:335) notes that the Roman Catholic Church's approach to veneration is that only saints are venerated not worshipped and this is supported by Mbiti (1978:152) when citing that African tradition dictated that God alone is worshipped and ancestors alone are venerated. The role of both ancestors and saints is the same in relation to the living and God, ancestors mediate and interceded on behalf of the living as Theron (1996:35) clarifies, saints intercede in heaven for the church in earth. Furthermore, upon intercede for the church on earth, saints do not hold any omnipresent and omniscient divinities because those are for God.

2.6.10.3 Mediators and healers.

With the assumption that when Christians die, they are immediately transported to heaven where they receive the title of being called saints, Dennis, and Robert (1999:54) claim that a theology and belief were then established that since heaven is where God resides, it means saints who lived with the people become mediators between the people and God. They also become healers whereby the living will call upon the saints at the time of sickness. The mediation of ancestors has been largely covered in this study and the element of veneration which includes calling upon ancestors in veneration to give guidance, has also been dealt with.

2.6.10.4 Ancestral dead and sacred dead.

Once again, the debate of comparison comes to effect where others are called ancestral dead - meaning the ancestors and others are called sacred dead, meaning the saints. This comparison is rejected by Amanze (2003:55), making an exposition which indicated that in some African countries, where AIC is prevalent, ancestors are understood to be an extension

.

of the church and constitute the community of saints. This is also echoed in the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church.

There are indeed doctrinal dichotomies between the Protest Church and the Roman Catholic Church presently regarding the usage of the word “Saints.” It is evident that in every Roman Catholic Church, there is an image of St Mary who is revered as the mother of God. The argument between some Protestants is that the Catholics worship and pray the image of St Mary and not God, to the extent that even hymns of the church are those which glorifies St Mary.

In defence of this, the Catholics argue that prayers and worshipping are going to God through St Mary, they recognise the role played by the virgin Mary in the making of salvation in which the world exist with. While I find myself confused and conflicted as a protestant believer, Triebel (2002:195) attempts to solve this argument by suggesting that all Christians should not focus so much on evoking ancestors and saints but rather focus and evoking and praying to Jesus. Triebel continues to say that this is important because ultimately, ancestral veneration and saint’s veneration are all expressions of the family and tribal solidarity and ancestors in the African traditional religion are the same as the saints in the Roman Catholic tradition.

However, this comparison may be justified by those who make a difference between good and bad ancestors, meaning ancestors who died in sin and those who died not in sin. Or the difference between ancestors who died not Christian and those who died as Christians. Nurnberger (2007:83-84) elaborates on the matter of non-Christian ancestors and argues that judging those who died is incorrect given the nature of God’s unconditional love to all. In other words, the church should cease to judge because none of the living in the present world know who has the right of passage to heaven. The living people continue to assume, influenced mainly by the Bible on what happens in heaven at the point of the journey of the deceased.

Considering the above, it is my submission that ancestors and saints are one and the same thing. It is just not in the vocabulary of African tradition to have a name saints. In other words, our saints are our ancestors. It is a pity that for over centuries, saints have been regarded as higher in statues than ancestors, something which need to be looked at in the future.

2.7. Conclusion

.

Chapter two dealt with a Practical Theological framework which amongst others looked at the literature review where different and relevant subjects were discussed. It also looked at the six identified churches for this study and brief history of their background and existence was discussed. Furthermore, the biblical and theological aspects of this study was discussed. Out of these subjects, different views, expressions, and opinions came out which helped and shaped the flow of this study in the coming chapters.

.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology.

Introduction.

This chapter explored the methodology used to gather data for the study, including the research approach, population, instruments, and central concepts relevant to the study. The approach of this study was qualitative research. Qualitative research can be defined in many terms but Swinton and Mowat (2006:29) describe it as the multi-method which focuses on involving and interpreting the subject at hand.

A subject is identified, interrogated, and investigated to get tangible information from the raw data on the subject. Qualitative research was chosen because interviews were going to be used as research tools. In interviews, one must listen and ask probing questions so that proper and reliable answers can be given. Qualitative research can be biased, personal and subjective in nature but it is required of the researcher to focus on data beforehand and use it so that tangible information can be found. The use of the researcher's own voice is important, but it should be informed by data and arguments presented.

3.1 Population.

The sample size of this study was 24 participants from six different denominations, three from Mainstream churches and three from African Indigenous Churches (AIC). Participants were all above the age of eighteen years and could thus provide consent to participate. The ministers/Pastors of all six denominations were consulted and it was them who recommended participants in this study. In other words, I asked and consulted ministers from the churches, and they provided participants and three of them (ministers/pastors) chose to be participants. Participants were a mixture of both men and women, young and old. The primary instrument of data collection used was interviews, using the four sets of subsidiary questions to all participants.

.

3.2 Research design.

The research approach was qualitative. Coolican (2006) states that it involved, among others, asking questions in interviews of participants who had the knowledge of the subject under study. De Vos *et al* (2011:313) describes the narrative in qualitative approaches as biographical writings which vary from life stories, life histories, autobiographies and auto-ethnographies. This was helpful in the interviews because the subject of ancestral veneration and ancestors was generally not a new thing to participants. Participants had good ideas of the experience, the perceptions, arguments, beliefs about ancestors. This was further supported by the fact that most of the participants stay in the rural and semi-rural areas where culture, traditions, lands, and chieftaincy are still observed and respected.

3.3 Difference between qualitative and quantitative.

As indicated, qualitative research does not have a single definition, but it has been described as the multi-method, which is focusing, involving, and interpreting the subject at hand. Swinton and Mowat (2006:29) state, "A subject is identified, and it is interrogated and investigated to get tangible information from the raw data from the subject." Data from the participants was taken seriously, analyzed, and used effectively to produce and construct an accurate outcome of the study.

Quantitative research refers to how people relate and encounter the world; an encounter which leads to a better understanding and the interpretation of the world. This is done on a bigger and broader scale and quantitative results are tested from this research. Davis and Buchanan (2016:4) put it that Qualitative research is there to explore, to describe, to develop theory and to explain why variables are related, whereas; Quantitative research is there to predict, to confirm, to validate and to explain how variables are related.

The qualitative approach enables me to understand the participant because it can be designed to encourage open-ended questions, and this gives the participant space to dominate the interview with his or her experience and opinions. Some participants' experiences, responses and attitudes towards the questions and interviews can reveal subjectivity (Bernard, 2000:23). Similarly, Rezaul and Cathleen (2016:11-12) indicate that qualitative methods have much in exploring people's feelings or asking participants to reflect on their experiences. In this study,

.

participants were able to express their feelings and reflect on their own personal experiences and views. Some were casual, professional and some were just personal.

3.4 Social Construction Perspective.

This study was underpinned and triggered by my painful observation and experience of the differences in doctrinal, liturgical, and cultural practices worship practices by the Mainstream churches and AIC. The social constructive perspective was used in the interviews so that the interpretation of the discourses in the participants' speech, responses and attitudes could be significant and relevant as would be in accordance with Henning, Rensburg and Smit (2004: 34). The social constructive perspective is an attempt to come to terms with the nature of reality. It can also be traced in part to the interpretive approach of thinking (Andrews, 2012:46). This means that the social constructive perspective helps me to deal with the reality of life and to interpret this reality in such a way that it will attempt to make sense in individual context.

Constructed responses are those responses which are authentic and coming from the clear mind of the participant. Created responses would be those responses influenced by an existing ideology or view on the subject at hand. This helped me in identifying dichotomies in practices and worshiping of the identified churches. Participants in this study presented different opinions and views. Some agreed with each other and some disagreed. What was important was the practical realities of data which emanated from the responses. This was helpful because it made it easier to construct an opinion on what was before this study. The temptation to impose one's biased view on the matter was eliminated by the authentic data I received from this study.

The limitation of the qualitative approach is that a small sample is used. In this study, only 24 participants from only two different churches were used. Therefore, the general views, opinions, and responses of other people outside the 24 participants could not be tested. The quantitative approach could have been used to accommodate more opinions, but it also has a limitation of not being able to discover participants' subjectivities and they are not necessarily studied in their natural environment as per Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Pinter (2006:111).

.

3.5 Sample Method.

Purposive sampling was used so that the study should not lose its direction of exploring conflict within the specific location. De Vos *et al* (2011:392) describe purposive sampling as a technique where the researcher must think critically about the parameters of the population and then choose the sample accordingly. De Vos *et al* (2011:392) also states that when this type of sampling is used, participants and sites can be selected purposefully to inform an understanding of the research problem of the study. As indicated above, Ministers/Pastors of the participants were consulted and were briefed about the intention of the study and the interviews and most of the interviews took place in the church buildings which were convenient to all participants.

3.6 Data Collection.

The primary source of data collection for this study was interviews conducted with individuals. A qualitative approach using social constructivist's perspective was used and semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant allowed to give his or her views based on the four subsidiary questions.

As indicated above, Andrews (2012:45) describes a social constructive perspective as the construction of knowledge whereby beliefs are identified, which give people reasonable confidence. Andrews further states that the perspective gives common sense understanding and consensual notion as to what constitutes knowledge as well as to attempt to come to terms with the nature of reality. Also, it places great emphasis on everyday interactions between people and how to construct their reality.

The study was based on collecting data from different participants with different realities and situations. The data collected from the interviews was analyzed and conclusions were drawn based on the findings. Mouton (2001:342) describes an interview as "an attempt to understand the world from the participant's points of view, to unfold the meaning of people's experiences and to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanation." There was main question of the study and the four subsidiary questions from which the bulk of the answers and outcome were expected to come. All questions were in English and were asked in English and the language preferred by the participant.

.

3.7 Procedure.

Permission to interview the participants was given by the minister/pastor in charge and all participants were taken into a journey of explaining the purpose, aim and the interviews were semi-structured with one main question and four fixed subsidiaryquestions. I was at liberty to probe participants to express their views more to elicit more data.

3.8 Data analysis and interpretations.

Mouton (2001:108) postulates that data analysis is a process of breaking up of the data into manageable themes, patterns, trends, and relationships. The recordings of the interviews were used to listen for the relationships, patterns and similarities of the opinions and expressions of the participants, which helped to analyze and interpret the data efficiently. The data were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed in accordance with the following guidelines provided by De Vos *et al* (2011:402):

- Text should be transcribed sufficiently and in detail.
- Sometimes the verbatim transcriptions of recordings are needed and sometimes summative notes of key aspects of the conversations may suffice.
- Read and re-read the text, play, and replay audio recordings to examine the non- textual data to become thoroughly familiar with it.

Data was collected with the guidance of the above points of De Vos, and it was processed and reduced to a story and its interpretation. It was also collected, studied, and abstracted in such a way that it serves the study at hand.

Recurring words in this study.

- **African spirituality**: Harvey and Adogame (2012:109) report that African Spirituality is embedded in the living traditions and cultures of the African people in a way that it relates to other spiritualties in the world without being measured through or by them. African Spirituality provides a guide for the search of emerging African traditions in the study of African religions in the myths, rituals and human agents who undergo ritual

.

apprenticeship like priests, diviners, herbalists, kings, chiefs, and artists.

- **Christian spirituality:** I have picked up that the participants responses to African spirituality were mostly preceded and could not be separated from the notion of Christian spirituality. Tan (2011:362) describes Christian spirituality as "disposition or internal condition of people when in such a state as, prepares them to recognize and fully appreciate spiritual realities and such true spirituality is ultimately the result of the in-working of the Holy Spirit. It is shaping, empowering of the 'spiritual person' that is a person who is alive to being responsive to God in the world."

- **Perception:** A cognitive process by which individuals organize, interpret, and understand sensory impressions from their environment (Werner, 2007:49). Meaning an individual will see, hear, or listen to a situation or a subject, process that in his or her mind and make conclusions about what he/she processed. Those conclusions may be wrong or right but still, it has the potential to develop into a perception. In this study, some participants responded negatively towards questions, and it was noted that they are misled by their perception in understanding ancestors.

- **One God:** Participants recognize that there is one God who is prayed by all people. Yes, the Bible, especially the Old Testament dies mention and have scriptures introducing many gods but the understanding in this research was that people pray one God.
- **Unity:** Despite the differences in worship and practices, there is always a need for people to unite, churches to unite.

- **Africans:** Participants realized that their churches do not immune them from being Africans, even those churches which originates from the west.

- **Christians:** Above all, congregants of these churches follow Jesus Christ.

Re-occurring themes.

A theme is defined by Kawulichi (2015:112) as "an abstract entity that brings meaning

.

and identity to a recurrent experience and its variant manifestations**."** The following themes came from the interview's findings:

- **An inclusive church:** There was a great emphasis on what the mandate of the church is and how the church portrays itself to the word. The church must be seen as an inclusive body where all people are welcomed and not judged.

- **We are all human beings:** No church is better than the other church and no person is better than the other person. We should all strive to see and respect each other and bring down the walls in between us.

- **Embracing and tolerance:** Both participants from two churches emphasized theposition of being different and encouraged tolerance and embracing of each other.

Patterns.

Identifying patterns from data because it helps to accordingly give theory specificity. Kawulichi (2015:99) argues that identifying these patterns in data or group data also helps in identifying what is relevant and accurate to fit in the study. In other words, it helps the researcher not go pick unnecessary data and filter in in the paper. This will make the research lose focus. In this study, there were mixed patterns. Some participants had a consistent stand based on their understanding of ancestral veneration. Some were conflicted in that; they would be members of a denomination which does not believe and teach ancestral veneration but those participants believing in ancestors. Some participants were also consistent on their non-supporting of ancestralveneration.

3.9 Ethical considerations.

Rezaul and Cathleen (2016:54) state "ethics is the principles to uphold the things we value." Mouton (2001: 238) states that ethics is concerned with what iswrong and what is right in a form of human conduct. Caution was taken in aligning oneself with the sensitivity of this study. Terre Blanche *et al* (2006: 45) assert that it is important that the researcher becomes aware of his or her biases and how they can affectthe data collection. This in my view may lead to

.

deception and fabrication of data to suitthe personal feelings of the researcher.

Deception refers to misleading participants, deliberately misrepresenting facts or withholding information from participants." This is supported by Rezaul and Jo Faruque (2016:132) when they mention that it is unethical for researchers to deceive the participants about the true purpose of the study and to ask the participants questions that could lead them to an unpleasant experience, causing guilt and invading their privacy. Equally so, Mouton (2001:240) warns against the fabrication of data by the researcher and calls it the most serious transgression of the codes of ethics. It was from that point that I ensured that participants:

- Signed the consent form with the choice of writing or not writing their names.
- Assured them that the recordings will not be made public and will be kept safe.
- Assured them that at no point will their voices be used for public consumption without their consent.
- They could request their voice notes at any given time when they need to check them.

Participants were assured of their rights to privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality, which De Vos *et al* (2011:119) describe as an element of personal privacy and confidentiality. As such, all participants were coded by colors blue-African Indigenous Churches and yellow-Mainstream churches. The individual interviews were conducted at a place which was central, accessible in terms of transport, in which participants did not have to spent money to arrive at. This is supported by Davis and Buchanan (2016:58) when they encourage interviews to be conducted in a comfortable and secure place. Participants should not be afraid that someone may overhear their responses, especially if those responses are sensitive. In addition, the highest degree of honesty and professionalism, which was adhered to ensure that the report of this study would be written using non-biased language, that data would be complete, unadulterated, and I would make a clear distinction between evidence and own interpretation as per Davis and Buchanan (2016:51).

The Ethical clearance certificate was approved by the University of South Africa and is upon that approval that this study was conducted.

.

3.10 Conclusion.

This chapter dealt with the “how part” of doing the study. It identified the tools to be used in doing research. Aims and objectives, methodologies, type of research such as qualitative or quantitative and others. This chapter was used as the engine which holds the entire research together. In other words, it linked the first two chapters with the last three chapters.

.

Chapter 4: Research Findings.

Introduction.

This chapter presents the research findings and gives different opinions, views, arguments, beliefs, and conclusions of participants regarding the problem of this study, dichotomies between Mainstream churches and African Indigenous churches (AIC) - a practical theological exploration of Ancestral veneration. The findings were conducted using the main questions which reads: “What are the main dichotomies in the worship practices between Mainstream Christian and African Indigenous Churches in South Africa?” With the main question guiding the research findings, four subsidiary questions were formulated and used in the interviews, namely:

- What are the main differences between the Mainstream churches and AIC churches?
- How can we view Jesus Christ as the great ancestor?
- How can Christian denominations find synergy in how they approach ancestral veneration in their respective spaces?
- How can the Christian community practice inclusive and contextual Christian ministry? (This means how Christian community worship, praise, preach and pray in such a way that it speaks to the current voice, current demands, and expectations of the members?).

24 participants were interviewed with twelve from Mainstream and 12 African Indigenous church with four participants from each denomination/ church:

Mainstream churches:

- Methodist Church of Southern Africa
- Lutheran Church
- Anglican church

.

African Indigenous churches:

- Zion Christian Church
- Ethiopian Church of Africa
- Church of Christ Assembly

There was a clear observation during the interviews in that some participants refused to be recorded due to the current trend of social media abuse and their wishes were respected as such: four participants from ZCC were not recorded, two participants from Ethiopian Church of Africa and one participant from Lutheran and one participant from Anglican and two from Methodist church of South Africa, all did not want to be re-coded. All audio and scripts were captured in their verbatim form so as not to lose the essence of what is contained within them. All the audio and scripts are available upon request for verification.

Subsidiary questions were used to conduct the interviews to collect data. It was from the 24 interviews were re-occurring words, similar arguments and themes from all participants were identified. The re-occurring words, similar arguments and themes were discussed in chapter five as I analyzed and interpreted the data.

4.2 Subsidiary questions.

4.2.1 What are the main differences between Mainstream churches and African Indigenous churches?

Participant one: *Differences. Let me start with the Mainstream churches. One would argue that Mainstream churches are more western, they are more western the practices culture and so,they are supported by the scripture, and they are based by western doctrines. One will argue that everything done in the Mainstream is backed by scripture.*

The AIC are based in African and focused on African traditions. One would say, they rely mainly on history of black people, how black people came about, I mean before Christ, the birth of Christ *and after Christ. How was worshipping in Africa, how were they worshipping before colonists. They are based on the style of worshipping which was there before. We had to adapt the western culture and ways of doing things in the Mainstream church especially after colonization.*

.

Participant two: *Sa ntlha (first* thing*), Mainstream churches, re bua ka (we* are talking about*)* the Trinity- God the father, Son, and Holy Spirit*. E enngwe e ka dirang hore gonnne le (one* thing which is going make us know*)* the difference *akere. Enngwe gape, eke ele beleletseng ke tsaya gore* (the other thing is that I think*)* Mainstream churches are churches after reformation. Churches after reformation have pastors who are trained at colleges and universities. Others *motho oa appointa (some* people are just appointed*)* personally to lead the church.

Participant one: *With the Lutheran, we are the traditional church. Holding on the traditions of the mission's society which came from our side, speaking from the Lutherans point of view. The Hamburg mission from the town in Germany whereby other missionaries also came here in South Africa. From where we are, we have the traditions. A little bit of background, ELSA, ELSA, is from out of many missions which all started in Cape Town and then moved to Durban. In Durban I will say, there were many missionaries: Hamburg's, Norwegians, and Sweden. So, the Hambars also went further to the Tswana and the Beria region also went further, I would say to Northern Sotho and the Swedish stayed in KZN, even thou there were still Norwegians and Americans, given that background, form my side, speaking from my side now. That is where ELSA came from. We have that German tradition whereas the Hamas burg tradition. So, our sing is staff rendition. We sing with notes and many Lutherans, it is our traditions to sing with note. It is our identity. To sing hymn in an African way-that I not lutein it took us time as Lutheran to use bits, clocks, and drums. For us, Lutherans, our identity is to sing with note. We are choral church.*

Now how we differ from the AIC is that they do not use notes. They use drums, emotions, clapping of hands. That is how we differ with them and miss that. It is only now recently that we started using drums and bits. Even thou we started with drums. Some members were saying no that is Methodist, you cannot. It is a matter of identity. But we do have them, and we have started Africanizing even thou it is not all parishes. Some do it and some still some to the traditions of notes. Stinking to those singing. As you know from the African side. It's clapping of hands wayawaya (forever and ever).

