

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

A READING OF GALATIANS 5 AND ITS IMPACT ON CHRISTIANS IN  
THE ANLO TRADITIONAL AREA

COOL GODWIN KOFI DEFFOR

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THE ANJO TRADITIONAL AREA

BY

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Thesis submitted to the Department of Religion and Human Values of the  
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Cape Coast, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for award of Doctor of  
Philosophy Degree in Religion and Human Values.

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## DECLARATION

### Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no apart has been presented for another degree in this University or elsewhere

Candidate's Signature:..... Date: .....

Name: Cool Godwin Kofi Deffor

### Supervisor's Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

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## ABSTRACT

The study concerns a reading of Galatians 5 and practices and its appropriation for Christians in the Anlo Traditional Area. The chosen text deals with a situation of intra-religious debate between two religious beliefs and practices - Judaism and the Christian faith. The text is appropriated to the context of Anlo Christians who usually clash with the traditional rulers during the ban on drumming and general noise making. The Tri-Polar Exegetical Model as developed by Draper (2001) was employed for the study. The Contextual Bible Study Methodology by West (1993) was adopted for the contextualization of the text. The literary critical tool was used for the Distantiation (exegesis) of the text which has a structure of six divisions. The Distantiation of the text under the six divisions brought about six ideas: freedom from ethnic or religious laws (verses 1 to 6), legalism and freedom (verses 1 to 6), lawful and lawless people (verses 7 to 12), love for humanity and freedom (verses 13-15), freedom in Christ abhors fleshly desires (verses 19-21) and fruit of the spirit and freedom (verses 22-26). These ideas were used for the Contextual Bible Study (C.B.S) involving participants from seven different denominations of the Anloga local council of churches. The study group came up with the resolution that although the ban contravenes their religious beliefs and practices, its observance will not negatively affect their Christian worship. This birthed action plans for both individual and social transformation as a way of resolving the annual clashes in the period of the ban during the 'Hogbetsotso' Festival of the Anlo people.

## KEY WORDS

Appropriation

Circumcision

Contextualization

Distantiation

Freedom

The Whole Law

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## DEDICATION

The study is dedicated to Emelia Mensah and my children Winner, Mawuko, Mawuyram, Mawulikplim, and Mawulorm.



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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Background of the study**

In Paul's epistle to Galatians, the view of some Jewish Christians (agitators or troublemakers, Galatians 1:7; 2:12; 5:10) indicate that those who accepted the Christians faith must be circumcised to qualify as people of God. Circumcision, "was a rite enjoined by God upon Abraham and his male descendants, as a sign of the covenant made with him, Gen.17" (Vine, 1996, p.102). These Jewish Christians (agitators) were on independent law observant mission among the Gentiles Churches (Barclay, 2014). Paul sees danger ahead for the Galatians if they continue in their thinking and practice as influenced by the agitators (Fletcher, 2016).

Therefore, Paul argues against returning to a life of Torah in Galatians 5 (Fletcher, 2016). Paul's argument concerns the law observant mission among the Gentile churches (Barclay, 2004). This reflects intra-religious debate between the Jewish Christians (law observant missionaries) and the Gentile Christians. However, Paul indicates fulfilling the whole law which demands loving each other and he also talks about faith which works through love in Christ Jesus Christ but not circumcision or uncircumcision in the same Galatians 5. This suggests how to handle the internal debate between the Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians. This has motivated the researcher to use the Tri-polar exegetical model (Draper, 2001) approach which determines the behaviour of a

reading community, for reading Galatians 5 with Christians in the Anlo Traditional Area.

The reason is Anlo Christians regard the ban on drumming and general noise making in the period of 'Hogbetsotso' festival as a joke of oppression and as an infringement on their freedom in terms of religious belief and practice. The 'Hogbetsotso' festival is celebrated by the chiefs and people of Anlo to commemorate their migration to their present location. The festival begins in early May and ends on the first Saturday in November when the grand durbar is organized. One significant features of the festival is the ban mentioned earlier. The ban comes as a traditional religious belief and practice. It implies that all other religious and social activities that are associated with the drumming and noise making in general, must be suspended with regard to the preparation towards the festival. Since the Christians in the traditional area regard the ban as an oppression and infringement on their belief and practice, it brings misunderstanding between the traditional rulers and the Christians. The misunderstanding results in clashes in which members of both parties, at times, sustain various degrees injuries. One of such clashes occurred at Tunu, a town in Anlo Traditional Area, under the jurisdiction of the Keta Municipal Assembly. It happened on 18<sup>th</sup> September, 2013 when Rev. Sabbla Moses and his congregants of Bethel Evangelical Mission were drumming in Church service in the period of the ban. According to Rev. Sabla Moses, when the traditional faithfuls attempted to stop them from drumming, a serious fight ensued in which he and some people

