

PASTORAL CARE IN  
PENTECOSTAL/CHARISMATIC  
CHURCHES

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# **A cat enters a white lady's bedroom at night.....**

White lady: Awww hey where did you come from kitty? Who do you belong to? Picks up cat and takes him to the kitchen, pours some milk for the cat and goes like “you have a good night kitty, tomorrow we will go find your owner” then locks the kitchen door behind her.

# Some cat enters a Ghanaian woman's bedroom at night.....

Ghana lady: Herr Yesu mogya nka wanim wati, where did you come from? Whoever sent you has failed, tell them you did not meet me. She picks up her Bible and tries to throw it at the cat and fails then bursts into tongues. She then picks up the phone and calls pastor.....

Ghana lady: Odifo you said it ooo, now they have come fiili fiili (physical).....

She will go to church on Sunday in white to share her testimony. See where I'm going with this.....

A 53-year old photographer and a member of the International Central Gospel Church (ICGC) Head Office committed suicide on Good Friday morning by hanging himself in one of the auditoriums for the church's church service.

The photographer, Mr. Victor Acheampong popularly known as "Kofi Papa", was alleged to be indebted to the house owner, who had just returned to Ghana, an amount of 40 million cedis.

This story stirred controversy in the country. How can such an affluent church not come to the aid of one of its own who was facing financial challenges?

Ama Hemmah, a 72-year-old woman from Ajumako Asaeso in the Central Region of Ghana was burnt alive at Tema, a port city just 25 kilometers from Accra on suspicion of being a witch. A student-nurse, who appeared on the scene, attempted to rescue Ama Hemmah from her ordeal but she died of her burns within 24 hours of arrival at the Tema General Hospital. Five people who allegedly tortured and extracted the confessions of witchcraft from Ama Hemmah before drenching her in kerosene and setting her ablaze were pastors and church elders.

- Della Russel Ocloo, “Grandma Set Ablaze to Exorcise Witchcraft,” *Daily Graphic*, 26<sup>th</sup> November, 2010.

One can cite the case of a Ghanaian employee at the Zimbabwe Embassy in Berlin who butchered his mother to death because a prophet told him that the mother was the cause of his ailment.

Or the 95 year old grandmother who was ejected by her daughter from their family house for allegedly causing the death of her granddaughter and daughter who died of breast cancer and HIV/AIDS respectively and had to spend the rest of her life in a market stall where she sold condiments in the day and slept at night till her demise at the ripe old age of 106.

Or the nine (9) year old boy suffering from a skin disorder whose parents kept indoors till he died on the orders and declaration of a spiritualist, Maame Osofo of Twelve Apostle's Church that the boy was possessed by witchcraft.



Or the 15 year old pupil of Kaneshie Presbyterian Junior Secondary School who was dog-chained, beaten to bruises and left kneeling in the sun for hours by his “born-again” mother who believes that the boy was a demon.

These stories raise  
the question of what  
kind of Pastoral Care  
and training are these  
Pastors exposed to?

# **Pastoral Care can be simply defined as:**

- one person helping another in crisis or “dis-ease”.
- Shepherding the flock.

# Pastoral Care Involves:

- Healing
- Sustaining
- Guiding
- Reconciling

Clebsch & Jaekle

# Resources of Pastoral Care

- Prayer
- Faith
- Sacraments
- Scripture
- Counselling Skills
- Health and Psychological Sciences
- Christian Community

Clergy are the helping professionals of choice.

More people will come to pastors than all the other helping professionals put together.

Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches cover a broad area that defies easy definition.

Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches can be broadly defined as “Spirit-led” or “Spirit-filled” churches.

Holy Spirit is present and active and is expected to wrought miraculous healing that defies medical explanation.

Pentecostals tend to interpret reality in spiritual rather than physical and psychological terms. Spiritual diagnosis and treatment of ailment to the neglect of biological and psychological causes.



- Anti-psychological explanation for disease.
- Medical & psychological solutions are seen as stifling the work of the spirit.
- A dualistic view of the person.
- Lack of integrated understanding of the person.
- Pentecostals tend to ignore or demonize dis-ease or attribute it to the lack of faith (refer to stories).

# Referrals

Pentecostals are less likely to refer or seek professional assistance for their clients.

Pentecostals cannot be  
generalized.

While some have caused  
harm to their members,  
others have become more  
progressive.

- Emerging social consciousness among Pentecostals in the last few decades.
- Targeted ministries to meet practical needs and social concerns

Some Pentecostals have set up spaces to facilitate medical and psychological services in congregations and communities.

## **Examples:**

Couple counselling

Alpha hospital, Madina

Visitation of the sick and material support

- Need for lay and pastoral training
- Need for foundational training in Pastoral Care in Pentecostal Seminaries
- Continuous Education, online and short courses may help those who are already in ministry.

Pentecostal Pastoral Care  
requires a well rounded  
understanding that God  
works through spiritual,  
medical and psychological  
means.