We also differ in baptisms. Infant baptism. We do infant and they do not do it. So now. Most of African churches, they use "noka" (river) for "immersing." For us we Lutherans, we recognize

.

three types of baptizing, immersing, spilling, and pouring whereas "kafa" (this side), on the other side is only immersing is one because of "tswanaetse o tsene ka nokeng" (you must be immersed in the river) and that where now we differ.is just we acknowledge all three types but the one we used to be the pouring from the bowl. It is the only one done. I'm sure if can take them to nokeng, they will be shocked.

Participant one: *The AIC uses more cultural forms of prayer and prefer language spoken to the people. Like "Sione", we sing "Mpogo" which the Mainstream churches such as "Wesele" calls it praise in worship. For example- "Mpogo"- we look at Revelation 14 "ka bona konyana e dutse thapeng e bina pina e sautlweng ke batho." The AIC-particularly -ZCC preaches the bible and the bible only.*

However, there are people in the AIC churches who have the tendency of worshipping the leader such as our father Bishop Lekganyane and that is wrong, and I know that Mainstream churches do not have such problem of glorifying its leaders to the position of God. That is my take on the first question.

Participant four: *It's a good question because some of us come from mixed families. I mean you will find that I am from Anglican and "o mong" (one* God*) in my family comes from Apostolic and sometimes "re ya lwana" (we are fighting) in the house because of our different views. Having said that, I personally think that the differences are around Africa and the West. African Independent Churches are from Africa doing things in an African way and the Mainstream are from the West doing thing in the white way and sometimes, this cause conflict. I think that is the main differences Rev. Thank you.*

Participant one: *Mainstream churches are governed by structures such as Conferences, Sessions, and Synods where decision making involves many. The worship in the Mainstream is also structured and follows a pattern such as Creeds, "Te deum," etcetera. AIC- leadership centres around one figure and decision making is done by "muntu omunye"* (one people}. *In some cases, this* figure *becomes a deity that is worshipped and elevated aboveJesus but less than God.*

Participant two: *Okay, phapang e ke e bonang dikerekeng ke hore Mainstream e tsamamya haholo le constitution ya* Naha (the difference I see is that the Mainstream is more aligned with the constitution of the country). *Empa AIC e tshetlehile haholo ho setso (*but the AIC on

.

more on culture*). O tla hopola hore ho AIC, ha se ngata bomme ba etella pele. Ke nahana hore hape ba enka magolong a bible (*you will recall that at AIC, women are not allowed to lead*). O tla hoopla hore ke Poul areng ha* mme *a na le bothata kerekeng, a ye hae ho ntate alo mo jwetsa (*you will recall that Paul once said to one woman-if you have problem in church, go and tell it to your husband*). Mainstream ba tsamaya le nako ya hona jwale, rona re sa dutse Nakong ya kgale (*Mainstream moves with times and we still sitting in the old times).

Participant two: *I think the main difference between the Mainstream and the AIC's lies in the practices (*way of worship*) as well as their beliefs. One of the reasons why the AIC's decided to break away from the Mainstream was because they felt the disconnected to their traditional way of praising God. Therefore, they believe that there is interconnectedness between them and their ancestors.* (I refer to them as guardian angels*). African spirituality allows them to praise their God and appease (*not worship*) their ancestors because they believe. AIC have divergent ways of praising through dancing, singing, playing of instruments etcetera, whereas Mainstream on the other hand believes that their interconnectedness does not exist.*

Participant three*: From the ZCC's point of view and my experience, ZCC is unique to the point that some other churches call us bad names and think we pray "Ntate" (*Bishop Lekganyane*) but we are now used to that. For me, the difference here is doing and praying things in the African way and other doing it in the stolen way or colonized way. I mean charity begins at home-they say. I would not leave my way of practicing taught by my parents and go to America and want to do in Africa what Americans do. I mean, Americans don't even know how we worship in Africa.*

Participant four*: Well sir, Mainstream churches are well structured with educated pastors. Education on theology is critical. There is more democracy in the mainstream churches because of conferences and there are elections even thou the Roman Catholic has permanent Pope, but elections are done when that Pope dies. African churches on the other hand, there is no formal education I know of their churches, I don't know if conference also. All I have observed is patriarchy and family churches. No formal buildings and it is so, in many of them with different spirits.*

.

Participant three: *According to me, Mainstream churches are churches of the law. We believe in the in law. Like Lutherans, we use law and the Gospel. We have our constitution, but it is for admin, but the Pastor role is included there akere. The pastor is focusing on the gospel. And this mainstream churches-they are not owned like the AIC. I can stay here for years, and the church can say: Moabi, we are now moving you and I will have to move. We are a sending church not calling church. A sending ministry. But this one, it seems that they are owned. Like the ZCC, the central figure is only Lekganyane. Ha a bua sea se buang (*when he says whatever he says*) and one can question him because it is his church. Here with to consult raise your concerns and reach consensus*.

Participant one: Mainstream churches are governed by structures such as Conferences, Sessions, and Synods where decision making involves many. The worship in the Mainline is also structured and follows a pattern such as Creeds, "Te deum", etc.

AIC- leadership centres on one figure and decision making is done by "*muntu omunye" one person)*. In some cases, this figure becomes a deity that is worshipped and elevated above Jesus but less than God.

4.2.2 Essence of participants' responses on the question- What are the main differences between Mainstream churches and African Indigenous churches?

All participants expressed enough knowledge of the differences between Mainstream and African Indigenous Church. There was a clear explanation as to what Mainstream and AIC in that participants were able to mention some of names of churches belonging to Mainstream and AIC and were able to mention the titles and positions such Pope or Bishop and that was an indication of knowledge from participants. Furthermore, participants acknowledged the family dynamics that play in between Mainstream and AIC. That is, in one family, you will find members of the Mainstream and members from the AIC and leaving together in harmony.

4.2.3 How can we look at Jesus Christ as the great ancestor?

Participant four: *I was recently insulted in the meeting of some Anglican congregant about the whole issue of ancestors. I hold the view that as Africans, ancestors are part of our being. Now those against me had a view that I am insinuating that ancestors are greater than God. Jesus came and lived amongst us. So, he was a person and he died. Ancestors who came, lived and they died. In that sense, Jesus is*

.

*there for an ancestor to us. He may not be a "Motswana or Mosotho or Mozulu" (*Tswana or Sotho or Zulu speaking person*), but the fact remains that he was a person and he died. So, because we relate to him due to things he did for us, dying for us- he is our father and therefore our ancestor.*

***Participant one**: Now for us Lutherans, we go back to the bible in the book of the Hebrews where it says Jesus is the great* ancestor *who died for us. Is just that I forgot the scripture. E teng foo* (it is just there*). He is the greater ancestor, and our focus is on Christ alone. If you know us the Lutherans, we have the sola scripture and Christ alone and we focus on Jesus as the greatest ancestor. No need to go through someone else. There is something we need to understand about Motswana (*Setswana speaking person). *Doctrine may say this, but your identity remains even thou members always to the ancestor's even thou the doctrine e re jwetsa* (it tells us) *(in the Hebrews" sola scripture. Luther also said that there is no need to worship Saints like the Roman Catholic will do. Rather we look at the ditoro tseo ba didireleng* (their works*) and be impowered by what they left and ronababa setseng ka kwano (we who are left behind) try to leave the way they live. Not to pray to them. So, Jesus is the great ancestor and re rapela yena (*and we pray Jesus*).*

Participants four: *Well, it depends on who do you refer to as "we" because even here "Mowesele" (Wesleyans), the issue of ancestors-sangomas and traditional healers or doctors is a taboo thing. No proper resolutions and guidelines on how to deal with such. So, we need a holistic conversation and approach on ancestors. I think it is the book of the Hebrews where Jesus is named as the great ancestor. For me thou- we need to look at the role of an ancestor and match it with Jesus. If they fit, then we can look at Jesus the great ancestor. If the role of the ancestor is opposite to what Jesus stood for then, no need to even suggest that we can look at Jesus in that way*.

Participant two: Jesus is not our ancestor; he is our God. There is difference between mankind and God. Christ is not an ancestor but ke Modimo. Let's take him as God.

Participant one: *When people die, they go the graveyard to bury the flesh, but the spirit leaves forever and does not go to the grave with them. It in the book of Genesis and John where Jesus is described as the Word. Jesus was not flesh but spirit which leaves forever. Therefore, I think, Jesus cannot be equated to the ancestors because ancestors were never spirits but flesh only. It is Jesus who raised himself from the death and it is believed that they are ancestors waiting*

.

of Jesus to raise them from the dead (the so-called judgment day). It is therefore contraction to even look at Jesus as the ancestor because he is bigger than that.

Participant one: *Ntate* (Sir*), it is believed that we are all from Adam and Eve. The bible says so andtherefore, all those whom we read about in the bible and sometimes speak of them as if theyare just around the corner, are our ancestors. Look, Moruti* (Reverend), Nna *(*I*), my surname comes from ntate-ntate-ntatemogolo (*grandparents*) whom I don't even know but I am still Lebone* (surname*). I cannot, all of the sudden when people are dead, now change my surname into something else.*

Participant two: *Nna, (*I*) Moruti (*Reverend*), with Jesus as the ancestor. We take everything from the bible. According to the bible, Modimo o mo tlisitse mo go rona as motho (*God brought Jesus to us a person*). Modimo* (God*) wanted us to know to undergo what we are going through. We go through him.*

*I don't see Jesus as the ancestor but as a mediator and maybe ntate Abraham is our ancestor and we cannot pray him. Ke Modimo a tla mo berekisa ka tsela eo a tla mo berekisa ka yona (*it is God who will him as God wants to).

If you believe that ke rra-rona (He is our father*) its fine but I see Jesus as mediator*

Participant three: *According to me, Jesus Christ is not ancestor because I do believe that there are ancestors. For example, my wife died in 2015. So, to use the terminology she is my ancestor, but I cannot worship her. I only venerate them. We say Jesus Christ- he wascrucified, he was buried and risen. Now we say ke mothatayohle* (Almighty) *and he will come at Purasia as the church. He rose and I cannot say he is an ancestor. In our Nicene Creed, we say ke motho ruri-ke Modimo gotlhe (*He is fully human and fully God) *O tswetswe ga a tlholwa (*He was born alone*). Jesus is God- himself and cannot be our ancestor.*

Participant three: *I think this question is anything but a theological question because ancestors are those, we can connect with through our blood. So, Jesus was a Jew and culturally,we do not have anything blood line within him. At the same times, Jesus lived and died, and he did* wonderful *things for us not to recognize him as the great ancestor. A good great ancestor which we praise because he is God and venerate as we venerate ancestors.*

.

4.2.4 Essence of participants' responses on the question- How can we view Jesus Christ as the great ancestor?

Participants answered this question not from their individual church policies, theology and or teachings but they answered from their inner being understandings. It is during this question where emotions were shown some participants cried when dealing with this question. There was a feeling that even the question itself is undermining Jesus. On the other hand, some participants managed to use their beliefs in ancestors and linked Jesus with their belief. The doctrine of incarnation surfaced from this question as participants answered it, but they were not aware of this theology, they were only answering according to their views.

4.2.5 How can Christian denominations find synergy in how they approach ancestral veneration in their respective spaces?

Participant four: *Sir, tolerance is very important. Not only to the denominations but it starts at home, at work, in our community meetings. Let's begin to understand that we will not always see eye to eye because we are not equal, we come from different background. We have different views and all of that. Some people don't believe in ancestors, and some do. Neither one is wrong nor right. So, the key word for me is really "tolerance of each other. "Dankie" (*thank you).

Participant three: *Ntlha di pedi, ya ntlha ke gore bible e boitshepo e osi, re dirisa bobotlhe* (two points, the first one is the Holy bible, and we all use it). *Ntate Dipali a itse gore Modimo oo Tlatsana ao rapelang o esi fela (Mr*. Dipali must know that God of the Tlatsane's is one*). Fa re ka its era tlhaloganya le megopola rele* (if we are to understand and have the same mind) *of different denominations ra tsamaya ka tselaele esi fela, re se nne (and* journey together in unity and not being*) too particular or too choosy* but *re tsamaye ka tsela ele nngwe fela (*but journey together*).*

We may differ in opinions and so many things *but le teng, go na le Setswana se seng" rata sag ago-o se tlhoye sa motho o mogwe (*we may differ a lot but there is Sestwana idiom which says love what you have and do not hate what is not yours*)." Seno se raya gore fa ole Mosione rata Sione ose tlhoye Wesele, (*this means, if you are Zionist, it is fine but do not hate a Methodist*). Mathata ke gore motho o tswa Wesele mme a tlhoye yona Wesele eo a tswana ko go yona (the* problem is a person leaving the Methodist church and up hating it*) Ntlha e nngwe ke ee*

.

*(*the other is this one); it may differ from the scope but let me say it. Baptism e nosi fela (baptism is one*). We have no two baptisms. O kolobeditswe Mowesele but fa o fitlha ko Sione, oa kolobetswa gape (*you get baptized in Methodist, you leave, and you get baptized again at Zion*). It then becomes a conflict of interest because what is wrong withthe first baptism. It therefore undermines the first baptism and the other church.*

Participant four: *I do not think they will. Churches are too proud to listen to each other and to tolerate each other. Ha ke battle ho bitsa maina* (I don't want to mention names) *but there are churches which are just pathetic in their attitude towards tse ding* (other things*).*

Participant four: *Churches do meet at funerals, at weddings and other chieftaincy- imbizo (gatherings) but they don't meet to talk about ancestors. So if we meet and don't discuss doctrines and* theologies *then peace will prevail.*

Participant three: *First, we can agree that there are ancestors. But in life, we must compromise. What will help us is to compromise. I used to say; on the first of December or 31 of December, take your spate- olo tlhagola* (clean the graveyard*), we can go to the graveyards and clean and brush but do* not *worship. And don't take meat and tobacco to them. They are dead. As Christian, this is how we can approach this thing that we compromise and venerate not worship. Even Paul says that- don't worship the dead. We can't pinpoint. If someone believes in ancestors- it is his belief- that is the compromise.*

Participant one*: They can find synergy in one aspect of humanity and God and that is Spirit. Remember in the book of Genesis-God breathed into a human being. In all our differences as Christians, in all our fights and all of our difference's views (for example- we the ZCC's, we don't call the ancestors "Badimo" (angels) as other call them, we call ancestors "mangeloi"(angels) Yet one thing we can agree on is the spirit which leaves forever and forever. I mean beyond death. That is Spirit none other than God.*

Participant one: *Yah but lefoko* (this word) *le "synergy"? We really need to understand who we are because all the Mainstream churches are not for here. They all came here by board. And behind them was western culture. For which we adopted or when we join the church, we join unaware. So now we need enculturate our churches. So ke yona e tla re etsang re be so* (it is the thing which is going to make us*). For example, if you take Batswana-within the Methodist*

.

Lutheran and ZCC but all of them ke Batswana. Now, they will link because of their culture. Inculturation is the key word.

Once we know who we are, it is now where the theology will talk to us. Theology changes with context and it is informed by context. The theology we have is from Germany. But now what happens with the theology which happens in our times and space as Africans, Batswana or maPitoria.

Participant four*: Synergy to me is togetherness and I suppose tolerance. Let us understand each other views and believes. Let us tolerate or walk away if we don't and or accept rather than being nasty about other people believes.*

Participant four: *No, "Moruti":* (Reverend), *I am sorry, they will not. Churches are too much divided, too much separated, and too much isolated. I personally do not see any synergy amongst churches. I mean, "bona Moruti"* (look Reverend*) at Catholics right now in Mafikeng, don't attend any joined church prayers at all. Ga ke battle go bua ka Masione (I* do not want badmouth members of the ZCC*) so, it is difficult. Even Anglicans themselves are finding difficult to find each other about their understanding about Badimo.*

4.2.6 Essence of participants' responses on the question- How can Christian denominations find synergy in how they approach ancestral veneration in their respective spaces?

Most of the participants found the word "synergy" difficult to understand to the point where I had to explain in simple term language of connectedness and or churches working together in tolerance of their different views regarding the ancestral veneration. It was clear that there were mixed reactions and responses from both participants of the Mainstream churches and AIC. This means, some participants from the AIC were clear that they choose to worship individually as a group so that they do not mix their beliefs or taint them. Others were saying that churches can find synergy if they respect each other's teachings, beliefs, doctrines, and theologies. Some pointed out that tolerance of each other and ceasing of undermining and disrespect of each other is the ultimate solution in finding synergy regarding ancestral veneration.

4.2.7 How can the Christian community practice inclusive and contextual Christian ministry?(This means how Christian community worship, praise, preach and pray

.

in such a way that it speaks to the current voice, current demands, and expectations of themembers?).

Participant three: *Every year after the council meetings and other meetings from head office, branches are informed of the decisions taken and what is expected of Zionist. We are encouraged to be respectful being- we respect God, Ntate* (Sir*), our families and other people. I suppose these are principles which should be used by all churches to find synergy and to speak to the current expectations. We don't need to sit down as churches and craft documents. We just need to realize our* common *principles and practice them and everythingelse will fall into place.*

Participant three: *Let every church identify what is missing and why is it missing. Let every church introspect and check where it comes from, where it is and where it is going. It will not help us to continue* competing *as churches as if we are praying different gods. So, once we know what we are missing, we will be able to be contextual.*

Participant: Civilizations was, is and will forever be there. Time changes every second, minute and hour- you know what I mean. But the Word of God never changes, it was from the beginning of times, through the changing times and it will forever be as it in the bible. We cannot change the word of God because we will be attempting to change God.

We should be very careful and guard against the evolution of life changing how we look and listen to God. We should be very careful not to allow modernisation to change our relationship with God. Let's not worship change but let us continue to embrace the Gift of the Holy Spirit- "Mowa o halalelang" (Holy Spirit*).*

Participant four: *Let us create songs like Charles Wesley used to do in England, let us have young preachers who can speak the language of the youth sir. Let us listen to the needs our people and craft our sermons to addresses them. Let us preach about social ills and give people hope. Let churches stop fighting and competing for recognition and popularity. Let us do that. Let us accommodate the minority, the LGBTQ community, the sangomas, and others.*

Participant one: *Yah. Ke nahana hore* (yes, I think that) it is very important that all churches should unite to approach all *mathata are nang le ona* (all the challenges we have*). Ke nako yo rona hore* (at our own time*)* which should *re rere lentswe la Modimo fela* (where we should be

.

preaching the word of God only). Face all the challenges, *re di rapedisa, re kopane rele di kereke* (praying together united as churches). I think we will unite in one voice.

Participant three: Is all about contextualization. First, look at the context. *Nako ele ya go rera ka Palestine and Moshe ga e sahlole ele teng* (the time of preaching about Moses and Palestine is over*). You take the text to the people. Oska ba tlohela ko fatshe (*do not leave your listeners behind). *Ba bantsi bare moruti or tlogetse ko kerekeng* (many listeners say, Reverend has left in the church-he was preaching alone not to us). It means *ga ba utlwa (they did not hear you)* and make sure that the text fit the people.

Participant three: *I think we need to sit down* and *reflect on where we come from, as the church, where we are and where we are going. Covid 19 taught us a lot of things and the churchalmost collapsed. If we do not preach, pray and worship in such a way that it appeals to our people and is relevant, then we are doomed. Ka re (*I am saying*) let us sit down and re-look and re-trace our steps as the church.*

Participant four: *Sir, let us all be present with the present times. Its fine to stick to the principles tsa bagolo* (elders) *but youth is running away from the church. I am also youth and do not enjoy church anymore. This gap between youth and old must be closed.*

4.2.8 Essence of participants' responses on the question- How can the **Christian community practice inclusive and contextual Christian ministry?(This means how Christian community worship, praise, preach and pray in such a way that it speaks to the current voice, current demands, and expectations of the members?).**

There were mixed responses to this question. Meaning the Mainstream were on the issue of contextualization and AIC were fine in how they currently worship. Only one participant out of the twenty-four responded negatively to this question and the rest of the other participants responded positively. Firstly, Participants were of the view that all churches need to respectful and tolerate each other in their different worship and exist. Secondly, there was consensus amongst participants that churches need to sit down and reflect on how they are doing church now, they need to ask themselves as to why young people find the church irrelevant. Lastly, churches need to come up with songs, sermons which are contextual and speak to the current issues facing the communities.

.