sustained injuries. They were treated at the hospital on the request of the Anlo District Police Commander. The District Chief Executive withdrew the case from the Police Station for amicable settlement but the issue could not be resolved (Personal Communication, May 11, 2014). This kind of situation creates tension between Christians and traditional rulers any time the ban is enforced to pave the way for the celebration of the festival. Although what led to the internal debate in the selected text (Galatians 5) differs from the Anlo situation I contend that lessons from the reading of the text can be of value for the Anlo Christians.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Galatians 5 reflects intra-religious debate concerning Christian identity and soteriology in Paul's letter to Galatians. In Galatians 5, while the agitators or trouble makers advocate for circumcision, a Jewish religious rite, as a mark of Christian identity, Paul argues against it. Paul argues for freedom from a yoke of slavery, resistance to circumcision hence the whole law, fulfilling the whole law by loving each other and antagonism between the flesh and the spirit. This indicates a problem of debate between the Jewish Christians and the Gentile Christians. This calls for reading Galatians 5 to ascertain how the debate was handled.

Similarly, the annual traditional ban on drumming and general noise making that paves the way for 'Hogbetsotso' festival in Anlo Traditional Area, causes a great deal of tension between the traditional rulers and the Christians. The tension comes about because while the Christians feel that the ban is



infringing on their freedom of worship, the traditional rulers think the land belong to them. Therefore, any individual or social group that wants to stay on the land must obey and observe the ban. However, the Christians realized the ban has religious undertones so they are not willing to compromise. This creates inter-religious tension between the two religious beliefs and practices that needs attention; in other words a problem for solution.

Since the Anlo Christians regard and read their scriptures as the source of their freedom in decision making, the researcher selected Galatians 5 for reading with the Anlo Christians. Although, the cause of the intra-religious debate in the text is different from the inter-religious tension of Anlo, Galatians 5 can be read for appropriation to the Christians in the area of study. The reason is the inter-religious tension in Anlo is between the traditional rulers and the Christians who are living in the same area

Therefore, the Tri-polar exegetical model has been adopted for reading the selected text to challenge the context and foster appropriation of the text for Anlo Christians. In anticipation, the researcher hopes this will lead to suggestions for improvement or transformation of the relations between the two factions in their pursuance of freedom.

### **Significance of the Study**

The study contributes to knowledge by throwing light on the principles that emerge from the text by the use of the Tri-Polar Exegetical Model. This

informs the appropriation of the text for the Christians in the Anlo Traditional Area and serves as a guide for making informed decisions by Churches and groups in similar situations. This is because there are other Ghanaian communities like the Gas and the Fantes that also observe the ban on noise making and drumming in their domains during certain periods of the year. It also throws light on ways of handling the conflict created by the ban on drumming during the “Hogbetsotso” festival. Generally it serves as a reference for scholars.

### **Objectives**

The study is guided by some objectives. Specifically to:

1. Determine the meaning of freedom in the context of the selected text.
2. Contextualize the text in the targeted area of this study.
3. Appropriate the text for transformative action plans for Christians in the selected area of the study.

### **Delimitation**

The study has three delimitations: the text, the area of study and the use of the term “Anlo Christians”. A look at the contents of Paul’s letter to Galatians show that Galatians 5 forms a pericope as it has a clear beginning and an end. Although Galatians 5 relates to 1 to 4 and 6, it deals with specific issue. Galatians 5 falls between the first four sections (Chapters 1 to 4) and the sixth (Chapter 6). While the first four sections unravel an intra-religious problem, concerning the Jewish rite of circumcision which is tied to the whole law and

differentiating between the children of the slave woman from that of the free woman, the fifth section handles the problem and the sixth section points to responsibilities for Christians in Galatia.

The verse 1 of the fifth section which begins with an article *tē* which means “the” and the noun *eleutheria* meaning “freedom” shows two importance: it refers to the problem in the first four sections which end with the slave woman and the free woman (4:30-31) and it also explicitly begins a new section which handles the problem. After handling the problem in the fifth section, the sixth section shows the way forward which is the responsibilities for the Galatians. Therefore, in the case of this study, the focus is Galatians 5:1-26 which begins a section on the theme “freedom” for which sake Christ has set the Galatians free from a yoke of slavery (circumcision and the whole law). This enables the study to concentrate on how the text handles the internal problem between the Jewish Christians and Gentiles Christians and its appropriation to Anlo Christians

The term “Anlo Christians” in the entire study refers to the Charismatic and the Pentecostal Christian denominations, that are the members of Anloga local council of churches. They do not observe the ban on drumming and general noise making in the period of the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival. The reason is the focus of the study is on Christians who do not observe the ban hence the clashes with the traditional rulers. Therefore, the term “Anlo Christians” denotes the said Christian denominations that form local council of Churches at Anloga.