4.3 The essentials of the findings:

4.3.1 Oneness of God:

Both the Mainstream and African Indigenous Church participants understood that there is **One God** for all churches:

Participant two: *As African we do not worship ancestors, but we venerate our ancestors, we remember those gone before us, and recognize their presence in our* lives*, the most important the bloodthat runs in our veins are the blood of those gone before us. In both Christianity and African beliefs, and we see God as all powerful and the one who loves all people (perfect love), we all need Gods' help to be saved and God help all to escape in all predicaments. The Church has called to witness to Christ as the* ***One God****, in order to accomplish our mission as a church we need healing and transformation, so what we can do to cooperate our veneration to our respective space we just need to understand that all comes from* ***one God****, and that in veneration we are not worshiping the dead we recall their presence, healing services where we collaborate different healers, use of symbols (Candles, Essence, Water). The Roman Church and the Anglican Church are the good example of this."*

Participant three: ***Modimo ke Modimo (God is God)****. Go ya ka thuto e ke rutilweng ka yona (*According to the way I was taught*). So, there is a difference between Modimo le Badimo* (God and ancestors*). Ke nahana hore Badimo ke setso sa rona* (I think ancestors are part of our culture*). Ke dikakanyo le ditumelo tsa rona (it is our thinking and our beliefs). Tse etswang ke Modimo has tse etswang ke Badimo* (what is done by God cannot be done by a person*). Also – ke nahana hore le bona badimo bao* (so, I think they too are children of God), *ke batho* (they are human beings) *and they were created by Modimo* (God). *So, we cannot praise batho bao* (those people). *You cannot compare Modimo le Badimo. Definitely not* (God and ancestors).

Participant one*: "I think if am correct, it all goes back to ecumenism. So, we Lutherans, we support ecumenism as long as it does not affect our doctrines,* then *we support it. We can evenadopt other things, ba its emo phutheng and ke beta clock.*

Participant four*: Every year after the council meetings and other meetings from head office, branches are informed of the decisions taken and what is* expected *of Zionist. We are encouraged to be respectful being- we respect God, Ntate, our families and other people. I*

.

suppose these are principles which should be used by all churches to find synergy and to speak to the current expectations. We do not need to sit down as churches and craft documents. We just need to realise our common principles and practice them and everything else will fall into place."

4.3.2 Tolerance and respect in respect of the view of Ancestral Veneration

Both the Mainstream and AIC participants recognize that in some instances, there is disrespect and undermining of these two churches and call upon tolerance in how their viewancestral veneration:

*"Hey, what I noticed from the Mainstream churches is that the barutis, are going to college for training. Lefa ke sa itse gore ba fiwa eng (*even though I do not know what they receive*). Here you see there is administration and some social or something and structure mo baruting (from Reverends) from the Mainstream churches because I belong them."*

Participant three*: And when you are invited, or you have visited these AIC's.* ***Moruti, nna ke kopa go nna*** **personal? (Reverend, may I be personal?)** *So hae tsena mo kerekeng, ke batla order because ke motho ya ratang ho bala bible* (when coming to church, I want order because I like order*). Modimo hao batle chaus* (God does not want chaus), *o batla* (God wants*)* order and usually and this churches, *ha ke tsena moeng ke nna confusunyana* (as I enter their church, I get little confused*). Go nale enngwe eng ke ile* (I visited one church*)* because I knew the wife. Ha fuounu e lla, motho wa e arabe (when the phone rings, a person just goes out and to answer the phone). *There is no order. I dont like that situation. I am sorry to say but that is what I noticed. Another thing, whoever will be doing the sermon? Ha Moruti (Reverend) is preaching or during the sermons, bomme (*mothers*), or rather phuthego eya tlatsa and o fumane ke sa tlhaloganye (congregation make noise I find myself confused). According to the bible, Morena Jesu* (Jesus Christ) *is the only one between us and God. So, they will be thanking the angles." Ke leboga lengoloi la sebaka (*I think the angel of the place*) I am not comfortable with that. "Ke leboga lengoloi le re tsamisitseng go fitlha fa (*I thank the angel that carried until so far*) I don't understand that. I am not comfortable with that. The bible states that angels are ministeringspirits. Angels are being send by God."*

Participant three*: From the ZCC's point of view and my experience, ZCC is unique* ***to the point***

.

that some other churches call us bad names and think we pray "Ntate" but we are now used to that*. For me, the difference here is doing* and *praying things in the African way and other doing it in the stolen way or colonized way. I mean charity begins at home-they say. I would not leave my way of practicing taught by my parents and go to America and want to do in Africa what Americans do****. I mean, Americans don't even know how we worship in Africa****."*

4.3.3 Differences between Mainstream and AIC: There are differences in theology,doctrines, and teachings regarding the Ancestral Veneration.

Other two noticeable differences are that of Western and African and the focus on the Holy Spirit by the Mainstream and focus on the father-person by AIC. Mainstream churches are governed by structures such as Conferences, Sessions, and Synods where decision making involves many. The worship in the Mainstream is also structured and follows a pattern such as Creeds, "Te deum, and etcetera. "AIC- leadership centers around one figure and decision making are done by "muntu omunye (one people). In some cases, this figure becomes a deity that is worshipped and elevated aboveJesus but less than God.

When people die, they go to the graveyard to bury the flesh, but the spirit leaves forever and does not go to the grave with them. It in the book of Genesis and John where Jesus is described as the Word. Jesus was not flesh but spirit which leaves forever. Therefore, I think, Jesus cannot be equated to ancestors because ancestors were never spirits but flesh only. It is Jesus who raised himself from the death and it is believed that they are ancestors waiting of Jesus to raise them from the dead (the so-called judgment day). It is therefore contraction to even look at Jesus as the ancestor because he is bigger than that.

4.3.4 Conflicting in understanding ancestral veneration.

Both the Mainstream churches and the AIC, participants expressed conflict towards ancestral veneration. This means, some participants from the AIC denomination which does notbelieve in ancestors, would express his/ her belief in veneration ancestors. This will also be expressed by a member from the Mainstream churches whose denomination believes in ancestral veneration, but he/she does not believe. Secondly, there are AIC which completely do not believe in ancestral veneration, and some do and all participants from the Mainstream churches acknowledge that their denomination do not have problem with ancestral

.

veneration, even thou as indicated, an individual member may have a different opinion on the matter.

***Participant two**: One would say, what will make us find a common. We all believe in God that is the most important. **Yes, there are differences** but the fact of the matter is that we are family. So, what is the common goal? Is that we put our differences aside and look at the end goal which is Christ. I mean in those who are in the African philosophy also believes in God, especially Zion Christian Church and Apostolic Church see Christ as the Messiah. One unifies us is that we all see Christ as the Messiah and that is what unifies us. Yes, there are differences but the end- goal is that once again, one and praying one God. Ephesians speaks of the resurrection of the Jesus where there is no Jew or gentile-end goal is one God."*

Participant three: ***Yah. Ha ke nahane hore hona le* difference in this thing *ya badimo (yes, I do not think there is difference between this thing of ancestors)**. The difference comes with us go ya ko go re dumelang re rutuang ka teng (as to where we get educated and adopt certain beliefs). You can still be Mowesele (be a Methodist) and oye go thwasa (and go to be a traditional doctor) and still come back to the church. Ke nahana hore yo go to thwasa because ke tumela ya setso so* lona *and ha e erohanye motho le kereke ya lona* (I think being a traditional doctor is a culture and it should not take a person from the church*). Nna ha hona mo ke sa fitting teng ho rorisa Modimo (as for me, I do fit in any church for worshipping). Ha kereke ya bazwalane ekene moo keya ya (when the born-again church services in one, I attend). Ha kereke ya Wesele e tshwere service ke ya "inculturation (*when the Methodist church is on, I also attend, so I do inculturation*). Ke* fila *hore re batho ba one, re dumelaModimo o one* (so, I feel that all people are one, we believe in one God).

4.3.4.1 Ancestors.

The subsidiary questions had to involve the word "ancestors" in one way or another and participants had to respond to it.

4.3.1.2 Western invasion.

There was a confession from some of the participants that Mainstream church is Western influenced.

Participant three*: Well, I think my short and long answer is that: **Mainstream are slavery***

.

churches*- I mean look at the whole issue of uniform. I was told that Methodist uniform originates from* ***the garden boys of England****. The AIC are real African churches with not educations and progression at all. At least they are Africans, but they have progress issues unlike the Mainstream churches*."

Participant one: *From the ZCC's point of view and my experience, ZCC is unique to the point that some other churches call us bad names and think we pray "Ntate"* (The Father*) but we are now used to that. For me, the difference here is doing and praying things in the African way and other doing it in the stolen way or colonized way. I mean charity begins at home-they say. I would not leave my way of practicing taught by my parents and go to America and want to do in Africa what Americans do. I mean, Americans don't even know how we worship in Africa."*

4.3.1.3 Africanization.

Some participants defended their stands against the Western invasion by missionaries and emphasis the need for African people to hold firm to their Africanism**.**

Participant one*: Now for us Lutherans, we go back to the bible in the* book *of the Hebrews where it says Jesus is the great ancestor who died for us. Is just that I forgot the scripture. E teng foo (it is there-the scripture). He is the greater ancestor and how focus is on Christ alone. If you know us the Lutherans, we have the sola scripture and Christ alone and we focus on Jesus as the greatest ancestor. No need to go through someone else.* ***There is something we need to understand about Motswana.*** *Doctrine may say this* but *your identity remains even thou members always to the ancestors' even though the doctrine e re jwetsa (doctrine telling us).In the Hebrews" sola scripture. Luther also said that there is no need to worship saints like the Roman Catholic will do. Rather we look at the ditoro tseo ba didireleng (*their works*) and be impowered by what they left and rona baba setseng ka kwano* (we who are left behind*) try to leave the way they live. Not to pray to them. So, Jesus is the great ancestor and re rapela yena (*we pray him*).*

Participant four: Sir, *nna, ke tswallwa in Topia (*I was born in Ethiopian church*)* and I am proud to be one. *Ke nna fela ka tlung (*I am the only one in the family*)* who carried the legacy of my father's church. Ba *bang* (others*)* have gone to other churches. *Ka seTopia*

.

*(*according to the Ethiopian church),**we do things, pray and worship *ka Bo Afrika ba rona and Iona Mawesele (and you Methodists),*** it's English and English from German or England or wherever you come from. Secondly, the difference *ke honyatsana* (spirit of undermining*),* others are educated, and others are not educated. You know what I mean."

4.3.1.4 Biblical perspective.

Few responses from the interviews quoted the bible and some mentioned forefather and mothers from the bible.

Participant one*: Now for us Lutherans, we go back to **the bible in the book of the Hebrews** where it says Jesus is the great ancestor* who *died for us. Is just that I forgot the scripture. E teng foo (*it is there-scripture*). He is the greater ancestor and how focus is on Christ alone. If you know us the Lutherans, we have the sola scripture and Christ alone and we focus on Jesus as the greatest ancestor. No need to go through someone else. There is something we need to understand about Motswana. Doctrine may say this, but your identity remains even thou members always to the ancestor's even though the doctrine e re jwetsa (as the doctrine tells us) **in the Hebrews" sola scripture**. Luther also said that there is no need to worship saints like the Roman Catholic will do. Rather we look at the ditoro tseo ba didireleng* (their works*) and be empowered by what they left and rona baba setseng ka kwano (*we, who are left behind*) try to leave the* way *they live, not to pray to them. So, Jesus is the great ancestor and re rapela yena.*

Participant one*: The AIC uses more cultural* forms *of prayer and prefers language spoken to the people. Like "SIONE", (ZCC) we sing "Mpogo"* (ZCC worshipping song) *which the Mainstream churches such as "Wesele" (Methodists) calls praises in worship. For example- "Mpogo"* (worshipping song*) - we look at Revelation 14 **"ka bona konyana e dutse thapeng e bina pina e sautlweng ke batho"*** **(**I saw the lamp sitting on top of the mountain, singing a song not known by people*) and the AIC-particularly -ZCC preaches the bible and the bible only."*

4.3.4 Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu:

In responding to the last two subsidiary questions, this theme dominated the answers.

Participant two*: Let us create e songs like* Charles *Wesley used to do in England, let us have young preachers who can speak the language of the youth sir. Let us listen to the needs of our*

.

*people and craft our sermons t addresses them**. Let's preach about social ills and give people hope.**"*

Let churches stop fighting and competing for recognition and popularity. Let us do that. Let us accommodate the minority, the LGBTQ community, the Sangomas, and others.

Participant three*: Again, I will repeat what I* have *just said Moruti* (Reverend). *A baruti ba kopane banne **seoposengwe (let Reverends be united)**. Secondly, let us all understand each other for the world to understand us. Kana re rapela Modimo ale one (*by the way, we pray the same God*), the reason we differ so much and become irrelevant to the needs of the people is because is because of one thing, there is no spirit of unity."*

4.4 Summary.

24 participants were interviewed, 12 from the Mainstream and 12 from the AIC, with 4 participants from each denomination from the two churches. Four subsidiary questions were put before the participants to answer freely and fairly. These subsidiary questions were guided by the main question which reads "What are the main dichotomies in the worship practices between Mainstream Christian and African Indigenous Churches in South Africa?" The data found were to help to achieve the objectives of this study hence the questions asked with the central word of ancestral veneration at the center of them. The aim of this study was to:

> The aim of this research is to explore theological dichotomies between Mainstream churches and AIC with special reference to ancestral veneration to start or contribute to ongoing conversations and or discussions between the Mainstream churches and AIC.

The Objectives of this study were:

- To establish the theological and cultural dichotomies in ancestral venerationbetween the Mainstream churches and AIC.
- To explore how ancestral veneration fits in the worship and ministry practices of the Christian Mainstream churches and AIC.
- To engage the Mainstream churches and the AIC churches into a conversation on how

.

to foster healthy mutual co-operation between them.

- To create a conversation between Mainstream churches and AIC on awareness of the values embedded in their traditions and how they can advance to the social capital of the country.

From the questions asked, re-occurring words, similarities and common themes were identified in which data was collected from. Some of these themes spoke and supported what has been mentioned in the literature review. For example:

- The findings of understanding the role of the ancestors spoke to the biblical context of ancestors calling in the literature review.

- The conflict amongst church spoke to topic of personal experience under the theological framework.

- The understanding of dead person/ ancestor is related to the definition of Anthropology in the literature review. In this argument or understanding, the doctrine of anthropology cropped up and the importance of land where family members are buried was an important to look at. Praying the God of Abraham, Jacob and Isaac who are referred as ancestors in the findings related to the ancestral view of biblical fathers in the personal experience section of the framework.

4.5 Summary of important findings.

In this study, there were many findings which addressed the dichotomies between the Mainstream and the African Indigenous churches regarding ancestral veneration and here is a summary of the few most important findings for me in this study:

4.5.1 Biblical interpretations.

The point of praying one God and using one Bible by all churches came very strong during the interviews but the difference was the literal interpretation of the bible. There are scriptures in the bible which speak about the importance of ancestral veneration and other scriptures which

.

condemns ancestral veneration. This therefore creates tensions in how such scriptures are preached and taught in different churches.

The indoctrination of beliefs from such interpretations plays a role in how the Mainstream and AIC look at each other regarding ancestors and ancestral veneration. Unfortunately, I do not see such differences of biblical interpretation being resolved in any way. I recently attended the Church of Christ service, and I observed the taking off shoes when entering the church (taken from Exodus 3, story of the burning bush) and how church leader referred and called his congregants as Israel of the Old Testament. This is an example of different biblical interpretations.

4.5.2 Jesus as the great ancestor.

One of the research questions was how can we see Jesus as the great ancestor? This required a theological background, but some participants brought the theology of incarnation unaware of it. Again, here there were conflicting views around incarnation and some participants used it as a tool to defend the belief in ancestral veneration and the dismissal of ancestral veneration. In this argument, the doctrine of anthropology cropped up and the importance of land where family members are buried was an important point to look at.

It was important to look at because it helped in looking at Jesus as the one who can encompass all of creation as narrated in Psalm 24. The understanding of Jesus as the great ancestor also clarifies the notion of seniority between Jesus/God and ancestors. The title great ancestor is given to Jesus only and not ancestors. Therefore, it should be clear that there is no comparison between ancestors and Jesus, and they cannot be measured at the same height.

4.5.3 Doctrines.

With the struggle of biblical interpretations, comes the different doctrinal approaches between the Mainstream and the AIC. Again, using the bible as a tool, one of the tensions was that of the role of patriarchy in church. It was discovered that in some AIC, women are still not allowed to lead, to preach and to lead the corpse to the graveyards. I do know that in some rural parts of South Africa, even in the Mainstream, women are not allowed to lead the corpse, but it is not as rife as it is in the AIC. This practice is not only cultural but doctrinal also because it is derived from understanding the church history as captured firstly in the Old Testament and New Testament moving forward.

.

Furthermore, one of the arguments which kept coming up in the interviews was that of Mainstream being westernised and AIC being primitive but African. Looking at this argument, I discovered that it is true that the Mainstream is dominantly western, and this is observed by hymn books and liturgical prayers which are translated from English to African languages whereas, the AIC is strictly vernacular and original. With that observation, the subject of ancestral veneration will always be contesting issue between the Mainstream and AIC because western theology is very lean on African practices, rituals ways of life and cannot teach African anything about ancestral veneration.

4.5.4 Western invasion.

Westerners played a negative role in creating tensions and making dichotomies between the Mainstream and AIC. Their dominance and influence in making African to lose their Christian identity to the point of changing their names to what is known as "Christian names" was the beginning of dividing Africans to what we are now. This division by westerners was done from the economic, social and the religious point of view and our fore parents allowed this to happen, hence some people still see Jesus as the white American or a British guy with blue eyes.

4.5.5 Zionist Christian Church (ZCC).

The ZCC is one of the strongest AIC in South Africa. There are two unique findings about the ZCC:

1. Unlike all other churches where the Lord's Prayer is a must or part of the Sunday or any day services, the ZCC does not recognise or sing the Lord's Prayer, I can only assume that the singing of "*Mpogo"* replaces the Lord's Prayer.
2. The most important findings about the ZCC are that unlike other AIC, it does not believe in ancestors, nor does it venerate ancestors. According to their doctrine, God is the supreme and second to God is their "Papa," that is their Bishop. This information is important because it helped this study to be careful of perceptions not facts.

4.5.6 Conflicting views on ancestors

The literature review gave this study an idea on where different church stands regarding ancestors. Of course, those who believe in ancestors automatically believe in ancestral veneration. I discovered conflicting views from some of the participants from churches. For

.

example, a participant from ZCC was straight forward of his/her personal view on ancestors which agrees with his/her church stands and another participant whose church does not agree on ancestors would privately venerate ancestors.

4.5.7 Dichotomies on ancestral veneration.

The heading of this study is Dichotomies between Mainstream and African Indigenous churches: A theology exploration of ancestral veneration and a way forward, focus was based in collecting data from participants belonging to the two churches. I have since discovered organisationally, both churches have policies, resolutions and standing orders regarding the matter and it is clear of their differences which then constitutes dichotomies.

I want to put it that the differences and inputs regarding the ancestral veneration did not come from the policies, resolutions, and the standing orders of the two churches but came from the hearts of the participants. For the participants, this matter was more personal and emotional than taking from their church's guidelines. In other words, moving forward, the subject of ancestral veneration should be looked inclusively so and not only be looked from the church's point of view. Furthermore, this finding indicates that there so much spiritual confusion amongst ordinary people in our communities who need spiritual guidance on matters such as this one.

4.5.8 Similarities.

Despite the tensions between the two churches, the different doctrines, and cultural differences. The two churches have spiritual meeting place where their difference matters not. It is the meeting place where again the Oneness of God is vivid and social cohesion of Umuntu Ngumuntu Ngabantu (I am because you are) is displayed. Here I refer to when there is a funeral in the village or community or neighbourhood. Members of these churches will come during the week to share and exchange in singing, prayers and so forth, and on the day of the funeral, they will come with their different uniform but will be united with the bereaved family.

4.6 Usage of research findings.

A usage had to be design in how findings from the interviews were to be handled in such a way that they add value to the study. All interviews were important, and some had similarities, some were too rough in their objections. Above are some of the transcripts from the

.

interviews which were used to reach the essential and important findings. The following steps were followed:

Firstly, the above findings were collected as indicated by doing interviews from 24 participants, randomly selected: 12 from the Mainstream and 12 AIC.

Secondly, all consent forms were collected for safe keeping and the recordings were turned into transcript. Few of the participants who wished not to be recorded agreed that I can take note which were also looked at.

Thirdly, all transcripts were scrutinised where similarities, differences and unique answers were identified.

Fourthly, out of these transcripts, essential, important findings were discovered and used in this study.

Fifthly, literature review was consulted, and it helped with understanding the findings better.

4.7 Field notes/ Observations

Discomfort: One or two participants were not comfortable with signing the consent forms due to ongoing criminality of identity theft. Others had to confess that some of their beliefs regarding ancestral calling is against their church doctrines and there was a little discomfort after confessing but they continue, nevertheless**.**

Emotions: Some of the female participants become very emotional to the point of crying during the interviews. That means, the subject and the questions became too personal, and I had to bring water and bring facial tissue to cool them down. Furthermore, as indicated earlier, experienced on conducting interviews helped and I had to allow participant to be sober and remind the participants the confidentiality and transparency agreement.

Preaching mode: Some of the participants started well but along the interviews, developed a preaching point when answering some of the question of Jesus as the great ancestor. I suspect that some of them may be preachers and the excitement of the interviews took them to the pulpit.

.

Overall impressions are that all 24 participants did well, and enough data and information was collected from the interviews.

.

Chapter 5: Data analysis and interpretation.

5.1 Introduction.

In this chapter, two methods of analyzing data were used to interpret data and construct a conclusion. I have chosen to use two of them because speak to how I envisaged to interpret data and they are use-friendly in that they can also be used in qualitative and quantitative. In other words, they do not compete regarding usage. These methods are:

- Thematic analysis which according to Braun and Clarke: 2012:15) refers to getting insight from the patterns and themes from the data collected and helping the researcher to make sense of data collected.

- Constant Comparative Analysis method was used to analysis and interpret data. Thorne (2000:69) describes Constant Comparative Analysis as comparing themes, statements, and interviews with each other to develop a conceptual relation between various pieces of data. This method involves personal phenomena which in this study will be ancestral veneration.

In analyzing and interpreting data of this study, the main question was: "What are the main dichotomies in the worship practices between Mainstream Christian and African Indigenous Churches in South Africa?" was used as a benchmark, followed by the four subsidiary questions which reads:

- What are the main differences between the Mainstream churches and AIC?
- How can we look at Jesus Christ as the great ancestor?
- How can Christian denominations find synergy in how they approach ancestralveneration in their respective spaces?

- How can the Christian community practice inclusive and contextual Christian ministry? (This means how Christian community worship, praise, preach and pray in such a way that it speaks to the current voice, current demands, and expectations of the members?).

The above subsidiary questions provided the basis for the research investigation and the

.

consequent findings. This helped me to categorize, manipulate and summarize information to answer the main question of this research and ultimately respond to the title of this study which reads “Dichotomies between Mainstream and African Indigenous churches: A Practical Theology exploration of ancestral veneration”. Out of these questions, the following themes, similarities, arguments were then identified and summarised.

5.2 The Oneness of God

All participants demonstrated common understanding of one omnipotent God who is active in the world. Despite the different denominations, different doctrines, theologies, teachings and beliefs, there was a clear understanding that there is one God, which is common to all the Christian churches. Part of the AIC’s participants pain was that of being accused of praying their Bishop by the Mainstream churches. Yet despite this, AIC remain resolute that there only one God. McGrath (2001: 285-286) asserts that God is active in the world in various ways which are not competitive but complementary. McGrath (2001:286-286) continues to say God the activeness of God is seen acting through the laws of nature such night and day, light, and darkness, that God is seen active by acting through secondary sources and through persuasion. The many different churches which exist currently, including (Mainstream churches and AIC) should realize the gift of difference placed upon them by God and refrain from looking at the actual differences but begin to solidify their oneness and God is one. As St John puts it “I am the vineyard, and you are the branches.”

The oneness of God cannot be separated from the owner of the church which is God. Harvey (2017:21) puts it that in the Old Testament and the New Testament respectively, it has been God who have ensured that when the church is broken and divided, God shapes it back to its originality and the church cannot exist without God.

It is Jeramiah 18:6 who narrates the story of the clay in the hands of the potter and this may be interpreted that thee church is in the hands of one God and there is no other being who is able to unify the church. Hudson (1995:71) adds more on this and say the oneness of God as that of a family and continues to say Christians who welcomed Jesus as the Lord and Savior becomes brothers and sisters amongst themselves and with Christ at the center of their lives. They become a family both visible and invisible. This means that Christians together with

.

angels and those departed in faith become one family, God the father, as the head. John 15: 5 expresses this unity and oneness of God when Jesus says" I am the tree, and you are the branches."

With the ones of God, comes the belief in the Supreme Being. That God is all above and all supreme. Once again, the different churches, teachings, theologies, worshiping practices. The known and unknown dichotomies. All the mentioned ultimately submit to that one Supreme-God. Alolo (2007:18) states that in African see God as the Supreme because he is the author of all life forms including the word of the spirits. Hebrew (12:2) says "*let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and the perfecter of our faith.*" Adamo (2011:4) also adds by saying Africans understand God as Supreme Being because for African, it means that God is the head of all things, even divinities and ancestors.

It was encouraging to note our all participants were able to indirectly identify with each other with the oneness of God. In that, we were created in the image of God and God does notjudge nor tread us according to the church affiliations but as Christians.

5.3 Unity of the church.

Harvey (2017:3) says a church "Greek" 'ekklesia", derived from "ek-Kaleo", is a verb signifying to call forth; it denotes an assembly summoned or called out, a selected body separated from the mass of the people. It is made of followers of Christ who are ready to give evidence of faith in Christ, or experimental religion. In other words, it is a communityof all, gathered for the common purpose of serving one God. The Mainstream and AIC understand themselves to a church under the supremacy of God, hence there is common understanding of unity that must prevail amongst them. At the stage in did one denomination felt higher and powerful than the other when coming to what a church is. This is supported by Bancroft (1976:289) who describes the church as body of persons called out to the world and separated from sin by the power of God and by Faith of the crucified and risen Christ.

On top of the oneness of God demonstrated by the participants, the unity of the Church was mentioned by few participants. Their point of emphasis was that no one and no situation should prevent the churches from uniting. In past and recent times, the South Africa observed and experienced shameful events where members of the leadership of the church ended

.

up fighting violently and dividing the church. A case in point is that of the Shembe Nazareth (NEWS- 24, 2012), where members took each other to court for power and money and the IPHC (NEWS- 24, 2022), where people were gunned down inside the church. The unity expresses in these findings, however, is not much on the violence we see happening in other churches, but it is centered on unity of all Christians whilst acknowledging their differences regarding ancestral veneration.

5.3 Witness of the church.

I want to add that the unity of the church speaks also to the witnessing of the church. Stringfellow (2018) contends that the integrity of witnessing the power of God enables us to know that unity of the church is gift from God, it belongs to God, it comes free, and it is not earned or attained in any form. It is a call not only to those who already believe but to those who are still going to be called in to the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

The participants from Mainstream churches the AIC may not have agreed theologically on some of their teachings, but they demonstrated the commonality of understanding their primary task of being the witness of the church in the polarized world. This witnessing is seen practiced in different forms. Every Sunday services, street revivals done by some churches once a quarter or according totheir evangelical schedules, the pastoral programs of visiting the sick, the old, bible studies, public witness are part of the witnessing of the church (Matthew 28:19).

This unity of the church is seen amid the transforming and evolving world, world full of political tension globally, technology and changing times. The last question to the participants asked: how can Christian community practice inclusive and contextual Christian ministry? (This means how Christian community worship, praise, preach and pray in such a way that it speaks to the current voice, current demands and expectations of its members). One of the responses to this question was that of tolerance. Meaning, the witness of the church will continue to be visible if churches such as Mainstream and AIC learn to tolerate each other.

The witness of the church advocated by Christian globally remains steadfast and resilient in facing the challenges and pressures of the world we live in. MacBride (2014:25) calls the resilient and steadfast church as that which is dwelling in the world by the word and is shaped by the crucified Jesus in its thinking. MacBride (2014:25) continues to elaborate that one of

.

the mission imperatives of the church is its public witness and how it is involved in the life of the communities through Jesus Christ.

Therefore, when the church becomes a church involved in the community, the differences and dichotomies of their ideologies and theologies and their stands on matters such as ancestral veneration become irrelevant to the task of saving souls. Stinton (2010:104) adds that the advocacy of the church is also that of prophet action. This is where the church prophecy speaks truth to itself and challenges power. I want to add that prophetic action or voice should also be turned into practical prophetic events. As is clear in the case study of this study, for example. The Mainstream churches and the AIC should intentionally come together and address the dichotomies between them not only about ancestral veneration but also about other issues and difference which hinders their unity to serve Christ.

5.4 Unity of the church as a homogeneous principle.

The homogeneity principle has played a role in the unity of the church beginning with the Abrahamic covenant which perpetuated the understanding that all humanity comes from the seed and the blessing of Abraham. Padilla (1982:23) further calls on all Christians to see each other the same way that God sees them. We were made from the same cloth of Abrahamic faith. One participant blames the dis-unity of the current church as especially the Mainstream and AIC on the clergy of both. He/she then suggests the unity of the church should be started, be driven, and advocated by the clergy from the start. He/she argues that the community respects pastors/ reverends and the community turn to do everything the clergy leads to do.

The role of Jesus in the New Testament meant that all barriers were broken, all division of humanity were fixed (healed) and both the Jews and Gentiles were joined in one seal of faith. However, data collected showed divisions and barriers within the churches, especially regarding ancestral veneration. The homogeneous principle should be applied, and Christians from the Mainstream churches and AIC should be taught and be reminded that we are alike because we come from the same cloth. Churches may wear different clothes, have different buildings, and teach different beliefs about ancestors but they are alike.

The Bible in the New Testament has only three references where Jesus entered the temple of Jerusalem. He entered eight days (Luke 2:21-39) after his birth for circumcision as the Jewish

.

boy, he entered at age twelve (Luke 2:41-52) with his parents and lastly at age thirty- three to chase away criminals in his father house (Matthew 21:13). This information is important to discard the notion of church uniforms, buildings, theologies, and traditions which are at war with each other whilst on the other hand all praising the same Jesus.

5.5 Conflict amongst churches.

The conflict of the churches can be traced as indicated in the beginning of this study, from the invasion of the missionaries and their subsequent bulling and imposing of their western ideologies. Some churches resisted and some succumbed to those oppressive ideologies. This is where conflict can be traced. Oosthuizen (2022) supports this view by adding that the conflicts between the Mainstream churches and the AIC results in the split in which the AIC decided to stand alone, citing the Mainstream as western orientated and therefore losing the African authenticity.

The word “independent” was founded by the AIC based on not wanting to be colonized by the western doctrine but wanted to remain in Africa. This conflict is not just between two different churches but extends itself within one church. For example, the participant demonstrated he or she is member of a church which teaches that there are no ancestors and yet a participant does ancestral rituals. This view is mentioned by Ntombana (2015:105) who expresses the lack of Mainstream members to express their Africanism within their church but outside (AIC), they can freely do so. I wish to express that this view of members belonging to a specific church and yet not following the teachings of that church is a topic on its own which needs further investigation and discussion.

5.6 Understanding the role of ancestors.

5.6.1 Ancestors.

Different authors such as Setiloane (1988:77) and other authors have defined and explained ancestors in different ways. Adamo (2011:4) puts it that Africans understand ancestors as good models for human behavior and aspire to be ancestors themselves. Some of the participants may have a different view from this because they completely do not recognize ancestors. Therefore, the aspiration of Africans to be ancestors may be overrated. Beyers (2010:4) concludes that ancestors are to be those guides of the journey and how to attain the

.

fullness of life including going through birth rites, puberty rites and death.

Mekoa (2019:103-104) describes ancestors as superintendents of family affairs who continue to bear titles of father andmother. Ancestors continue to channel though which their relatives can be in contact with God or the Supreme Being. In the African "domba" (consulting surgery of traditional healer) ancestors are referred as "O-Gogo no-Mkhulu (our grandmothers and grandfathers).

Nurnburger (2007:25) supports Mekoa (2019:103-104) by highlighting that ancestors are not strange and evil spirits. Ancestors depend on the recognition of their offspring for their continued authority and belonging. It is for this reason that I and some people still visit the graves and still slaughter animals to continue with the light of recognizing the ancestors. Some participants argued against this idea of going to the graves.

According to these participants, going to the grave is nothing to do with connecting with ancestors but is to clean the grave and show children where the body of their loved one's is laid. There is a relationship between God and ancestors which in my view has to make sense if it includes the living. It is the living who were created by God and who lived with the ancestors. So, the living places an important role in understanding the relationship between God and ancestors.

Breugel (2001:38) brings a different point in this relationship between God and ancestors by mentioning that in some tribes, God only empowers the ancestors to take care of the living and then God steps aside. Much as I agree with the relationship, but I differ with this view because God is the creator of all beings-dead and alive and God loves all beings. The idea of God delegating his tasks to take care of the living sound to be irresponsible of God.

5.6.2 Role of Ancestors.

Similar feedback as in the conflict of churches was presented by a few of the participants here. There were different and aggressive arguments about understanding the role of ancestors in our current lives' reality of ancestors. These arguments are summarized by Singh (2012:1), defining these augments about spirits as spiritual dimensions of humanity which existed many years ago. Singh continues to use the term "the dawn of new consciousness," meaning as these arguments arise in the current times, they call us to re-look, re -think and

.

deal with reality. The perspective from the participants about the dawn of new consciousness was covered by the call to unite and find a better way for churches to work together despite our differences.

"The dawn of new consciousness" should firstly be interrogated because it seems as if it means, the discovery of the role of the ancestors is a new thing in Africa when in fact it has existed for many years back. Our parents, grandparents and great grand parents have also known of ancestors and their role in the societies.

Secondly, perhaps the new dawn of consciousness should be looked at from the perspective of the conflicts within societies and the church (as this study seeks to achieve regarding ancestral veneration in particular). In the past, the role of ancestors was regarded as sacred where only "*sangomas*" (traditional doctors) were regarded as the only people with direct access to ancestors and could communicate alone with ancestors. Modern times have seen the emergence of "*sangomas*" (traditional healers*)* who in my views have somehow commercialized the gift of interacting with ancestors. There are currently many television programs, radio, and social media programs where commercialization and fame programs are aired by sangomas, mostly young people.

The word "*sangoma*" (traditional healer) used to conjure up images of barefoot healers in traditional garb, chanting and waving an "*ishoba" (*material used as a symbol of royalty*).* It was an image that inspired awe and respect – and a healthy measure of trepidation for those uninitiated in their ancient and mysterious ways. Nowadays it's as easy to find a sangoma on YouTube as it would be to find one in a rural village, far off the beaten track. The modern sangoma is as likely to have an "*ishoba"* as they do on social media accounts or and YouTube channel. With their designer clothes, Brazilian hairand on-point makeup, younger traditional healers are rapidly changing the public's perception of sangomas – with some being serious slay queens too! DRUM speaks to three young women about being the changing face of traditional healing" (DRUM, 2019).

The above paragraph is an example of the modern "*sangomas*" (traditional doctors) which I have accused of being commercial and all about fame and it is my assumption that the sacred role of the ancestorsis somehow undermined. Mekoa (2011: 206) comments by saying it is the ancestors who taught African people to experience the life-giving force from one person

.

to another person. The failure of a person to recognize another person was and should still regarded as inhuman and that failure is also being regarded as human force that militates against life. Mekoa continues to say another role of ancestors has been that of healing through the knowledge of herbs and other remedies. Long before modern technology of medicine, people were still getting sick and there had been a way to heal them.

So, the role of ancestors here should never be discarded. Parrinder (1954:58) puts it that ancestors are believed to have survived death and to be living in a spiritual world, but still taking a lively interest in the affairs of their families. Mtukwa (2023:6) elaborates that ancestors are considered part of the African community and there calling the "dead" perhaps the appropriate name should be the living dead. They continue to become the police of the morality of the e society as they themselves leaved lifeguided by the common ancestor (great ancestor- Jesus). Mtukwa (2023:6) continues to describe ancestors as those who visit their families now and again and share meals with their families symbolically. For example, when a member of the family drops food or spill alcohol on the floor. It is believed it is a direct symbol of ancestors taking and eating that food. In some parts of African traditional events, old people will spill some of the ground as a sign of respect to the ancestors.

For this study, the role of ancestors should therefore be seen as intermediaries between the people and God. Ancestors are a spiritual bridge which helps us to connect with God. They are not the key to God because any one can and has the right access to God through prayer and meditation. This role of ancestors should not be seen as ancestors competing with God and the preaching which encourages ancestors to be seen as pagans should be dismissed by education and correct information.

5.6.3 Ancestors and God.

Both the Sesotho and Setswana languages use the same word to describe both God and Badimo (ancestors). "*Modimo*" (God) and "badimo (ancestors). At the same time, "badimo" (ancestors) has a literal translation of "Modimo (God) as one and badimo (ancestors) as many gods" in other words, badimo (ancestors) can easily lose and mislead people into thinking that "badimo" (ancestors) means many gods and therefore ancestors are gods. The question of this study which asks of how we can look at Jesus as our great ancestor helped in

.

understanding the relationship of Ancestors and God. The responses from some participants ranged from the biblical point of view where all Christians are regarded as coming from the spiritual blood of Abraham and from the cultural point of view all people who are dead are ancestors and God is supreme of all things-dead or alive.

However, it is Setiloane (1988:77) who explains this better by saying that "badimo" (ancestors) it two words abbreviated. The word comprises of batho- people, "*Dimo (God in IsiNdebele)* -God. So, ancestors are simply "batho ba Modimo (people of God). In this definition, it is worth noting that in IsiNdebele, God is referred as "Dzimo" (God in IsiNdebele) which has same tone as Dimo in Sesotho. Nurnburger (2007:38) asserts that the confusion of the singularity and the plurality of the word "badimo" (ancestors) and the plural Badimo (ancestors) always refers to the entire ancestral hierarchy and compares to the Catholic appellation to "all saints."

As previously indicated, authors did try to explain and to define Ancestors in the best possible way. Once again, Setiloane (1975:64) introduces the word "ho dima" (something on top of) to define God in relation to the ancestors. That God is the one who penetrates and permeates all things. So, even ancestors are subjected to the penetration of God. Setiloane (1975:77-80) continue to mention that it is difficult in African languages such as Sesotho to define God. The Sesotho people will call God; "*selo se*" (This thing) or "*Motlhod*i" (Creator) or "*Hlaa-Hlaa Macholo*" (Beyond antiquity). This is important as people continue to struggle in making a difference between God and ancestors.

To make sense of the relationship between God and ancestors, Mbiti (1969:82) says "The living-dead are bilingual: they speak the language of men, with whom they lived until 'recently'; and they speak the language of the spirits and of God, to whom they are drawing nearer ontologically." This means, the relationship of God and ancestors is a communicative one and it includes the living people to whom the living-dead are the fore parents of. This is important in defending the practice of ancestral veneration because it makes once again a clear distinction between the roles of the ancestors and God and how people have to approach the two entities.

Whilst focusing on the relationship between God and ancestors only, Pauw (1960:29) brings to our attention of this study, the third dimension in this relationship and he adds the living as

.

part of trio; God- Ancestors- The living. Pauw (1960:29) asserts that there are some rituals performed by the traditional healers where the names of the ancestors are mentioned as a key to the name of God whilst helping the client with a diagnosis. Pauw (1960:30) mentions that all three beings have a way of influencing each other in the process.

My grandmother, to whom I have already alluded in my observations as a sangoma will not consult anyone or diagnose anyone without calling out the names of her ancestors and ending with lifting the supremacy of God in her chanting. I understand this as invoking that relationship between God, the ancestors, and the living. In other words, God remains the Supreme Being who then gives the ancestors power to heal and to protect the client or patient. My grandmother will call and chant names of her ancestors whilst not forgetting to merge them with God. Nurnberger (2007:103) clarifies the problem of metaphors of vernacular languages used in giving ancestor titles that if the role and the position of God is clearly outlined, ancestors will not be considered in the same authoritative level and power as God.

5.7 Conflict in understanding ancestral veneration.

5.7.1 Perceptions.

The conflicting perceptions concerning the understanding in ancestral veneration are caused by personalities. Werner (2007: 55) states that personality variables such as interpersonal skills, emotional intelligence, communication skills, self-control and integrity largely determine how well a person applies himself or herself in a situation. These personality variables were identified during the pastoral conversations with those who were discriminated against because of their ancestral calling and those identified during the interviews with participants that led to prejudice.