In this light, the study concentrates on Aɲlɔga which is the seat of the traditional area. The reasons are: (a) the key traditional rulers like the “Awoamefia” the King of Aɲlɔ, “Nyigblanua” the traditional priest and “Avadada” the traditional warlord reside in Aɲlɔga and (b) normally church leaders in the traditional area seek guidance from the executive members of the Aɲlɔga local council of churches when it comes to the ban on drumming and general noise making in the period of the “Hogbetsotso” festival.

### **Methodology**

The fundamental aim of employing any scientific tool for biblical interpretation is not only the comprehension of the biblical text but also how the interpretation of a particular text is properly applied to any given situation for the benefit of humanity (Barton, 1992).

In this regard, the study employs the Tri-Polar Exegetical Model as developed by Patte and Grenholm (2000) and modified by Draper (2001) as indicated in the literature review. The method aims at highlighting the nature of biblical text as religious such that its interpretation sets the tone for the conduct of believers of the Bible.

The Tri-Polar Exegetical Model which I refer to as Tri-PEM in this study has gone through modification by scholars such as Draper (2001) and West (2007). The Tri-PEM deals with three significant poles which Draper (2001)

refers to as (a) distantiation (b) contextualization and (c) appropriation as explained in the literature review of this study.

The methodology is adopted by the study because it seeks to challenge and give guidance to Christians to take informed decisions. The decision is taken when the reading community of faith (Christians) applied the meaning of the text they read to their situation.

### **Methodological Procedure**

This section deals with how the research was conducted as follows:

1. There were primary and secondary surveys of the Anlo culture in light of religious beliefs and practice with special focus on the ban on drumming. The Anlo Christians' view on their religious beliefs and practices was also determined. This involved field work among traditional rulers and Christian leaders in the Anlo traditional area.
2. There was a survey of the structure and the content of Paul's letter to the Galatians that informed the selection of Galatians 5 for study. This led to the exegesis of the chosen text (Galatians 5) on the themes of freedom in Christ on the one hand, and circumcision and the whole law (Judaism) on the other.
3. Contextual Bible Study, as propounded by West (1993) was conducted with some Christians of the Anloga local council of churches which comprises seven denominations. At this stage the meaning of the text

(Galatians 5:1-26) was determined by the targeted study group. This helped in facilitating contextualization by way of analysing and evaluating the Aᅇlɔ context in light of the selected text.

4. The Aᅇlɔ context together with the contextualization of the text were analysed and evaluated. This was the appropriation of the text for the Christians in the Aᅇlɔ Traditional Area. It offered a way of bringing the two contexts together to enhance understanding which led to achievable recommendations for Christians in dealing with freedom and religious beliefs and practices with regards to the ban on drumming in the period of the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival in the Aᅇlɔ Traditional Area.

#### 5. Field work

The field work conducted took the form of interviews with the traditional rulers and the Christian leadership in the Aᅇlɔ traditional area to assess their views on freedom and religious beliefs and practices generally, with special reference to the ban on drumming. In this respect, the researcher adopted purposive sampling strategy to intentionally select individuals that matter for the study (Creswell, 2008) as indicated in the delimitation. The individuals that were selected formed two sub – groups which were true generalisation of the findings (Kusi, 2012). The selection of the sub – group took the form of purposive sampling “in which the researcher samples cases or individuals that differ on some characteristics or trait. The procedure, requires that you identify the characteristics and then find sites or individuals that display different dimensions

of the characteristics” (Creswell, 2005, p. 83). This is because the individuals that were selected were from two sub – groups (church leaders and traditional rulers at Anlɔga) who usually exhibit different attitudes when it comes to the traditional ban on drumming in the Anlɔ Traditional Area in the period of the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival. In this regard, there was focus group discussion for the two groups separately.