Brown (2010: 4) states that prejudice is a judgment or opinion formed beforehand or without due examination. Brown (2010:4) further states that prejudice involves an unjustified, usually negative attitude towards others because of their social category or group membership. These perceptions regarding the understanding in ancestral veneration are visible between the Mainstream churches and AIC as two independent institutions but they stretch further into individual churches. By this, I mean, there will be members in the ZCC which does not teach

.

and belief in ancestral veneration and yet have members who are "*sangomas*" (traditional healer) in hiding and in the Methodist church, such people exist and all of them together with the set church are driven by perceptions.

5.7.2 Confusion caused by Western invasion.

The aspect of western invasion has been discussed at length in this study and there is still much more data regarding it. Such that, it may lead to confusion if it is not narrowed to the relevant research questions. Kgatla (1997: 633) argues that the confusion caused by western missionaries in the culture and practices of Africans not only by missionaries but also by Western scholars themselves. Kgatla (1997:633) continues to say, Western scholars were aggressive in nature when writing to the world about Africa without giving Africa a chance to voice who they are. This made western scholars listen and perhaps having something to write home about which would have been beneficial to them. I suppose this trend is still in existence where some western broadcasters in the media still narrate the problems of Africa better than Africans themselves. This may be extended to the political power which the western still hold on Africans and puts Africa in the inferior posture and the receiving side.

The view is the same in understanding ancestral veneration, the western has caused much confusion and division amongst the people. Setiloane (1986:17) posits that western missionaries did not understand that African clan names are necessary because the participation of the deceased (ancestors) in people lives is driven by respected clan names in a particular family. It is because of such frustrations amongst other reason, which led to the AIC to distance itself from the rest because it wanted to retain its African originality (Kasomo 2012). Molobi (2005) defends the AIC for its stands to distance itself and says AIC lived in the shadow of past experiences imposed on them by western influences, reasons, and theories. They were forced to define their lives, identity, religious and cultural practices according to western values. When the time came for the AIC to rise against the western forces, they did so unapologetically. Lamola (1985) calls the quest of AIC to stands on its own African principle and refused to be taught the bile and their God by westerners as "African radicalism and affirmation of their black self-hood."

.

Is Africa still confused?

Dichotomies as highlighted in this study reflect confusion about ancestral veneration. For the fact that there is still tension in understanding and teaching of ancestors indicates confusion. There is confusion between Mainstream churches and AIC and between members from both churches. This confusion may be seen even in the Pentecostalchurches in how they preach and teach about ancestral veneration.

5.7.3 Africanization as a solution.

As a way of defending the term "Africanization," Tshaka (2016:91) laments and say the usage of the word "Africanization" has become a public discourse by some people including the theologians to voice out frustrations on how Africa is departing from its core philosophies. The re-occurring of this word was provoked by the realization of how the symbols, ways of Africa have been made irrelevant and unnecessary by foreigners. The call by participants for African churches to unite does speak to the Africanization as a solution. What came collectively in all the participants was to note that Africans are Africans and that is not going to change, therefore, if a solution must be found for churches to leave together without tensions, it is Africans who should that solution.

Bediako (1995:1) comments that Christianity is here to stay in Africa with a foreseeable future. As to whose or which Christianity was brought into Africa, the missionary way or in the organic spirit of the AIC; that should not change the religious importance and their social institutionalism should not be ignored. Africanism, which absorbed western ideologies and teaching, should further remain intact for its future, and stay valid in the face of other spiritual forces which may arise. Moreover, Bediako (1995:210) further cites that Christian religion should not compete with the African worldview, rather it should avoid destructive dichotomies in epistemology. In avoiding these dichotomies, Bediako (1995:2) suggests that Africans who have chosen to follow Christianity should do so freely whilst not disrespecting African ways and cultures. Secondly, they should embrace and understand how Africans managed from the past to interpret God from the Christian religion into God in the African pot.

I want to put it that "*Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*" (I am because you are) must be repeated

.

within the understanding of Africanization if Africa must claim its authenticity as a people and as a continent. If Africa must reclaim its own roots regarding different beliefs and practices which were distorted by foreigners. African people need to realize that yes indeed things are evolving and changing but our humanity cannot be changed by western ideologies and the fast-treading technological world. Africa must stand up and fight for what is originally African. It should there not be a taboo for churches to freely sit down and debate and argue about ancestral veneration because it is something embraced and embedded in the African spiritual vocabulary.

5.7.4 Contextualization.

Contextualization is defined as "the fact or process of considering something in its context (the situation within which it exists or happens), which can help in understanding it (Business Dictionary, 2019). Luzio and Auer (1992:36) posit that contextualization is everyday face to face communication which includes amongst other things; language, linguistic and cultural variability's which will help understanding the any situation.

In other words, reading the bible, for example, which is believed to be written more than 2000 years ago, written for a different audience other than the current one, it must read and understated in the context of today. For the bible or any article or book to make sense to the reader, it must have an understanding of language, culture and the people. Otherwise, it will further distance itself from its readers because it does not touch their context.

Having said this, Hiebert (1984: 109) warns of the danger of over-contextualization in that even when reading or approaching the gospel in the New Testament for example, readers should not over-contextualize to the point that the massage of the gospel is lost along the way. Hiebert then suggests that as readers and researchers deal with the complexities of contextualization, people rather move from Dependency (depending on the bible or article without contextualizing it), from Hiebert Independency (over-contextualizing) and move to Interdependency (considering the article, and or the bible for example and partnering it with contextualization).

Ancestral veneration needs to incorporate or at least be looked at in the current church practices and worship, especially be those churches who recognize the ancestors and not have

.

any objections towards them. Earlier, I referred to modern "*sangomas"* (traditional doctors*)* and the sacredness of "sangomas" (traditional healers) who have direct access to ancestors and are then able to help people in methods of veneration. All of these must happen within the understanding parameters of the people. It is observed that some preachers literally read and preach the bible as it is and no proper interpretation which should be partnered with contextualization is done. Hence in some sectors of our rural places, women are still religiously and culturally oppressed because the bible is read literally without contextualization.

5.8. Conclusion

Chapter five dealt with data interpretation and analysis and two methods of analyzing data were used to interpret data and construct a conclusion. Interviews from the participants and literature review which was relevant and available helped in achieving proper interpretation and analysis data. It is mainly from data interpretation and analysis that I was able to formulate and opinion and make some relevant recommendations.

.

Chapter 6: New Discoveries, Conclusions and Recommendations.

6.1 New Discoveries.

After engaging with participants, gathering of data, and engaging with sources and after self-reflection on this study, I managed to construct the following recommendations which will add value to the field of practical theology.

6.1.1 Veneration of God.

Veneration means giving thanks, gratitude, appreciation, acknowledging and recognising. Throughout this study, from chapter one up to chapter five, the journey, inputs, and arguments had centred on ancestral veneration. My observation is that the word veneration has been applied to ancestors only and not to God as if it would be improper to say God can be venerated also. In other words, it cannot be correct that the word veneration is relevant only when used to ancestors and not to God. Taking the definitions of what veneration means, all attributes of veneration fits in God. In fact, if anyone must be venerated first, it should be God because both the ancestors and the living understand that it is God who gives life and takes life. The living has to be appreciative of the God who gave them ancestors and who gave them life.

The question is why the word “veneration” is rarely used on God? Is it because of the stigma surrounding the relationship between God and ancestors? Or it is not used on God because it may presuppose the equality of God and ancestors. For this study, one has to look and hear what African languages say about this and a discovery is that at the beginning of a prayer in Sesotho for example, veneration takes over, but this becomes a problem when coming to English. A confusion between praising, praying, worshipping and veneration to God and or ancestors need to be managed so that it becomes clear that God can be venerated, prayed, praised, and worshipped whereas ancestor can only be venerated.

.

6.1.2 Theology of co-existence.

Earlier in this study, dichotomies and the similarities between the Mainstream and the AIC were identified and partially addressed. Furthermore, some of the tensions in the Dichotomies roots were identified such as the role of the western invaders in the African Spiritualties. Yet despite all these challenges and similarities, both the Mainstream and the AIC continue to leave and operate side by side. They continue to tolerate each other as they did during the oppression years in South Africa where their buildings were used as hiding places from the oppressive system.

To date, they continue to co-exist and walking parallel with each other with unparalleled doctrinal, liturgical, and cultural approaches. **Corinthians chapter 3:5 to 18** tells a story of Paul and Apollos with different followers but same God. In verse 5, Paul asks a question "**who is Paul and who is Apollos?"** From then Paul then introduces the theology of co-existence and lifts grace as the supreme leader to be followed.in other words, Paul was saying, it does not matter how we may differ as long as we belong to One God then it is safe. Whilst I have indicated earlier that I do not see any resolve in the conflicting interpretation of the bible by the two churches, I do believe that their co-existence as Christian churches is important because I have seen them coming together and embracing African Spiritualties without compromising their Christian values.

6.1.3 Baptism

The different liturgical, worshipping, and cultural practices demonstrated in this study showed gaps and cracks which contributed to the dichotomies between the Mainstream and AIC regarding ancestral veneration. The literature review also educated us on the differences between the Mainstream and AIC regarding order of services, formalities of a services, hymns, liturgies and so forth. This study managed to pick up some differences especially in the administration of sacraments such as Eucharist and Baptism. An example of this is when a member moves out of the Mainstream church and join the AIC where in terms of their religious rituals, any members must be baptised according to the standards of the church. Oosthuizen (1992) asserts that baptism is regarded as purification ritual in the AIC. Meaning, once a new member comes from any other church and join the AIC, that member must be purified through baptism (most of the times is the immersing method in done in the rivers.) This may be used

.

as one of the standards of the AIC. There AIC church does not make any difference between adult and infant baptism. Regarding adult and infant baptism, there is no one agreement on how to handle the matter but AIC is guided by the Bible (Oosthuizen G. , 1992)

With this information, it is clear there is a lack of doctrinal understanding of what baptism is and that constitutes tensions which lead to unnecessary dichotomies. I therefore wish to submit in this study that unlike other differences between these two churches, the understanding of what Baptism can be put on the table and be tested. My submission is influenced by the biblical evidence as written in the New Testament (Matthew 3: 13-17). Both the churches and perhaps other churches also derive their practices of baptism from the bible. Therefore, the tension of the origin of baptism will not hold water and no church can therefore claim to be the authors of baptism.

6.1.4 A church not in synchronicity with its member's spiritualties.

Data collection from the interviews painted a sad picture of a church from both side of the identified churches. A picture of members attending a particular church because it is the church of his/her late parents, or he/she grew up in that church. However, data shows that some members are confirmed to the set of rules and norms of that church to the detrimental of their spiritualties. It is as if they are caught and cannot escape the situation.

That is why some members opt for double denomination where in the morning, they attend the Mainstream and in the afternoon, they are at the AIC (as it was the case with my grandparents).A question has to rise from this experience, a question of why people are leaving their churches and going to other churches, what is it that they are missing in their own church? And what is it that they are searching for. Especially if all churches serve One God.

The answer lies in how churches had become so rigid in the laws and administration to the point of not addressing the spiritual hunger and depression of members coming to the church. It is the church that is not in par with the spiritual expectations of its members. Unfortunately, when that happens, Satan jumps up and takes advantage of the situation, hence South Africa is experiencing so much fake pastors and prophets. The church must have its ears on the ground and listen to the heartbeat of its members and like Jesus in Matthews's chapter five sit down with members.

.

6.2 Conclusion.

6.2.1 Introduction.

This concludes the journey and makes recommendation based on the five chapters on this study, *dichotomies between mainstream and African indigenous church: a practical theology exploration of ancestral veneration.*

Chapter one dealt with the introduction, background and the problem of the study, the aim, purpose, and objectives of this study. It gave this study the direction in which to follow moving forward. Chapter one also laid the foundation as to what is to be researched so the study does risk being haphazard but focused.

Chapter two focused on the cracks and gaps in existing theory and helped the research to construct a new opinion by looking at the practical framework of the study. In doing so, literature review which was present and relevant and theological themes were interrogated and much time was spent on the available literature. Different authors added their voices on the study, some were agreeing, and some were not agreeing on the subject at hand, which was very important in strengthening the arguments and conclusions of this research. Here are some few of those voices which addressed few differences between authors:

Using the doctrinal, liturgical, and cultural practices as the compass in searching for the **dichotomies between Mainstream and AIC**, Kamoso (2012:115) cites that independency of the AIC was important to preserve their own African identity against the western forces while the Mainstream churches were already swallowed by the western invasion. At the same, Kamoso (2012:115) does criticize the AIC for not taking theological training seriously as most of them do not have theological training colleges and pastors.

Masondo adds to Kamoso (2012:116) criticism of lack of theological training of the AIC by mentioning the name "*inkonzo zo moya*)" (churches of the spirit) and question the AIC with calling themselves such names because they presuppose that other churches are not of the Spirit. On one hand, Masondo (2014) and Molobi (2005) will make a claim that AIC lived in the shadow of the past and on the other hand Conradie and Klaasen (2014:21) will criticize the Mainstream to even refer to the origin of the name which American not African.

.

One of the major discussions was on **ancestral veneration** as part of the title of the study and again, there were different views from different authors about this. Bae (2023) asked whether ancestral veneration is a cult or worship and Nyamiti (1984:38) brought in this question a definition what ancestral veneration and he adds that ancestral veneration is the African way of looking at ancestors as intermediaries. Ancestral veneration was also looked from the biblical perspective and scriptures from the Old Testament: Deuteronomy 18:9-18,2 Samuel 28:3-25, Isaiah 8:16-23 and Leviticus 20:6,27 and Matthew 17, Galatians 1: 13-16, Hebrews 1:1-7 and Luke 16: 19-31.

Mokhoati (2018:3&4) adds another dimension in the ancestral venation by mentioning the relationship of ancestors and God. This was very import for the study because of the subsidiary question to the participant was on how we can look at Jesus as our great ancestor.

Part of the discussion of this study had to deal with **Christian practices and rituals and African practices and ritual.** To see if there are similarities and differences which may constitute dichotomies. Pauw (1960:146-147) makes distinctions between African and Christian practices to defend the African practices from being labeled pagan activities by Christians. In doing so, Pauw highlights few practices which are like Christian practices: rite of baptism, prayer for healing, prayer for the bereaved and so forth.

Looking at difference between Mainstream and AIC and the definition of Ancestral veneration and comparing it with analysed data, I discovered some of the following:

- That the doctrinal, liturgical, and cultural practices differences between the Mainstream and AIC contribute to the tension which is existing between them. By this I mean, it is clear from the evidence collected and literature review consulted that here we dealing with Africa rooted system (AIC) and western system (Mainstream). These two systems are unable to find each other, hence, undermining of each other in other areas of their existence,

- That because of these differences, ancestral veneration will never be understood in the same way by the two-denomination given their policies and standing points on ancestral veneration.

.

- That the approach to ancestral veneration should not only be looked at from the institution point of view (church) but deeper looking into individual perspective should be considered. Data has shown that ancestral veneration is more personal than institutional to the point that the members of some churches defy the standing orders and policies of their church regarding ancestral veneration.

- The positive story to tell is that both Mainstream and AIC recognises the dichotomies and the tension, and they continue to co-exist in the spirit of "*Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*" (I am because you are). Furthermore, data shows that there is willingness to engage one another on some matters and find common ground. Lastly, they agree and recognise the oneness of God in which they all bow down to.

Chapter three dealt with the how part of doing this study or the methodology in this study. Qualitative research was chosen because the tools used were interviews and to be able to interpret data collected, the study opted to use the social construction perspective which then helped with dealing with the present realities, challenges, and assumptions in this study and this enabled the research to come with constructed opinion based on fact. Swinton and Mowat (2006:29) describe Qualitative research as the multi-method which focuses on involving and interpreting the subject at hand.

In terms of population, the sample size of this study was 24 participants from six different denominations, three from Mainstream churches and three from African Indigenous Churches (AIC). Participants were all above the age of eighteen years and could thus provide consent to participate. The ministers/Pastors of all six denominations were consulted and it was them who recommended participants in this study. In other words, I asked and consulted ministers from the churches, and they provided participants and three of them (ministers/pastors) chose to be participants. Participants were a mixture of both men and women, young and old. The primary instrument of data collection used was interviews, using the four sets of subsidiary questions to all participants.

Lastly in terms of data collection, the primary source of data collection for this study was interviews conducted with individuals. A qualitative approach using social constructivist's perspective was used and semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant

.

allowed to give his or her views based on the four subsidiary questions.

As indicated above, Andrews (2012:45) describes a social constructive perspective as the construction of knowledge whereby beliefs are identified, which give people reasonable confidence. Andrews further states that the perspective gives common sense understanding and consensual notion as to what constitutes knowledge as well as to attempt to come to terms with the nature of reality. Also, it places great emphasis on everyday interactions between people and how to construct their reality.

The study was based on collecting data from different participants with different realities and situations. The data collected from the interviews was analyzed and conclusions were drawn based on the findings. Mouton (2001:342) describes an interview as "an attempt to understand the world from the participant's points of view, to unfold the meaning of people's experiences and to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanation." There was main question of the study and the four subsidiary questions from which the bulk of the answers and outcome were expected to come. All questions were in English and were asked in English and the language preferred by the participant.

Chapter four dealt with research findings. 24 interviews were done using four same questions and participants were allowed to freely express their opinions, agreements and disagreements based on the nature of a question asked. In this chapter, management of subjectivity had to be firm because participants were speaking from their hearts, raising their own personal observations, experiences, and their intellectual views. I had to use experience gained before when dealing with interviews so that I remain neutral, fair and transparent thought the interview and manage any situation as it arises.

Chapter five explored data analysis which was the basis of formulating new opinions. In other words, after laying a foundation in chapter one, dealing literature reviewed and consulting sources and authors in chapter two, having selected the methodology in chapter and studying the participant's feedback in chapter four, chapter five then presented findings from data which was analyzed in previous chapters. Furthermore, I had to include data findings from data collected and literature review as part of the chapter.

.

Chapter six is the concluding chapter in which new discoveries were identified and mentioned, recommendations done, and the concluding remarks of the study are also made.

Challenges, gaps, and limitations in the study

Oral information: It was easy to collect data from the Mainstream churches because there is much written about their history, policies, theologies, and doctrines. This was not the case with some of the African Indigenous churches where information was limited, and I had to rely on oral information which can be difficult to argue about it if it is to be tested.

Language barrier: In as much as participants were told of their right to express themselves in the language of their choices, the questions were written in English and had to be translated in the African language of the participant. This posed a problem because if I was not careful and did not understand the language of the participants, good information could have been easily lost or misinterpreted.

Sampling participants: The process in identifying participants was to consult the relevant pastor of that church, who in turn had to randomly select participants. In some AIC, some pastors were skeptical about my intentions and were not comfortable. I assume that the fact I introduced myself as a pastor from the Mainstream, which may have contributed to the skepticism. This resulted in me struggling to get some of the participants at first.

Managing emotions: At the preparation stage for the interviews, I did not expect any uncontrollable emotions because I had four questions to ask. It turned out in some participants, especially the female participants, outburst of tears when answering some of the questions. The positive thing was that interviews were done in church offices where water and facial tissues were available to give to the participants to come down. What helped me to control the emotions and the situations was the experience of doing such interviews. Both my previous academic work was qualitative and interviews. Therefore, I learned over time to listen to the participants, be aware of the situation but still distance myself from that situation so that I do not get emotional and loss control. This is what I did to manage the emotional situation. I also give the participant time to recover and assure the participants of the basics of confidentiality and transparency as outlined in the letter given to her/him.

.

What then underpinned this study was the clear and painful differences experienced in the worship practices regarding ancestral veneration.

An observation as outlined in the introduction of this study regarding the painful experiences in the worship practices regarding the ancestral veneration in both the mainstream and African indigenous church. This study needed to find out why this is happening and deal with dichotomies to reach that finding. It is from that point of view that the journey to investigate, to probe, analyze, research, read material began.

6.2.2 Mainstream churches and African Indigenous churches.

This study focused on two churches - Mainstream churches and AIC. Tables and graphs were presented to show their dominance, interviews and data were drawn from participants coming from them. Literature which was available was investigated and presented, together with some oral histories which added to the understanding of the dichotomies in ancestral veneration.

Overall, the difference between the Mainstream churches and the AIC other than those mentioned in chapter two, can be compared, and compared to the argument of the believers in 1 Corinthians chapter 4: 6 to 21. This was an argument about the teachings of Paul versus Apollo. Some believers were for Paul and others for Apollo. Paul then writes to the believers clearing the air and the confusion and Paul put God above him and Apollo. Paul emphasizes the point that it does not matter where the teachings and the message comes from. If that massage makes the believers to be spiritually full and it puts Christ as the Supreme Being, then anything else is not important.

Therefore, the differences in worshipping, practices, teachings, ideologies and theologies between the Mainstream churches and AIC should in any way constitute a dichotomy which stretches tension and produces a spiritual and cultural war. Equally so, the differences in the view of ancestral veneration should be respected by both churches.

.

6.2.3 Is Christianity African?

Maluleke (1997:6) cites that it is not easy to come answer whether Christianity as African or not because there are shared experiences of slavery and colonialism in Africa which makes precarious to believe in expressions such African Christianity, African philosophy, and African Literature. As it is, Africans struggles to find its language to define some terms such “African” for example. To make sense and intrinsic meaning of such terms, former colonial master’s languages must be borrowed to explain ourselves as African.

Maluleke (1997:16) continues to cite that whilst it is difficult to answer questions of Christianity as African, we should be diverse enough to understand that exists to make sense of any theology that confronts it and Christianity is such a theology which African found a way to identify with. Furthermore, we should be aware of the contribution of the resilience of Africans to allow westerns to invade their own way of worshipping which pushed Africans understanding of God away and replaced it with theirs coined as “Christianity”. It is such resilience which in the early 1800 centuries, churches were full of “missions not with Christianity.” Meaning African welcomed missionaries in their churches but not their Christianity teachings.

On the other hand, Oden (2007:18) differs with Maluleke (1997:16) and argues that Christianity has for many centuries being told in the story forms. It has been a narrative of Israel, Jesus, Apostles and God with his creation and history. Africa has been part of those telling the story and therefore, Christianity has been part of African from the beginning. Oden (2007:31) continues to argue that there are biblical evidence of Judaism and Christianity interfacing each other by Jewish people visiting Africa, in particular Egypt where the birth of Christianity in African is assumptive to have originated.

Further, I would add to what I said above by pointing out that African had a belief in God and sense of how God speaks to them.

.

6.2.4 Finding coherence between Christian Spirituality and African spirituality.

The literature presented and the participation of the participants in this research have revealed that ancestral veneration is a subject under African spirituality. At the same time, worshipping and church are subjects under Christian spirituality. It was ideal for this research to find commonality between the two spirituality as a matter of addressing the dichotomies surrounding ancestral veneration.

Tan (2011:362) describes Christian Spirituality as "disposition or internal condition of people when in such a state, prepares them to recognize and fully appreciate spiritual realities, and such true spirituality is ultimately the result of the in- working of the Holy Spirit. It about transforming and empowering a person to be a spiritual person who will be responsive to God in the world it." This definition emphasizes the point of the working of the Holy Spirit in a person who is willing to accept it as a living human tool.

On the other hand, Gordon (1991:43) defines the meaning of the term spirituality as elusive and has successfully evaded most attempts to capture it. It is used generally to describe those attitudes, beliefs, and practices, which animate realities. Gordon defines Christian Spirituality more specifically as derived and inspired by the revelation of God in Christ. It was therefore, not simply for the interior life or inward person but as much for the body as the soul and is directed to the implementation of the commandment of Christ, to love God and other people.

Another argument about Christian Spirituality comes from Smith (2007:5) who argues that Christian Spirituality is not about simply hearing the story and believing it to be true. It was also about experiencing the relationship with Christ. In other words, Christians must live Christ, have to be involved in the life of Christ and act as Christ would act. Smith further states that Christ was never a "lonesome" person but a connective person, a person who was outward in spiritual posture and could relate with all types of people even those he deemed to have bad spirits.

Perhaps, for the purpose of this study, one should speak of the opposite of Christian Spirituality in which Harvey and Adogame (2012:109) put it that African Spirituality is embedded in the living traditions and cultures of the African people in a way that it relates to other spiritualties in the world without being measured through or by them. African Spirituality provides a guide

.

for the search of emerging African traditions in the study of African religions in the myths, rituals and human agents who undergo ritual apprenticeship like priests, diviners, herbalists, kings, chiefs and artists. It is African spiritualties, which single out and define Africans as distinct from the rest of other world peoples.

The combination of African Spirituality and African religion is realized by Mbiti (1975:13-15) as he adds that African Spirituality and African religion belongs to the people and both functions more communal than individual. That both, are a product of the thinking and experiences of forefathers and mother, people and children who formulated religious ideas and beliefs.

6.2.4.1 Coherence.

Heine, Proulx and Vohs (2006:46) put it that coherence helps people to find a need to perceive events through a prism of mental representations of expected relations that organize their perceptions of the world. This means coherence helps to create meaning on the thoughts and listening of people of each other. Moreover, it helps in dealing and managing the challenges that faces humanity in all spheres of life.

As indicated above, this study was underpinned by what was observed and experienced regarding worshipping practices in respect of ancestral veneration, especially between the Mainstream and the AIC. One of the responses from the participants who was against ancestral veneration was the idea of serving two master's or two supreme spirits at the same time. This the participants referred to serving God and venerating ancestors as if ancestors have the same power as God. Singh (2012:34-35) disputes the notion of two masters or two Gods and place it that modern understanding of the Holy Spirit should not be locating the Holy Spirit at a certain place or identifying what the Holy Spirit is and what it is not but rather worshippers should be allowed to celebrate worshipping in their diverse expressions, in their diversity and in any other alternative methods of worshipping, which are familiar and embrace the Holy Spirit. In other words, someone who believes in ancestral veneration from either one of the identified churches should not feel or made to feel less of a Christian than the one who does not believe in ancestral veneration and vice versa. One classical example of coherence in as far as African and Christian spiritualties are concerned is an oral story of granny of a sangoma in city of Welkom in the free State Province. On Sundays, she is picked up by the Chief Operating

.

Officer of Bongani Hospital to go and help the medical doctors with her traditional diagnostic gifts and traditional herbs.

The two spiritualties can demonstrate coherence and embrace each other in both cultural spaces- cultural events and Christian spaces- churches. Again, both spiritualties can be channelled together for the purpose of healing and transformation to the church and to the society. They can both be used to enrich African Christian identity and re-emphasize African Christian position as being part of the body of Christ. It is also my view that both spiritualties can effectively be used contextually as the church and accommodate all people who believe that Jesus Christ is their Lord and Saviour and be given an opportunity to worship contextually and holistically. Coherence is wide and cannot be subjected to spiritual matters only. It can be applied in the society to help in matters of misunderstanding and matters requiring education. In this case study, one could use coherence in a way that societal view and church view on the ancestral veneration are brought together in order that both the church and the society find themselves in one understanding and equally and collectively work together to find remedy of the pain observed and experienced.

6.2.5 Dichotomies because of Perceptions and Conflicts.

This study has revealed that there are dichotomies in the worshipping practices of the Mainstream and the AIC regarding ancestral veneration. Dichotomies do not just appear from nowhere, they are derived and perpetuated by an event, an observation, and way of life or way of doing things. They may also be produced by words and thoughts, in this study, dichotomies were produces by clear differences between two churches and one can only make assumptions that perceptions which led to conflict in understanding contributed to this dichotomy.

6.2.6 Perception

A perception is the process by which people translate sensory impressions not coherent and unified view of the world and around them. Though necessarily based on incomplete and unverified(unreliable) information, perception is equated with reality for most practical purposes and guides human behaviour in general (Cambridge Dictionary, 2019). The definition of a perception uses the word “impressions” as the key word. It is impressions that people

.

make and have of other people, which could be correct or incorrect and make people to have negative and or positive conclusions about other people or phenomena.

Werner (2007:49) describes perception as a cognitive process by which individuals organize, interpret, and understand sensory impressions from their environment. Any organization is made up of different people from different backgrounds. An organization can formulate a system on how to operate and yet individuals may acknowledge that system whilst their perceptions differ from that system of the organization. Werner (2007:29) mentions three ways in which individuals can master their perceptions at the expense of the organizational system or order. Werner states that:

- Human qualities such as intelligence, attitudes and feelings are not directly observable.
- We know that people act purposefully, and we therefore try to identify their intentions and motives (why is she so friendly? What does she want from me?).
- People could give a false impression of themselves which causes us to make incorrect observations about them.

Perceptions are impressions which may be incomplete and unverified and may lead to human behaviour, which guides people's feelings, reactions and responds to what they are confronted with. Generally, people will react positively towards what they feel good about but will react negatively towards what they are not happy about.

Perceptions with incomplete information are also the course of the conflict amongst people, families, church, and the society at large. Most of the times, it starts as a small behaviour from one person to another and then it usually escalates to a group and eventually ends up as source of conflict or a societal problem.

In this study, perceptions were presented from participants from both churches regarding each other's, way of teaching, worshipping, and understanding of Jesus. The perceptions were not only from one church to another but also amongst members of each church towards another member of the same church regarding the belief in ancestral veneration. Most of the times, these perceptions are played out or displayed by one person or one group towards another. For example-one of the sayings has been that the AIC members are primitive and uneducated. This saying is wrong because there are very educated members from the AIC.

.

Equally so, the Mainstream members are accused of not being African and yet there are many members in the Mainstream who practices African rituals. It is such sayings which are perceptions which in return produces conflicts amongst the churches and to members themselves.

6.2.7 Conflicts.

Heuser and Shawchuck (2010:147) define conflict as "two entities trying to occupy the same space at the same time; it begins when (1) someone takes an action (2) is perceived as a threat to others, and (3) the threatened party (individual or group) launches a reaction aimed at protecting themselves and their territory." Heuser and Shawchuck further assert that there can be constructive and destructive conflict.

Heuser and Shawchuck (2010:149), describes the features of constructive conflict as;(1) narrowing the focus of the conflict so that the issues are clearly understood, (2) maintaining the emphasis on the primary issues of conflict, not on ensuing secondary issues, (3) moving towards collaborative problem-solving and (4) employing trustworthy leaders who stress mutually satisfactory outcomes. A destructive conflict was that of one view identifying another different view as sinful and unhealthy. Conflict in this study centred around perceptions in as worshipping practices are concerned regarding ancestral veneration. Heuser and Shawchuck proceeded to define the assumptions of destructive conflict in which some of them are relevant to this study. These assumptions were:

- The issues continue to multiply as do the number of conflict parties, negative attitudes, and self-justification. One self-justification is "There is only one Spirit that has to be amongst Christians and that is the Holy Spirit."
- The initiating causes of the conflict are not effectively addressed, so even though the causes may be disregarded or forgotten, the conflict continues. An example of this point is the debate around homosexuality within The Methodist Church of Southern Africa. For many decades, this issue has been in the face of the church but the patriarchy and cultural systems within the church ignored it. However, it did not die, and it has currently resurfaced at a very fast pace and the church is at logger heads with itself about the matter. Equally so, the matter of ancestral veneration and calling

.

if I may add have been on the church and public discourse for a long time and in some churches, they have been to be a taboo and less time is spent in church meetings, regarding these topics.

- The use of power and strategies of threats, coercion and deception escalate the conflict: In this study, it was discovered the Mainstream churches, and the AIC are the most dominating denominations in South Africa and therefore, due to their numbers and resources, the risk of taking bad decisions and conflicting decisions is high. At any given time and space, conflict has a negative implication on the smooth running and the life of the church and society. There is a realistic expectation from society, that fewer conflicts should be happening in the church because of what the church must resemble to the world (Christlikeness). The reality is that there are conflicts within different churches and amongst different denominations, categories of churches, different faiths, and religions. A discussion for another topic should be how does the church as a community of faith resolve and handle spiritually in a manner which will be exemplary to society.

6.2.8 Religious Exceptionalism.

One other sources of fighting amongst people, churches, societies, and the people globally is religious exceptionalism. In its broad term, it does not relate only to religious people but relationship of humanity. Rivett (2012:393) adds that religious exceptionalism is broad and cannot only be confined to one area but in an effort to challenge the exceptionalism paradigm, it was discovered in the nineteen centuries that culture, natural resources and commerce across different regions contributed and continue to contribute to this ideology of religious exceptionalism. For example, in America, Rivett (2012:392) asserts that the religious exceptionalism in America was at one stage regarded “Myth of America.” Two examples of religious exceptionalism in churches maybe:

- The denominational competition about membership, theologies, doctrines and the status differences between mainline churches, AIC, and charismatic churches.

- The way congregants sit in the church services: mothers-one side, fathers-another side and young people in their own space and leaving and pushing those who do not belong

.

to the organizations at the back.

Similarly, Kelsey and Twiss (1994:3) define religious exceptionalism as a condition of extreme judgment where a certain group of people or organized society holds a view of being better than other people. It is an ideology which does not consider neighbours and therefore always become self-centred. It is also an ideology of "chosen ness" where a group of people who believe that they have be chosen above all other people. Kelsey and Twiss put it that the division of human communities into "in'' group and "out" group is one of the roots of religious exceptionalism. Furthermore, Kelsay and Twiss say that when people begin to identify themselves more based on sexuality, ethnicity, race and other terms, that becomes the beginning of extreme complex which is then translated in religious exceptionalism.

Green (1988:162) elaborates that we assume that religion deals only with matters of personal destiny only, but Green continues to say that assumption is extremely wrong because religion works as the moral character into the social justice.

One of the countries accused of religious exceptionalism is the United State of America. Barlow (2012:51) says that America have adopted the religious exceptionalism from the culture of Mormon mind. Mormons are a group of religious fundamentalists who believes that God has chosen them to be above all other people and they are the only one doing things according to God. Mormonism was born in the United States of America only a generation following the birth of the nations. Their prophesies speak of the eventual arrival of the Gentiles who would, by God's might, emerge from their own captivity and be lifted in the new world above all other nations (Barlow 2012:58). American exceptionalism is therefore biblical because according to Barlow (2012:53), Americans draw their justification of exceptionalism from the Abrahamic covenant between Abraham and God and a chosen people brought to a chosen land.

Literature presented and data collected from the interviews showed that there is much religious exceptionalism in the worshipping practices of the two churches, their structures and church organisation. Few of such evidence of this religious exceptionalism is how the ZCC worship in song which suggests that only their Bishop and their church is the way to heaven. On the other hand, the Mainstream's opinion of being the better church due to their seminars of theology is also evidence of religious exceptionalism.

.

In other words, both churches are guilty of religious exceptionalism and judging to which one is more severe than the other is a futile exercise. In Africa, the concept of religious exceptionalism should not be existing at all. African people lived by the phrase "*Motho ke motho ka batho*"[1] which means we with co-exist with each other and cannot survive without each other. It speaks of the spirit of Ubuntu which is a great force for social cohesion and good. One is tempted to blame the current religious exceptionalism that is prevailing in the continent of Africa to the workings of colonialism. We now know how the segregation law of group areas, act no 41 of 1950, did, influenced by colonialism. On the other hand, it is not wise to be blaming apartheid, colonialism for all the troubles and socio-economics challenges that we are facing, particularly when we have the wisdom to change the situation.

Paul writes in attempting to dismiss the notion of religious exceptionalism (Galatians 3:28) that the resurrection of Jesus meant that there is neither Jew nor gentile, no male or female. Meaning in the eyes of God, all people are the same. Therefore, no church, people, or society should claim to be better than other if all believe in the Galatians interpretation of Paul.

6.2.9 Land and Anthropology.

6.2.9.1 Land.

The aspect of land and anthropology cannot be discarded because there is an existing relationship between the dead and the land. In South Africa, there are still outstanding land claims where people are waiting for the land of their forefathers and mothers to be returned to them. Most of the Africans are buried in a land called graveyards which is a sacred and respected. Other cultures such Zulu culture would use the word "ukutchalwa"[2] when burring someone. The word refers to planting a seed on the soil. Other cultures such as Xhosa buries their people behind the house in the yard and that is normal. So land ownership is not about just owning a land but it is also to keep the relationship with the departed.

6.2.9.2 Anthropology

This relationship is anthropological in nature because land is God's creation and so is human beings, animals, and the rest of creation as it exists. African people have relationship with all

.

these things and as indicated earlier, they take care of them in a way to worship and acknowledge God. Mbiti (1970:91-93) draws our attention to how Africans relate to God using creation as a tool. Mbiti asserts that Africans do not consider God to be a man but to express certain concepts, they employ anthropomorphic language and images about God as an aid to their conceptualization. Mbiti (1969:48) attributes the living and the dead people at the centre of the universe and puts it that people understand themselves to be leaving in a religious universe with a natural phenomenon that is intimately linked with God. So, it is God who binds all things together and ancestors and other spirits belongs to that binding together of God.

Mbiti continues and say God is therefore given titles such as Father within an understanding of what the role of a father is in the African household and the kingship of the village. God is also seen as the grandfather and elder. Again, this is about the contextual understanding that grandfathers are elders and are experienced people to lead and guide the nation. In return, people are regarded as the children of God. This is an understanding every child has a parent. Those parents may not be present in the life of the child, but every child have a parent. Hence a phrase “it takes a village to raise a child.

Nurnberger (2007:25) supports Mbiti and argues that ancestral veneration is not a spiritual device to secure eternal life or to play down horror and the finality of death but it therefore to ensure that the departed do not become homeless spirits but continue to be part of the community in their own spirit way. It is important for all people, the living, and the dead to have a sense of belonging and ancestral veneration provides that space.

6.3 The role of the church in managing and resolving dichotomies related to ancestral veneration.

This study needed to do theological exploration research in relation to dichotomies in the worship practices between Mainstream churches and AIC regarding ancestral veneration. This was due the observed and experienced pain in the worshipping space of both churches and the pain and tension which continue to exist. It is from that departure that dichotomies where to be investigated, the source and the solution to end them if any. Moreover, the churches identified are not islands sitting far away from the society, hence, the problem of dichotomies cannot be shelved within the walls and policies of the church but the society and the community in which these churches exist must be taken into consideration. This is important

.

because everything that happens in society does affect the church and its members and everything that happens in the church has an impact on society. It is in the gospel according to Matthew 28:16-20 where Jesus commands his disciples to go to the world and preach the gospel (The Great Commission).

6.3.1 The church.

The church can be defined as the messianic community, the body of Christ, which is not a building nor an institution but an "ecclesia," the universal church (Atkinson, 2018). Bancroft (1976:289) describes the church as the body of persons called out to the world and separated from sin by the power of God and by faith of the crucified and risen Christ. It therefore, means that the church is a community tasked with a purpose. Its mission is not centred on its building and its institution but goes beyond the walls and the building. Its mission is to reach out to those who are in as well as those who are out.

There should not be a difference between those called members of the church and those who are within the society, but all must be treated and be cared for in the same way. In fact, members of the church spend an estimated six hours in church in a week and the rest of the hours are spent outside the church in the community. Morris (2014:9, 10) asks the following question as an attempt to describe what church should be:

- Where is the glory of God in the church?
- Where is the power of God that belongs to the church and should be operating in the church?
- Where are the signs, wonders, and miracles of God?
- What is causing the decline of the church?
- Will the church be restored to its place?

The answers to the above questions can only be found by the current church with its traditional, cultural, historical, and contemporary challenges. These should be questions that those who leading different churches are should be engaged on in a way to craft the future of the church moving forward. These are questions which may be used to measure the status of the church.

.

6.3.2. The society.

The Cambridge dictionary defines society as “the community of people living in a particular country or region and having shared customs, laws, and organizations (Cambridge Dictionary, 2018). In simple terms, a society is the people living currently. Societies and communities form citizens of locations, towns, countries, continents, and the world. The church cannot find itself isolated from the definition of a society, the two should be inseparable. The Methodists hymnal and prayer book has many prayers which call for God to love and care for the people called Methodists and the society in general. I wish to highlight one which focuses on prayers for all types of the people regardless of their religion, background, and faith. It says: “We *pray on behalf of all types of people, that you show them your way, we also pray for the universal church, that it be guided by your Holy Spirit, we pray for all those who are troubled spirituality, physically and mentally”* (Methodist Church of Southern Africa, 1926).

6.3.3 The role of the church in resolving conflict.

The role of the church is one of providing a pastoral care to its members and society at large. This pastoral aspect must be a tool used in all forms of challenges faced by the church, including conflict. Willimon (2008:76) asserts that the pastoral ministry of the church should always be a function of what needs to happen for the church to be faithful to its vocation. This implies that the heart of the function of the church is to be pastoral. It is the nature of the church, people and or society to disagree, depending on the level of our disagreements. It is from those disagreements where conflict may rise.