#### 6. Collection of data

The “unstructured” technique, which is a qualitative procedure of data collection, was employed. This technique has no formal structure and it gives the researcher a free hand to discuss issues with the interviewees. It allows the researcher to have his purpose in mind such that questions asked and how they are presented to achieve this purpose are left with the researcher (Kusi, 2012). In this vein, unstructured interview guides were designed for the key traditional rulers indicated earlier, the executives of the local council of churches and two ministers whose denominations do not belong to the council of churches. It enhances, gathering of detailed, relevant and sensitive information on the topic. However, the researcher did his best to prevent aimless incoherent information (Wragg, 2002) from the interviewees when they express their views in detail.

#### **Research instruments**

The study applied three research instruments which were the exegesis of the text, primary source and scholarly works.

### **The exegesis**

The exegesis is a crucial instrument for the study and it was carried out by a Tri – PEM as indicated earlier in the methodology. This instrument unveiled what the selected text meant in its context, in the context of the targeted area and the appropriation for the Christians in the area. This means that the exegesis was the main instrument used to enhance the Contextual Bible Study.

### **The primary source**

It is the grass root findings which give the first hand information that is vital for the study. In this study, the first hand information produced different opinions that were expressed by the interviewees who were opinion leaders in the community as indicated earlier.

### **Scholarly works**

Information was obtained from the available scholarly published works such as books and journals on the topic.

### **Literature review**

Review of scholarly works was one of the key components of the study. The review fell under the following categories:

1. The world view on circumcision and the whole law.
2. Secular and Christian world views on freedom.
3. African biblical interpretation.



### **Brief scholarly views on circumcision and the whole law**

Circumcision is “to cut or cut off all or part of the foreskin of (a male) or all or part of the clitoris of (a female), often as a religious rite; to purify” (Brookes, 2006, p. 278). This definition is not all that different from that of Goetz (1988) which simply puts it as the operation of cutting away all or part of the foreskin of the penis. In this study, the focus on circumcision concerned males with regards to religious undertones.

The origin of circumcision is unknown and its widespread ethnic practice as a ritual or religious act and the use of stone knife rather than a metal one signify the great antiquity of the operation Goetz (1988). Parrinder (2001) indicates that circumcision has been a Semitic and partly African practice. He goes on and makes an observation that in Africa, the Egyptian and Ethiopian Christians have retained it. His observation, in respect of Africa, seems to be limited to the fact that Christians in the Anlo Traditional Area, where the researcher targets for the current study in the republic of Ghana, also practice circumcision.

Traditionally, circumcision is performed before or at puberty. On religious grounds, it is carried out as an instruction, for example it is performed for the Jewish babies on the eighth day after birth which signifies part of the covenant between God and Abraham. This makes it obligatory for all male converts to Judaism. Therefore, for the Jews, it is the fulfillment of the covenant initiated by God with Abraham as clearly stated in Genesis 17: 10-14:

10 This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your descendants after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised.

11 You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you. 12 He that is eight days old among you shall be circumcised; every male throughout your generations, whether born in your house, or bought with your money from any foreigner who is not of your offspring, 13 both he that is born in your houses and he that is bought with your money, shall be circumcised. So shall my covenant be in your flesh an everlasting covenant. 14 Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant (RSV), that qualifies one as a new convert to be rightly part of them.

This covenant is described as the first divine commandment of the Pentateuch for every male that ascribes to the Jewish faith (Yeshua, 2003). It is reasonable for Yeshua (2003) to view the Abrahamic covenant as stipulated in Genesis 17:10-14 as a divine commandment. This is because the initiator of the covenant is well identified in verses 1 and 9 of the same chapter 17. Verse 1 says “When Abram was ninety-nine years old the LORD appeared to Abraham, and said to him, “I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless” (RSV) and verse 9 also says “And God said to Abraham, “As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations” (RSV). The two verses quoted above identify the initiator of the covenant as

“God Almighty”. Here, a close look at the initiator (God) and the covenant in verses 10-14 reveals the nature of the initiator:

1. He is a supernatural being
2. He is above Abraham and his descendants
3. His terms of the covenant must not be violated
4. His covenant is everlasting.

The covenant also shows the position of Abraham, his descendants and associates:

1. He is the subordinate
2. He has no say in the covenant
3. He must be obedient to the covenant
4. His descendants are also affected by the covenant.
5. There are sanctions for defaulters
6. His associates are not exempted from the covenant.

The covenant suggests that as long as the initiator and the generation of Abraham exist the covenant must be in operation. The perpetuity of the covenant does not change its potency.

The supernatural nature of the initiator with the sanction over the subordinate (Abraham) and his generation depicts omnipotence of the former over the latter. It shows that the subordinate (Abraham) and his generation could not express their opinion concerning the covenant. A look at the Genesis 17:10-14 shows that God who initiates the covenant is superior to Abraham (the

subordinate) in respect of the covenant. The core of the covenant is “circumcision” which can be referred to as the product of the covenant initiated. The understanding is that anyone who wants to ascribe to the Abrahamic covenant must undertake the rite of circumcision as the key identity specified by the initiator. This covenant reflects the suzerain type of covenant.

A scholarly study of international treaties of the late second millennium B.C.E., found mainly in Hittite reveals two forms of covenants which are parity and suzerainty (Bernhard, 1988). The two covenants are different. According to Bernhard (1988),

A parity covenant is reciprocal-that is, both parties, being equal in rank, bind themselves to each other by bilateral obligations. The suzerainty covenant, on the other hand, is more unilateral, for it is made between a suzerain, a great king, and his vassal, the head of a subordinate state. To his vassal, the suzerain “gives” a covenant, and within the covenant the vassal finds protection and security. As the subordinate party, the vassal is under obligation to obey the commands issued by the suzerain, for the suzerain’s words are spoken with majesty and authority of the covenant author (pp. 98-99).

The quotation shows the difference between the two different covenants. In this wise, a parity covenant takes place between two personalities of the same status while suzerainty concerns a superior and his subordinate (s). It is also clear that with regard to suzerainty:

1. It is the superior who spells out the terms of the covenant.
2. The subordinate (s) has to obey it, in other words, carry out the commands or the rules of the superior.
3. The subordinate's safety is guaranteed by the superior.
4. There is no room for the subordinate to alter the terms of the covenant.
5. A breach of covenant on the part of the subordinate attracts sanction or termination of security from the superior.

Bernhard (1988) also indicates six characteristic features of the suzerain covenant which are

1. The preamble which contains the name and the titles of the imperial sovereignty of the Hittite King.
2. Historical prologue that points to the deeds of benevolence performed on behalf of the vassal.
3. Stipulations that are imposed on the vassal.
4. Attention to the treaty document which calls for the preservation of copies of the treaty in the temples of both countries and the public reading of the document once a year in the vassal state.
5. Witness to the treaty which involves the gods of both countries. However, precedence is given to the Hittite gods.

6. Sanctions take the form of blessing as a result of obedience to the treaty but curses or total destruction if the vassal is unfaithful.

The suzerain covenant and its characteristic features show that the subordinate has a lot to do in order to remain in the covenant.

Although the etymology of the Hebrew term “Bērit” which means covenant is uncertain (Weinfeld, 1972 and 1973), its use in Genesis 17:10-14 and in the suzerainty as indicated above shows two things:

1. Biblically, the concept of “covenant” points to the relations of God with his own people in such a way that it is used “to indicate either a bilateral relationship (of God with the human being or the human being with God) or a relationship in one direction (only from God to the human being)” (Soggin, 2001, p. 55).
2. The term is also used to portray a deal between human beings for example Great kings and their vassals as indicated earlier.

In the case of the biblical concept with regard to Genesis 17:10-14 it is implicit that the “covenant” relationship comes only from God to Abraham and his future generations. A vital aspect of the covenant is the physical sign that is the physical seal of “circumcision” for every male. The act of circumcision in this context suggests a form of religious belief and practice for those who ascribed and would ascribe to the covenant. Likewise the religious belief and

practice in the context of suzerain covenant seems to be the preservation of the copies of the treaty document in the temples of both countries and the annual reading of it.

The difference between the Abrahamic and suzerain covenants is, while the act of circumcision is an instruction from only God to man, the keeping and reading of the treaty document in the temples come from man (Great King) to man (vassals of the Great King). The circumcision is practised “as the human response to the act with which God makes the covenant with his own people, here presented in embryo by the patriarch Abraham and for successive generation” (Soggin, 2001, p. 72). This shows that God takes perfect control of the covenant hence the practice of circumcision. Unlike the practice of circumcision where God plays the central role, in the suzerain covenant it is man (the Great king) who takes the lead and allows the gods to witness the treaty (Bernhard, 1988). Thus, the reading of the document in the temples is indicative of religious belief and practice. What comes out is that both God (in the Abrahamic covenant) and the Great king (in the Suzerain covenant) were superiors over the people such that the people who were involved in the two different covenants could not freely express their views on the terms of the covenants. The situation was like ‘do as I say’ as the two covenants have divine elements: God the initiator of the Abrahamic covenant which deals with the rite of circumcision and the Great king who allows the gods to play a role in the suzerain covenant. Although both covenants indicate divine elements: God and gods with their sanctions for deviants as noted earlier (Bernhard, 1988, Soggin,

2001 and Yeshua, 2003), in Galatians 5 a different view in relation to freedom gained in Christ Jesus emerges which challenges the efficacy of circumcision which has divine support. In this respect Bernhard (1988), Soggin (2001) and Yeshua (2003) are silent on any challenge such as that of Galatian 5 that faces the divine covenant rite of circumcision. In this wise, this study sets out and looked at the challenge by reading Galatians 5 and appropriate it to the situation of the Christians in the Aṅlɔ Traditional Area.