Brister (1992:101) introduces the saying “Am I my brother’s keeper” which is found in the book of Genesis chapter four, verse nine. Although, this question, in its original form was according to me, and arrogant, scared question of someone guilty of murder, it is a practical and intentional question to ask within the church, when dealing with pastoral matters in conflict. Conflict should not make people to lose their identity, responsibility, and accountability to each other, rather we should turn it into an ongoing platform of self-realization of our differences of opinions. In both the Mainstream and AIC churches, pastoral aspect must be used a tool to manage the pain experienced but both congregation with regard to dichotomies established.

.

6.3.4 Pastoral care.

The definition and the role of pastoral care has been alluded briefly but, it is vital to note that pastors, ministers, or bishops of churches must ensure that ongoing and proper pastoral care is given to members. This should only be limited to the dichotomies related to ancestral veneration but across the board in as far as the spiritual needs of the members are concerned. Pastoral care can further be used as a tool not only in the church meetings but can be extended to the society meetings, community meetings and conflicts.

6.4 Recommendations.

6.4.1 Ecumenical conversations.

Given the right of religion as enshrined in South African Constitution, it will be important that all types of Christian churches to begin with regular dialogues regarding contextual challenges such as dichotomies as indicated and this study. These dialogues should not only be limited to Christian churches, but the broader community of faith including other faith-based religions. A pastoral system must be created, which will re-ignite the spirit of humanity in the community. Mekoa (2017:6-7) cites colonialism had dismissed *Ubuntu* and declared it a failed philosophy which is not suitable for today's modern development. Furthermore, the concept of "*Ubuntu"* is a social ethic with philosophical or moral principles, which in one way or another represent the collective experience of people and cultures. These principles will help the church and the community to adhere to the set of rules or code of conduct, that is knowing what is right and what is wrong. (Mekoa: 2011:169) adds that *ubuntu* can be described as:

- To live and care for others, to act kindly towards others.
- To be hospitable, to be just and fair.
- To be compassionate, to assist those in distress.
- To be trustful and honest and to have morals.

If we are to be intentional and practical about "Ubuntu," then it will be required of churches and faith-based organisations to put their doctrinal, political, social, and religious differences aside and work towards a common goal of restoring "*Ubuntu"* amongst themselves. It is about recognising and agreeing that there is one Supreme Being, who is called God. God who is approached, named, prayed, and worshipped in different ways. These approaches to God may

.

be conflicting with each other, but it is that one Supreme Being that humanity desires to worship. The relationship between the church and society must be established in a manner, which does not have dichotomies in them. Both the pastor and leadership of the church must be pastoral to the community and advocate the message of being accountable and responsible to each other.

6.4.2 Religious tolerance.

As indicated, South African Constitution does protect the right to the freedom of religion. Indeed, there is evidence of religious intolerance seen in other countries such as Nigeria where Christians are fighting with Muslims for territorial and believe spaces. Such dichotomies regarding the belief in ancestral calling may pose a thread of religious intolerance and therefore, there is a need for churches and others in the authority position such politicians to continue encouraging religious tolerance. With religious tolerance, social cohesion will be inserted amongst the people and the concept of "Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu" will be realised and all churches and communities will live together respectfully so with their differences.

6.4.3 Education.

Churches needs to create space for education to its members with available time, spaces, and structures available to them. Other churches have Sunday school or children ministry and youth programs. Other churches have seminars, festivals, and regular meeting. It is in such spaces where congregants ought to be educated about some awkward or taboo phenomena's which affect the church and the community at large. Furthermore, the church should begin to put emphasis on education and involve as part of the conversations, contemporary threats such as perceptions around the belief in ancestral calling veneration.

These conversations as Ukpong in (Marumo 2019:4) states, should be seen as the vehicle that provides converts with courage to affirm their own cultural identity and allow the Holy Spirit to lead them into transforming their culture to the glory of God. In this study, converts should be transformed to all Christians and the community that is challenged and dealing with the emergency of the ancestral calling problem. It appears that the Methodist Church of Southern Africa has been comfortable with its rigid and primitive ways of running church, which is taken from the Methodist hymnal books. The hymnal books still carry the small prayers praising the

.

queen of England. It is these un-evolving ways of doing church, which has caused the church to be aloof to the current challenges of the people and made it to be slow in thinking of the ambiguities of future of the church.

6.4.4 Back to the Roots.

More discussions, dialogues and conversation need to take place regarding the dichotomies around churches in general, we need to recognise and confront such differences which some agree, and some disagree with each other. I recommend that people should reclaim and rediscover their African identity as the first step in dealing dichotomies in doctrinal, liturgical, and cultural practices. This means going back to the basics of doing things in an African way without being influenced by western ideologies. According to Mtuze (2008:97), the battle around culture in church circles is on-going and it is rooted in both the tradition and imperialism. Traditionalists and fundamentalists believe, without exception, that the only way to go is total assimilation of African culture by western culture. Imperialists have made it their bound duty to replace our African culture with their own western culture and legitimise it as the only civilized culture. This has been debated over and over and therefore, Africans need to start educating themselves about the tragedy caused by missionaries and then begin the process of emancipating themselves from mental and cultural slavery of inferiority of their own identity.

6.4.5 Recommendation for further research.

As indicated in chapter three, this study has limitations in that it focuses only on one area and two churches. Future studies should be conducted which will involve the voice of other denominations, interfaith and other religions so that a broader pool of data can be produced.

6.5 Conclusion.

Re-imagining and re-living the Garden of Eden.

In conclusion, the church, community, and the world can still re-imagine and re-live the harmonious story of the Garden of Eden where all human beings live together with love. Genesis chapter one and two are about God's perfect creation and God's plan for humanity to live together with nature, plants, birds, and animals. These chapters are supported by the

.

prophetic analogy of the wolf sitting with the lamb as recorded in Isaiah chapter eleven, verse six.

Despite the challenges that faced the church, the community, and the world today, God remains the pillar of our existence and it is through God that all people can be able to live in peace with each other. At the end of the day, perhaps a new Kairos statement should be written which is not simply a spiritual statement of faith but a statement which is inclusive of all people, rich and poor, educated, and uneducated. Inclusive of all the challenges faced by churches in Africa so that no one is hurt by the success of another.

.

Bibliography.

Adamo, D. T. (2001). *Reading and interpreting bible Bible in Africa.* England: Wipf and stock.

Adamo, D. T. (2011). Chrsitanity and the African traditional religion. *The postcolonial round engagement. Verbum et Ecclesia*, 1-10.

Adedibu, B. (2018). The changing faces of African Indepednent churches as a development actors across borders. *African Journals online*, 1-5.

Akijar, L. (2000). *Is the interpretation of Christ as the ancestor of the church compatible with Christian doctine: a study of the Christiology and Ecclesiology of Charles Nyamiti .* Pietermarizburg: UKZN.

Alolo, N. A. (2007). *African traditional and concepts and developments.* Birmingham: International development.

Amanze, J. N. (2003). Chrstianity and ancestor veneration in Botswana. *Studies in world Christianity*, 43-59.

Ancestral veneratio to be approved in church. (2023, 01 31). Retrieved from virtueonline: virtueonline.org/ancestor-veneration-be-approved-church

Anderson, A. (1993). African Pentecostalism and the ancestor cult: confrontation or compromise. *Missionalia*, 26-39.

Anderson, A., & Pillay, G. (1997). The segragated spirit. *A political and cultural history: Christianity in South Africa*, 227-241.

Anderson, R. S. (2001). *The shape of practical theology : empowering ministry with theological praxis .* Downers groove: Library of congress catalogiong in publication data.

Andrews, T. (2012). What is social construtionism? Grounded theory review. *An international journal,11.(1)*, 1.

Antonio, E. (2006). *Inculturation and post colonial discourse in African theology.* New York: Peter Lang.

Appian Kubi, K. (1979). *African theology en route.* New York: Orbis.

Atkison, J. (2018, 07 25). *the church and disclipline*. Retrieved from Understainding incarnation : doi:org./10.1163/97890004398378_014

Awolalu, O. J. (1976). What is African traditional religion? *Studies of comparative religion*, 48-52.

Ayegboyin, D., & Ishola, A. (2022, 08 28). *African Indigenous church*. Retrieved from African journal of studies: http//africanjournalofstudievol2

Azuman, J. A. (2014). *The legacy of the Arab-Islam: A quest for inter-religious dialoque.* London: Simon and Schuster.

Babbie, E. (2007). *The practice of social research.* Wadsworth: Cengage.

Bae, C. S. (2023, 06 25). *Ancestor worship and challenges it poses to Christian mission and ministry*. Retrieved from UPSpace-institutional repository: http://hdl.handle,net-.et/2263/25045

Bancroft, H. E. (1976). *Christian Theology.* Michagan: Zondervan.

Barclay, W. (2001). *The Gospel of Luke.* Kentucky: Westminister-John Knox press.

Barlow, P. (2012). Chosen land, chosen people. *Religious and American exceptionalism*, 51-58.

Bechtel, C. (2008). *Touching the alter.* Michigan: Eerdmans.

Becken, H. J. (1972). *Relevent Theology for Africa.* Durban: Lutheran Publishing house.

Becken, H.-J. (1993). Beware of the ancestor cult! A challenge to missiological research in South Africa. *Missionalia 21:3*, 333-339.

Bediako, K. (1995). Cry Jesus! Chrsitain theology and the presence in modern Africa. *Modern Africa as a heartland of Chrsitain religion*, 7-26.

Bernard, H. R. (2000). *Social research methods: Qaulitative and quantitative approaches.* Thousand Oakes: Sage publications.

Bibletools. org. (2023, 08 18). *What the Bible says sbout Ritual* . Retrieved from What the Bible says

.

sbout Ritual : https://www.bibletools.org
Binder, L. R. (1970). *Modern religious cults and society.* New York: AMS Press.
Blaxter, L., Hughes, C., & Tight, M. (2010). *How to research.* Berkshine: McGraws hill house.
Bopape, F. L. (1995, 03 23). *Narratives od the death and bereavement from the three South African cultures: an exploratory study*. Retrieved from Taylor and Francis online: http:doi.org/10.1080.14330237.2013.10820651
Bracey, E. G., & Moore, W. L. (2017). Race ""Tests"racial boundry maintaince in white evangelical churches. *Willy on line library*, 202-282.
Bray, G. L. (1988). *Communion of saints.* Virginia: In Ferguson and Parker.
Breugel, J. W. (2001). *Chewa Traditional religion.* Zomba: Kachere series.
Brister, C. (1992). *Pastoral care in the church.* New York: HarperCollins.
Britannica. (2023, 07 14). *Ordination*. Retrieved from Sacraments, Clergy, Ministry-Encyclopedia Britannica: https://www.britannica.com
Brown, R. (2010). *Prejudice:its social pyschology.* West Susses: Blackwell.
Buchanan, M. (2012). *Your church is too safe.* Michigan: Zondervan.
Bujo, B. (1992). *African Theology in its social context.* Maryknoll: Orbis books.
Cambridge Dictionary. (2018, 05 02). *Ancestor*. Retrieved from ANCESTOR: https://dictionary.cambridge.org.dictionary/english/ancesstor
Cambridge Dictionary. (2023, 05 01). *English dictionary*. Retrieved from English dictionary: https://dictionarycambridge.org
Chapman, G. (1978). *African Chrsitian Spirituality.* New York: Macmillan Publishing house.
Chikane, F. (1992). A critical examination of theology and praxis if the SACC-1968-1988:. *A critical examination of theology and praxis if the SACC-1968-1988:I*, 118-122.
Chipkin, I., & Leatt, A. (2011, 03 21). *Religion and revival in post apartheid South Africa*. Retrieved from Religion and revival in post apartheid South Africa: admin.hfs.org.za
Chitando, E. (2005). Naming the phenomena: The challenge of African Indepedent Churches. *Studia historiae ecclesiasticae*, 85-110.
Chua, L. O. (1988). A neural network apporach to transform image coding. *Wiley online library*, 317-324.
Chukwuokolo, J. (2022, 07 01). *Afrocentrism or Eurocentrisim*. Retrieved from A new journal of African Studies : Ogirisi chidozie.doc
Cleveland Clinic. (2023, 02 12). *Causes and Treatment*. Retrieved from Causes and Treatment: https://my.clevelandclinic.org
Cobb, C. (1950). *Talks from the Bible: the five elements of Chrsitian Worship.* Abeline: Stone-Campbell.
Cobbley, A. G. (2009). The African national church: self determination and political struggle among black Chrisitains in SA. *Church History*, 356-371.
Collinson, C., & Miller, C. (1981). *Worship in a multi-faith community.* London: Edward Arnold.
Conradie, E., & Klaasen, J. (2014). *The quest for identity on the so called "Mainline"churches in SA.* Cape town: Sun Media.
Coolcan, H. (2006). *Introdcution to the research methods in Pyschology.* London: Martins the printers. Retrieved from psycnet.apa.org
Dascal, M. (2008). *Controversy and confrontation.* Amsterdam: John Benjamen.
Davis, L. W., & Buchanan, C. A. (2016). *Qualitatative research.* Bloominton: Balboa.
De Gruchy, J. (1979). *The church struggle in South Africa .* Claremont: David Phillip.
De Visser, A. (2011). Honoured but eclipsed. *Beleifs about Christ in the African church*, 3-10.
De Vos, A., Strydom, H., Fouche, C., & Delport, C. (2011). *Research at grass roots.* Hatfield: Van Shaik .
Dennis, K., & Robert, G. (1999). Spiritual bonds to the dead in cross-cultural and hisotrical perspective. *Death Studies 23(6)*, 547-568.
Department of health. (2023, 06 02). *Covid-19*. Retrieved from Online resources and now portal: sa.coronavirus.co.za

.

Department of Justice and Constitutional Development. (2023, 05 12). *Chapter 2:Bill of Rights*. Retrieved from Chpter 2 :Bill of Rights: https//www.justice.gov.za

Douglas, K. B., & Hopson, R. E. (2001). Black church. *Journal of religious thoughts*, 95-113.

Dreyer, J. (2015). South Africa-in BJ Miller-MacLamore. *The willy Black companion of practical theology*, 505-514.

DRUM. (2019, 12 01). *Three young progressive sangomas chat on how they are practising thier craft the modern way* . Retrieved from Three young progressive sangomas chat on how they are practising thier craft the modern way : news24/drum/advice/three-yuong-progressive-sangomas-on =how-they-practise-thier-craft-the-modern-way

Du Toit, C. (1998). African spirituality and the poverty of Western religious expiriences. *Journal of theology of Southren Africa*, 36-60.

Dunn, J. G. (2010). *Did the first Christians worship Jesus?: New Testament evidence* . Kentucky: Westminister John Knox Press.

Dyrness, W. (2009). *A primer of Christian worship: where we have been, where we are and where we can go.* MIchigan: Eerdmann.

Erdman, C. R. (1936). *The Gospel of Matthew* . Philadelphia: The Westminister Press.

Ethopian Church of Southren Africa. (2023, 02 02). *Martin's Ecclesoastical*. Retrieved from Ethopian Church of Southren Africa: ecclesiastalheralddry,weebly.com

Etikan, I., Musa, S. A., & Alkassim, S. R. (2015). Comparison of conveiences ampling andporpusive sampling. *Amerinca journal of theoritcal applied science*, 2.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa. (2023, 08 29). *Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa*. Retrieved from Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa: https:/www.elcsa.org

Geller , P. (2012). Parting with the dead: Body [srtibility sd evidence of commoner,ancestral veneration. *Ancient Mesosmerica*, 118.

Gill, B. (2015). Contextualizing ancestor veneration: A theological survey and practical steps for implimentaion. *The journal of the international society for frontier missiology*, 183-184.

Gooder, P. (2011). *Heaven.* London: SPCK.

Gordon, J. (1991). *Evanelical spirituality.* Bristol: Lungdunn press.

Gorospe, A. (2016). Old Testament law exergisis on Deuteronomy 19. Reassesing the orgins of Deuteronomy. *Bulletin for Biblical research*, 15-22.

Green, M. R. (1988). *Religion and moral reason.* Oxford: Oxford university press.

Harper, S. (1995). *Devotional life in the Wesyelen tradition.* Nashville: Upper Room.

Harvey, G., & Adogame, A. (2021). *African tradition in the study of religion of Africa.* Burlington: Ashgate publishing house.

Harvey, H. (2017). *The Church: its polity and ordinances.* Collingwood: Trieste Publishing house (PTY) Ltd.

Heine, S., Proulx, T., & Vohs, K. (2006). The meaning maintance model: on the coharance of socail motivations. *Personality and social psychology* .

Hendricks, J. (2005). Cnesus 2011. *Religion in South Africa with deniminational trends, 1911-2011*, 11-85.

Henning, E., Rensburg, V., & Smith, B. (2004). *Finding your way in qualitative research.* Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Heuser, R., & Shawchuck, N. (2010). *Leading the congrgation.* Nashville: Abington.

Hiebert, P. (1984). Critical contectualisation. *Doctor Missiology entrance*, 107.

Howe, J., & Pascoe, S. (2010). *Our Anglcian heritage: Can an ancient church be a church of the future?* Florida: Eugen, Origon.

Hox, J., & Boeije, H. (2005, 07 05). *Data collection: primary versus secondary*. Retrieved from Sage journals: https:/www.data+collection+primary+versus+secondary

Hudson, T. (1995). *Signposts to spirituality.* Cape town: Struick Chrsitian.

Hwang, B. (1977). Ancestor cult today. *Missiology 5(3)*, 339-365.

.

Ikwuagwu, A. (2007). Inititation in African traditional religion: A systematic symbolic analysis with special reference to aspects of Igbo religion in Negeria . *Der Katholosch-Theologischem*.

Kamoso, D. (2022). An assessment of connectedness of Mainstrean and Indepedent churche in Africa. *Data analysis techniques in qualitative research*, 93-113.

Kaunda, C. J. (2020). *African theology, philosophy, and religions.* London: Lexington Books.

Kawulichi, B. B. (2015). Data analysis techniques in qualitative research. *Data analysis techniques in qualitative research*, 96-113.

Kelsay, J., & Twiss, S. (1994). *Religion and human rights.* New York: Religion and human rights organisation .

Kent, J. R. (2014). "Call up Samuel": Who appeared to the witch at En-Dor?(1 Samule 28:3-25. *Andrwe University Seminary studies*, 3-25.

Kgatla, T. S. (1997). The perspective of "ündersiders"and "topsiders" on the African religions. *Missionalia*, 633.

Kgatle, M., & Mofokeng, T. (2023, 07 18). *Towards a decolonial hermeneutic of expirieince in African Pentacostal Christianity*. Retrieved from HTS teoloese/Theological studies: https://hts.org.za

Kgatle, S., & Mashau, D. (2023, 01 21). *A Decolonial perspective on the practice of unvailling tombstones Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in South Africa*. Retrieved from Academic opne access publishing: https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14030288

Khathide, G. A. (2003). *Spirit in the first century, Jewish world, luke-acts in the African context.* Pretoria: Pretoria press.

Kiboko, K. (2010). Divination in 1 Samuel 28 and beyond. *An African study in politics of translation*, 2.

Knighton, B. (1999). The meaning of God in an African traditionall religion and the meaninglesness ofwell meaning mission:The expirience of Christian enculturation in Kamonga, Uganda. *Religion and innovations*, 120-127.

Kolb, R. (1993). *The Christain faith.* St Louis: Concordia.

Kruger, M., & Saayman, M. (2014). undesrstinding the Zionist church . *International journal of tourism research*, 27-38.

Lamola, M. J. (1984, 05 01). *Towards a black church: historical investigation of the African Independent church as a model*. Retrieved from Journal of black theology in Saouth Africa: http//www.scielo,org,za

Lebaka, K. (2021). Theology and religion. *Sociology of religion, hidtory of religion*, 110-118.

Lebeloane, L., & Madise, M. (2007, 09 02). *The relevence of oral history as a methodology of research in church history*. Retrieved from Institutional repository: http://hdl.handle,net/105004485

Lim, D. (2015). Contextialising ancestor veneration. *International journal of frontier missiology*, 109.

Linman, J. L. (2010). *Holy conversations: sporituality for worship.* Minneapolis: Augusburg fortress.

Luzio, A., & Auer, P. (1992). *The contextualisation of langauge.* Califonia: John Benjamin.