In this light, and as shown in the background to the study and the research problem, it is the Aṅlɔ traditional rulers who annually place the ban on drumming and general noise making in their bid to prepare towards the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival for which they expect other religious and social groups to obey. The ban seems to reflect Aṅlɔ cultural religious belief and practice which has become a traditional norm for the people of Aṅlɔ, and for which this study sets out to examine. The examination of the Aṅlɔ cultural perception in terms of their freedom in religious beliefs and practice served as a fertile ground for the Tri-PEM with regards to the selected text: Galatians 5. The text talks about standing firm in the freedom of Christ on the one hand, and on the other, strongly warns against circumcision that relates to the whole law which seems to signify a religious belief and practice in Judaism. Although the text was not written for the people of the Aṅlɔ Traditional Area, the examination of their cultural perspective has enhanced the contextualization of the text under study and its appropriation to the views of Christians in the area. Circumcision which is the physical sign of



the covenant that is made on the male body (Soggin, 2001) is an instruction in terms of religious practice from God to man (Abraham and his generation). As indicated earlier, the nature of the instruction is everlasting for the recipient and his associates to obey. Likewise, the ban on drumming, which seems to have a religious undertone that comes from the traditional rulers whose head is the “Awoamefia” the king of the Aṅlɔ must be obeyed. Now the instruction in Galatians 5 shows that circumcision which is an everlasting religious bodily sign in Judaism (Genesis 17) should not be practiced by the Christians in Galatia because of the element of freedom in Christ. This instruction comes from Paul (the head of Christians in Galatia) to those who accepted the Christian faith in Galatia.

The seemingly religious view of freedom in Christ in the selected text sharply contrasts the practice of circumcision which suggests a religious belief in Judaism (Genesis 17:10-14). This portrays a debate between the religious practice of circumcision with respect to Judaism, and freedom gained in Christ in view of the Christian faith. This is the reason why the study examined freedom in the context of the selected text (Galatians 5) and assessed how it challenges the Aṅlɔ context in light of the ban on drumming which reflects their religious belief, enhancing informed decisions by the Aṅlɔ Christians.

According to Dunn (1990) the act of circumcision is one of the works of the law. His position shows that Paul did not attack Jewish legalism but their ethnocentrism or nationalism. However, in Galatians 5:6, Paul’s position

indicates that in Christ Jesus circumcision or uncircumcision does not count but faith that works through love. Here, Paul's stance seems to signify a different view which has nothing to do with ethnocentrism and nationalism as Dunn (1990) puts it, hence, there arise a need for a study of the selected text to clearly see Paul's view on legalism and freedom. Again, Paul clearly states in Galatians 5:2-4 that anyone who is circumcised will not benefit from Christ and he is obliged to obey the whole law which means a separation from Christ. This calls for a brief look at the whole law with special attention to Paul's perspective of the Jewish law.

### **Some scholarly world view of the whole law**

Brookes (2006) defines "law" as

A rule of action established by authority; a statute; the rules of a community or state; jurisprudence; established usage; that which is lawful; the whole body of person connected professionally with the law; litigation; a rule or code in any department of action, such as morality, art, honour... a theoretical principle extracted from practice or observation; a statement or formula expressing the constant order of certain phenomena; the Mosaic code or the books containing it (p. 848).

The definition quoted above shows that

- a) Law is propounded and promulgated by acceptable body of opinion leaders in any human institution
- b) Law is a consensus and indispensable element for any community.

- c) Law is coined from practice or observation that shows persistent attitude of some people.
- d) Books that contain the Mosaic code in the Old Testament.

The four deductions from the definition form part of the secular and theological working tools in this study. In this respect, one can say “law” may show a mindset or a belief system of any particular secular or religious community, association or group of humankind. If this is so, then “law” is a vital element, to put it another way, a precious ornament for championing the wellbeing of any secular or religious institution. Therefore, it is not surprising to see leaders (even individuals) of nations, communities and groups jealously protecting and implementing “law” for maintaining order or encouraging acceptable behavior in secular and religious institutions. It is for this reason that this study briefly looked at an aspect of the whole law in the Hebrew Bible in view of the Ancient Near East code.

The first Ancient Near East code was discovered at Susa in 1902 (Mckenzie, 1966). This code originated in 1700 B.C. and was accredited to king Hammurabi of Babylon (Douglas, 1990). Hammurabi’s code contains a preamble and epilogue and “some of these laws have thrown fresh light on the legal material of the O.T. This is by far the largest corpus of laws we have from the Ancient Near East” (Douglas, 1990, p. 682). The prologue and epilogue of Hammurabi’s laws show that he receives commission, wisdom and authority from the gods to write the laws which suggest that the laws are his own composition (Mckenzie, 1966). There are other laws like the Lipit – Ishter which

goes back to 1900-1850 B.C. and the Akkadian laws to Eshnunna about the same period, the Middle Assyrian laws from the time of Tiglath – Pileser in 1100 B.C, and the Hittite laws which come from the time of Hattusilis III in 1280 B.C. (Douglas, 1990 and McKenzie, 1966). These laws exhibit the same formulation (Mckenzie, 1966) which is termed as “Casuistic” (Alt, 1959). This “Casuistic” formulation shows that “the case is described in a conditional clause, and the decision, penalty, or compromise is stated in the apodosis” (Mckenzie, 1966, p.95). The casuistic formulation starts with “if”: if a man... which Alt (1968) restricts to the covenant code that points back to the time of Moses. Alt’s (1968) apodosis entails positive and negative commands for example ‘you shall... you shall not’ which he regards as Yahwistic and having Israelite origin.

However, Gerstenberger (1965) gives a broader scope to these laws by including ‘Wisdom Literature’, as he sees the laws as vetitives and prohibitive (you shall not). In view of life-setting of the laws, he considers it as an ethos and particularly as clan ethics in which a father of a family gives some commands in line with the customs of his clan. According to Douglas (1990), the Old Testament shows that the vetitive and prohibitives can be given by different persons in authoritative positions such as the Lord (Exodus 20), the king, the tribal leader, the teacher, the father and the like. This portrays a link between the laws of the Ancient Near East and that of the Israelites in the Old Testament. Also, it can be deduced that some of the Israelite casuistic material has its origin from Mesopotamia which is indicative of a common heritage. The Ancient Near East laws, some of which are indicated above, and their link with Israel shows

that the laws were formulated to keep order for the good of the populace. The picture here implies that any secular or religious law is not a misplaced element to cause destruction to the adherents, but to draw them closer for meaningful co-existence. In Judaism, circumcision which relates to the whole law seems to portray a religious belief and practice that draws the people closer to God with regard to the covenant. However, Galatians 5 seems to downplay circumcision and the whole law. In this wise, this study did a quick look at the whole law and Paul's view about it as stated earlier.

According to Mckenzie (1966), the word *Torah* is used to describe the whole law as evident in the pre-exilic texts for example: Jeremiah 8:8 “How can we say ‘We are wise, and the law of the LORD is with us? But, behold, the false pen of scribes has made it into a lie” (RSV) and Hosea 8:12 “Were I to write him my laws by ten thousands, they would be regarded as a strange thing” (RSV). The word is also used to mean the Pentateuch: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy (Mckenzie, 1966). Mckenzie (1966) also posits that “The joy of the Jew in the law is reflected in the Torah...” (p. 499). He goes on that the rabbis made the Torah part of the beings which existed before creation. Douglas (1990) also posits that *Torah* is used for commandments in the vetitive (you shall not do this), imperative (do this) and jussive (you shall do this). He explains that it is a commandment which comes from a person of higher authority to a lower one such as the Lord, the king and the father to worshippers, subordinates and children as indicated earlier.

In this respect, it is not far from right to say that the whole law becomes like an indispensable precious ornament in Judaism. It implies that every stipulation in terms of the whole law must be obeyed by those who would ascribe to the faith. This reflects the definition of the law quoted earlier which shows that it is a rule or an action established by an authority. In the case of the whole law, the authority is vested in Yahweh for the Jews. Here, the understanding is that Yahweh's authority cannot be challenged. The Hebrew Bible or the Old Testament which contains the *Torah* or the whole law shows that the pivot of Israel's identity is to abide by the commandments of God (Horrell, 2006). Meanwhile, in Galatians 5, Paul throws a challenge to the Jewish Christians (described as agitators in verse 12) who did not see anything wrong with the act of circumcision. In his challenge Paul indicates that he who practices circumcision is obliged to obey the whole law. This shows a clear distinction between the Jewish religious belief and practice and that of the Christian faith in terms of circumcision which is tied to the whole law in Judaism. As indicated earlier in this study, circumcision is identified as one of the works of the law which Dunn (1990) describes as one of the "pillars of the covenant" (p. 94). In this wise, there is the need to briefly look at Paul's view on the Jewish law to enhance understanding of what he says in Galatians 5:3 with regards to circumcision and the whole law.