LWF. (2023, 01 26). *Visions and values*. Retrieved from Visions and values: www.luthrenworld.org

Macbride, J. (2014). *The church for the world: a theology of the public witness .* Oxford: Oxford universtiy press.

MacGrath, A. (1975). *Christian theology.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Machovec, F. (1989). *Cults and Personality.* Springfiled: Charles C Thomas.

Magezi, V. (2019). Practical theology in South Africa: Situation approaches, framework and agenda. *International report*, 15-135.

Maluleke, S. T. (1997). Journal of theology for Southren African 99. *Half a century of African Chrisitanity- Elements of emerging agents for the twenty first century*, 4-23.

Marumo, P. (2019). *A dialoque between African philosophy and Missio Dei: Koinonia and Ubuntu.* Cape Town: Incwadi Press.

Masondo, S. (2005, 12 25). *History of African Indigenous churches in scholarship*. Retrieved from Jouranl of the study of religion: http//www.jstor.org/stable/2475

Masondo, T. (2020, 12 05). *Verbum Eccles*. Retrieved from The African indigenous churches's spiritual resources fro democracy and socail cohesion: http:/dx.doi.10.4102.ve35i3.1341

.

Maxwell, A. J. (2005, 06 25). *The conceptual framework*. Retrieved from Qulalitative research design: rebeccawestburns.com./my-blog-3/notes/maxwelll-qualitative-reseach-conceptual-framework

Mbaya, H., & Celuza, N. (2019). Contributions of John S. Mbiti to the study of African theology and philosophy. *Stellenborsch theological journal, 5*, 421-442.

Mbiti, J. S. (1969). *African religion and philosophy.* New Hemisphere: Heinemann.

Mbiti, J. S. (1969). *African Religions and Philosophy.* New Hemisphere: Heinemann.

Mbiti, J. S. (1975). *Introdcution to African religion.* Sandton: Heinemann International Literature and textbooks.

Mbiti, J. S. (1978). *Prayer and Spirituality in African religion.* Bedford Park: Australian association for the study of religions .

Mbiti, S. J. (1970). *Concepts of God in Africa.* London: S.P.C.K.

McCall, J. (1995). Rethinking Ancestors in Africa. *Africa: Journal of the international African Institute*, 256-270.

Mekoa, I. (2011). *Walking on the footsteps pf pur ancestors.* Cape town: Incwadi press.

Mekoa, I. (2017). *Re-imagining Africa.* Cape town: Incwadi press.

Mekoa, I. (2019). Ancestors as guardians of morality in African religious thoughts. *African journal of religion, philosophy and culture*, 99-104.

Methodist chur ch of Ireland. (2019, 07 31). *Emphases of Methodist beliefs*. Retrieved from Methodist church of Ireland : www.irishmethodist,org

Methodist Church of Southren Africa. (2019). *Yearbook.* Cape town : Methodist publishin house.

Mkhize, N. (2008, 03 20). *Ubuntu and Harmony: an African approach to morality and ethics*. Retrieved from Philpapers: philpapers.org/rec/MKHUAH

Mndende, N. (1998). From underground praxis to recognised religion. *Religions and politics in South Africa*, 115-124.

Mohajan, D., & Mohajan, H. (2022). Exploration of coding in qualitative data analyis: Grounded theory perspective. *Munich Personal RePEc Archive*, 1-16.

Mokhoati, J. (2018). A critique of ancestor Christology in Bantu communities. *Phaaroes journal of theology*, 27-28.

Mokhutso, J. (2022). Ancestors are demonic-is it true? Traversting Chrstian and African tradition and religion . *Pharoes journal of theology*, 1-10.

Molobi, V. (2005). *Ancestral veneration at the core of African spirital renewal among the AIC-South Africa.* Pretoria: Unisa press.

Moripe, S. (2023, 01 31). *The organisation and management of the Zionist Christian Church*. Retrieved from ResearchSpace: http:/hdl/handle.net/104130803

Morris, K. (2014). *The church in crisis.* Alabama: Empowered Publications.

Mosothoane, E. K. (1973, 05 20). *Communio sanctorum in Afrika*. Retrieved from Communio santorum in Afrika: journals.co.za/doi/pdf/10.10520/AJA02569507_8

Mouton, J. (2001). *How to succed in your masters' and doctoral studies .* Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Mtuze, P. (2003). *The essence of Xhosa spiritutality .* Florida: Publishers and bookselles(PTY) Ltd.

Mtuze, P. (2008). Anglicanism and itsattitude towards African culture and spirituality; the rise of Xhosa spirituality in the Ethopian Episcopal church. *Journal of theology-South Africa* , 94.

Mtwuka, G. (2009). Ancestral cult and the church in Africa. *African journal of international affairs*, 6-12.

Mulaudzi, N. (2013). Ancestral consultation: a comperative study of ancient near Eastern and Western religions with reference to 1 Samuel 28. *Acient langauages and cultures*, 3-25.

Mutebi, G. F. (2014, 03 21). *Witchcraft, social cohesion and participation in South African Villges*. Retrieved from Development and change: www.onlinelibrary.wiley.com

Newell, W. (1976). *Ancestors.* Paris: Mounton.

News-24 . (2022, 03 28). *Shembe factions bacl in court* . Retrieved from NEWS-24: http://wwww.news24.com

.

news24. (2023, 05 22). *Minister appoints Ingonyama Trust board amid reported fights witinh Zulu monarchy*. Retrieved from News24: www.news24.co.za

NEWS-24. (2023, 03 28). *Police captured to fight factional battles within the church: IPHC*. Retrieved from DRUM-NEWS-24: http://www.news.24.com

Ngubane, S. (2019). Death and burial practices in contemporary Zulu culture, South Africa. *In H.Selin & R.Rakoff, Death across culture*, 119-131.

Nkruziza, D. (2007). Ethnicity- the gravitational centre of evangelization: an essay in aAfrican ecclesiology. *Europian journal of sclience and theology*, 51-62.

Ntombana, L. (2015). The trajectories of Christianity and African ritual practices: The public silence and the dilemma of the Mainline or mission churches. *ACTA THEOLOGICA*, 102.

Nurnberger, K. (2008). Is ancestor veneration compatible with the biblical faith. *Scripture 99*, 299-311.

Nxumalo, J. A. (1981). Zulu Christian and ancestor cult: pastoral conversation. *Scriptura journal*, 65-78.

Nyamiti, C. (1979). *African Tradition and Chrsitain God.* Eldoret: GABA Publications.

Nyamiti, C. (1984). Eldorania: Mambo Press.

Nyirongo, L. (1997). *The Gods of Africa or the the God of the bible? the snares of African traditional religion in biblical perspective.* Potchestroom: Institution for reformational studies.

Oden, T. C. (2007). *How Africa shaped the Chrisitan mind- rediscovering the African seedbed of western Christianity.* Oklahoma: IVP-Publishers.

Olukayode, O. A., Fatokum, S. A., & Abu, F. S. (2015). Spiritual and physical interpretations of dance, clap and gesticulation in Afircan Indigenous Church. *Journal of Philosophy, culture and religion*, 1-10.

Oosthuizen, G. C. (1997). Role of missionaries. *International bulletin of missionary reseach*, 8-12.

Oosthuizen, G. C. (2022, 11 01). *Indigenous Christianity and the future of the church in South Africa*. Retrieved from Internatioanla bulletin of mission research: journals,sagepub.com/doi.abs/10.177

Osmer, R. R. (2008). Introduction. *Practical Theology*.

Padilla, C. (1982). the unity of the church andd the homogenous unnit principle. *International bulletin of Liturgy*.

Park, S. K. (2010). A post foundationalist research paradigm of practical theology. *A post foundationalist research paradigm of practical theology*, 1-6.

Parrinder, G. (1954). *African Traditional Religion.* London: SPCK.

Parrinder, G. (1961). *Worship om the world's religion.* London: Faber and Faber Limited .

Pato, L. L. (1980). *The comunion of saints and ancestor veneration: a study of the concept "communion of saints" with specail reference to the Southren Africna religious exprieice.* Manitoba: University of Manitob.

Pauw, B. A. (1960). *Religion in a Tswana Traditional Chiefdom.* London: Greenwood press.

Pawson, D. (2015). *Unlocking the Bible.* London: HarperCollins.

Pfeiffer, J. (2002). African Indepednent Churches in Mozambique: Healing the afflictions of inequality. *Medical anthropology Quartely*, 179.

Plantinga Jr, C., & Rozenboom , S. (2003). *Discerning the spirits.* Michigan: Eeerdman publishing.

Pollitzer, P. H. (1984). Ancestor veneration in the Oruano movement. *Southren Journa of mission studies*, 124-128.

Powell, R. (1999). *Literacy as a moral imperative facing the challenges of a pluralistic society.* Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield.

Rai, N., & Thapa, B. (2015). A study on the purpose sampling mothod research. *Academia-accelarating the world research*, 2.

Ramatheta, D. (2008). Crucial aspects of an authentic and relevent African Christology theology. *Theology Library Journals 336*, 226-241.

Ray, B. C. (1976). *African Religions: Symbol, Ritual, and Community.* New Jersey: Library of congress cataloging in Publication Data .

.

Rezaul, M. L., Cthleen, J., & Cathleen, J. F. (2016). *Qualitative researvh.* Kuala Lumpur: Farwood publishing.

Rivett, S. (2012). Religious exceptionalism amd Amerin literary history. *the puritans of America*, 391-408.

RO. (2022, 08 28). *Is it a cult oe a new religion movement?* . Retrieved from penn today: penntoday/upen.edu/news/ot os a cultorneweigionmovement?

Roux, H. (2011). *the church and the Mission.* Pietermarzburg: Cluster publication.

Saldana, J. (2013). *The coding manual for qualitative research.* London: Sage.

Saldana, J. (2021). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers.* London: SAGE.

Scaer, D. (1985). Sanctification in Luthren theology. *Concordia Theological Quartely*, 181-195.

Schmidt, B. (2002). Canaanite magic v/s Israelite religion: Deuteronommy 18 and the taxonomy of taboo. *Magic and ritual in the ancient world*, 242-259.

Segette, A., & Landau, L. (2011). *Contemporary.* Washington: Library of congress cataloging publication data.

Segler, F., & Landau, L. (2006). *Christian Worship:its theology and practice.* New York: New York publishing.

Selepe, M. C., & Edwards, S. D. (2008, 03 23). *Grief councelling in African Indigenous churches:a case of Zion-Apostolic church in Venda*. Retrieved from Researchgate: doi:10.4314/indilinga.v7i1.26387

Setiloane, G. (1977). The image of God among the Sotho-tswana. *International journal of African Historical studies*, 144-147.

Setiloane, G. (1986). *African theology, an introduction.* Johannesburg: Skotaville Publishers.

Setiloane, G. (1988). African theology. introduction. *Journal for study of religion*, 77.

Setiloane, G. (1988). *The image of God among the Sotho-Tswana.* Rotterdam: A.A Balkema.

Setsiba, T. S. (2012). Mourning rituals and practices in the contemporary South African today: a phenomenological study. *universtiy of Zululand*.

Siebeck, M. (2022). *From Protology to Eschatology.* Germany: The Deutsche nationalbibliothek.

Singh, L. (2012). *The Holy Spirit or another spirit.* Colarado: Outskirts press.

Smith, K. E. (2007). *Chrisitan Spirituality.* London: SCM PRESS.

Smith, K., & Davies, J. (2011). Qualitative data analysis. Practical research evaluation. *Qualitative data analysis. Practical research evaluation*, 145-158.

Stavrakopoulou, F. (2010). *The land of our forefathers: the role of ancestral veneration in biblical land claim .* London: T&T Clark International.

Stinger, M. D. (2005). *A sociological history of the Chrsitain worship.* Cambridge: Cmbridge university press.

Stinton, D. (2010). *African Theology on the way: current conversations .* Britain: SPCK.

Stringfellow, W. (2018, 11 14). *The unity of the church as the witness of the church*. Retrieved from SAFE Journals: https://doi.org./10.1177/1033

Swinton, J., & Mouton, H. (2006). *Practical theology andqualitative research.* London: SCM Press.

Tan, Y. (2011). *Counselling and Psychology.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic.

Terre Blance, M. J., Durrheim, K., & Painter, D. (2006). *Research in Practice.* Cape Town: Cape Town press.

The American Anthropologicla Aassociation. (2023, 08 18). *What is Anthropology?* Retrieved from Anthropology is the study of what makes us human: https://americananthro.org

The Anglican church of Southren Africa. (2023, 01 31). *The Anglican church of Southren Africa*. Retrieved from The Anglican church of Southren Africa: https://anglican.org

Theopedia. (2023, 05 01). *Mainline churches*. Retrieved from Theopedia: https:/wwww.theopedia.com

Theron, P. (1996). *African traditional cultures and the church. SA.* Pretoria: Institute for missiological and ecumenical research.

Thorne, S. (2000). Analysis in qualitative research. *Statitisitcs from Americans.com*, 69.

.

Triebel, J. (2002). Living together with ancestors: ancestors veneration in Africa as a challenge for missiology . *Missiology 30(2)*, 187-197.

Tshaka, R. (2016). How can a conquered people sing praises of thier history and culture? Africanasation. *Black theology*, 91.

Tucker, G. (2023, 08 29). *Deteronomy 18:15-22*. Retrieved from Candle of school theology: https//doi.org/101177/00296438704100308

Tucker, G. M. (1987). Deuteronomy 18:15-22. *SAGE journals*, 292-297.

Ubink, J. M., & Amanor, K. S. (2008). *Contesting land and custom in Ghana.* Amsterdam: Leiden University Press.

Vos, G. (1976). *Puuline eschatology.* Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing.

Watts, F., Nye, R., & Savage, S. (2002). *Psychology for Chrsitain Ministry.* London: Routledge.

Wenham, G. (1979). *The book of Leviticus* . Michagan: William B. Eerdmans publishers.

Wepener, C., & Meyer, E. (2012). Ritual burning and slaughtering in an AIC: Pespectives from the liturgical studies and Old Testament Criticism. *Ritual burning and slaughtering in an AIC: Pespectives from the liturgical studies and Old Testament Criticism*, 1-14.

Wepener, C., & Meyer, E. E. (2012). Ritual burning and slaughtering in an AIC: perspectives from Liturgical Studies and Old Testament Critism. *Ritual burning and slaughtering in an AIC: perspectives from Liturgical Studies and Old Testament Critism*, 1-14.

Werner, A. (2007). *Organisational behaviour.* Hatfield: Van schaik.

White, J. F. (2000). *INtroduction to Christian worship.* Nashville: Library of vongress cataloging publication data.

Whitley, C. F. (2009). *The language and exegisis of Isaiah 8:16-23.* North Wales: De Gruyter.

Willimon, W. (1980). *Remember who you are. Baptism means for Chrsitains.* Nashville: Nashville university press.

Willimon, W. (2000). *Calling and character.* Nasville: Abingdon press.

Willimon, W. (2008). *Pastor.* Nasville: Abingdon press.

World council of churches . (2023, 01 26). *World council of churches* . Retrieved from Methodist church of Southren Africa: www.oikoumene.org

Zahan, D. (2000). Some reflections on African spirituality. *Meaning and expressions*, 3-25.

.

List of Appendixes.

Consent form-A Interview schedule – B

Participant information sheet- CInstitutional permission- D



Appendix A

COLLEGE OF HUMAN SCIENCE

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I,_____(participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

.

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recording of the one-to-one interview.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Suriname..... (please print)

Participant Signature…….. Date……

Researcher's Name & Surname… .....(please print)

Researcher's signature…….

.



Appendix B

COLLEGE OF HUMAN SCIENCE

REREARCH QUESTIONNAIRETITLE:

DICHOTOMIES BETWEEN MAINSTREAM AND AFRICAND INDIGENOUS CHURCHES: A PRACTICAL THEOLOGICAL EXPLORATION OF ANCESTRAL VENERATION.

To the Participant

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview with the questions listed below. Together with this questionnaire, is a copy of the information sheet provided to you. I wish to assure you once again of the following so that this interview becomes easy with free expressions from you:

- I will be asking only four questions which you may use any language you are comfortable with at any given time.
- The interview will take 30 to 45 minutes' maximum and will be conducted at Stadt 2 Methodist church and if the venue is out of your way, I will arrange with you to meet at the place comfortable and convenient to you.
- This will be one to one interview between me (the researcher) and you will not be disturbed.

.

- Questions will be put to you and you will answer as you feel and no pressure or misleading tips will be given to you as to influence you on how to answer the questions.
- Your confidentiality is assured and your names will not be used illegally on this interview and this study. My contact details and the University are available to you on the information sheet provided should you after interviews raised a concern.

This study which led to this interview looks at the dichotomies between Mainstream and African Indigenous churches: A practical exploration of ancestral veneration. Your participation will be helpful in helping to identify these dichotomies between the two churches and at the end of the study come up with recommendations with will help scholars and churches on how to deal and manage such dichotomies.

Main Question

What are the main dichotomies in the worship practice between Mainstream and African Indigenous churches in South Africa?

Subsidiary Questions

1. What are the main differences between Mainstream and African Indigenous churches?
2. How can we look at Jesus Christ as the ancestor?
3. How can Christian denominations find synergy in how they approach ancestral veneration in their respective spaces?
4. How can the Christian community practice inclusive and contextual Christian ministry (this means how Christian community worship, praise, preach and pray in such a way that it speaks to its current voice, current demands and expectations of the members)?

.



Appendix C

COLLEGE OF HUMAN SCIENCE

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Dear Prospective Participant

My name is Sam Tlali Dipali and I am doing research with Prof Dames Dryer in the Department of Philosophy, Systematic and Practical Theology, studying towards a degree on Doctor of Practical Theology at the University of South Africa. We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled: **Dichotomies between Mainstream and African Indigenous churches: A Practical Theology exploration of ancestral veneration**

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

I am conducting this research to theologically explore the dichotomies between Mainstream and African Indigenous church with specific focus on ancestral veneration.

WHY ARE YOU BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?

You have been chosen because you are part of the of the congregation in which this research focuses on the get data which will be useful to its completion. 24 participants from 4 different churches will also be interviewed using the same questions. Your information was obtained from your immediate minister/administrator(after consulting with you for permission).

.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

The study involves questionnaires in a structured interview. Four open ended questions which are clear and straight forward will be asked. They are designed to gather information from the participant. The expected time of answering all four questions is between 20 to 30 minutes.

CAN YOU WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY EVEN AFTER HAVING AGREED TO PARTICIPATE?

Statement that participation is voluntary and that there is no penalty or loss of benefit for non-participation.

Participating in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

There are no financial or any other benefit to participate in this interview. Your participation will help the study to produce and construct new ideas with will beneficial to the academic space.

ARE THEIR ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR YOU IF I PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT?

The interview will take place in a safe environment which will suit you with and distance and the interview will only take between 20 and 30 minutes only. Therefore, there are no possible risks in the interview.

WILL THE INFORMATION THAT YOU CONVEY TO THE RESEARCHER AND MY IDENTITY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

You have the right to insist that your name be not mentioned and recorded anywhere and that no one, apart from the researcher and identified members of the research team, will know about your involvement in this research or your name will not be recorded anywhere and no one will be able to connect you to the answers you give your answers will be given a code number or a pseudonym and you will be referred to

.

in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods suchas conference proceedings.

HOW WILL THE RESEARCHER(S) PROTECT THE SECURITY OF DATA?

Hard copies of your answers will be stored by the researcher for a minimum period of five years in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet at my study room for future research or academic purposes; electronic information will be stored on a password protected computer and also kept on Cloud digital safe space. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable. After five years of storage, if need be, hard copies will be shredded and electronic copies will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the computer and be removedfrom Cloud.

WILL YOU RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THISSTUDY?

No payment will be given to you and I will ensure that interviews are conducted within your reach such as your church. If need be, transport will be organized for you at no cost for you to attend the interview.

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICS APPROVAL?

This study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of the Unisa. A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you so wish.

HOW WILL YOU BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS/RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH?

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact me on the number: 078 226 7775, alternative number: 0783864700, email: samdipali@gmail.com. The findings will be accessible after 12 months from the date of the interview.

Should you require any further information or want to contact me about any aspect of this study, please contact me on the above cellphone numbers and email.

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact the University in which I will provide contact details will be provided to you.

.

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study. Thank you.

Sam Tlali Dipali signature…***duly signed***