### **Paul's view of the Jewish Law**

An old perception shows that the Hebrew *Torah* gives a wider understanding than the Greek *nomos*; therefore Paul's rendering *torah* as *nomos*

distorts the Jewish concept of *torah* (Schechter, 1961). However, Richardson and Westerhom (1991) posit that in the Second Temple Literature, the *torah* and *nomos* serve as divine commands which have to be followed. Their position supports those of Mckenzie (1966), and Douglas (1990). According to Mckenzie (1966), in the New Testament, the Greek word *nomos* which is *torah* in Hebrew comes from the Greek LXX. He goes on to say that it designates the law as such, for example the Pentateuch, the entire Old Testament, the Decalogue, or a particular law of the Pentateuch. Likewise, Douglas (1990) puts it that in the New Testament there is flexibility in the use of *nomos*. He also makes it clear that it is used in the canonical sense to denote the whole or part of the Old Testament. Dunn (2003) also shares the same view that Paul's use of *nomos* shows his thinking of the *torah*. In this respect, it is convenient for this study to state that *nomos* in Pauline epistles such as Galatians 5 refers to the *torah*, that is the Jewish law in the Hebrew Bible (the Old Testament).

In this wise, the Pauline epistles show two contrasting positions of Paul with regards to the Jewish law. These contrasting positions are clearly indicated in the epistles to the Romans and Galatians (Bultmann, 1952). What it means is that Paul has both positive and negative perspectives of the Jewish law. These two different positions show that

He is convinced on the one hand that God gave the law, so unless God made a mistake, or was unable to bring the plans to fruition, or has simply had a change of mind, then the law must be part of divine purpose. Yet on the other hand Paul is convinced that God has now acted

in Christ for the salvation of all who believe and that salvation comes through Christ and not through the law (Horrell, 2006, p.91).

Horrell's (2006) idea relates two things and these are that Paul:

- a) Agrees that the Jewish law was given by God for divine purpose. This means that God who takes the initiative to propound the law is superior to the Jews who must obey the law from the highest authority. It also means that there is no way the law can be amended by the Jews because of its divine nature.
- b) Accepts the point that for Christ's sake God allows salvation through Christ but not through the law. This in God's family, the law is not needed for salvation because of Christ.

As indicated earlier in the study, Paul's different views about the Jewish law can be found in Romans and Galatians:

Negative views

- a) Galatians 5:3-4 "Now, I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obliged to obey the whole law. 4 You are separate from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace" (my translation).
- b) Romans 3:20 "For no human being will be justified in his sight by works of the law, since through the law comes knowledge of sin" (RSV).
- c) Galatians 3:13 "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law..." (RSV).



#### Positive views

- a) Galatians 5:13-14 “Indeed, my brothers and sisters, you were called to freedom; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but serve one another through love. 14 For the whole law are fulfilled in a word, “You shall love your neighbour as yourself” (my translation)
- b) Romans 7:12 “So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good” (RSV).
- c) Romans: 13:8 “Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbour has fulfilled the law” (RSV)

The verses just quoted above distinctly portray Paul’s dual positions with regards to the Jewish law. The understanding here is that Paul is for the law on the one hand and not comfortable about it on the other. Clearly, Paul’s different statements as quoted above in terms of the Jewish law cannot be harmonized as a unified body (Raisanen, 1983). The reason being that in Judaism, Paul got his salvation through the obedience of the law however, his conversion delivered him from the legalistic Jewish religion with its obedience to the law. The works of the law such as circumcision as stated in Galatians 5:3-4 cannot enable one to gain salvation (Betz, 1988).

According to Bultmann (1952)

The way of works of the law and the way of grace and faith are mutually exclusive opposites... Because man’s effort to achieve his salvation by keeping the law only leads him into sin, indeed this effort itself in the end

is already sin... Thus, the law brings to light that man is sinful, whether it be that his sinful desire leads him to transgression of the law or that that desire itself in zeal for keeping the law (pp. 264-265).

Likewise, Kasemann (1969) puts it that

In fact, religion always provides man with his most thorough-going possibility of confusing an illusion with God. Paul sees this possibility realized in the devout Jew: in as much as the announcement of God's will in the law is here misunderstood as a summons to human achievement and therefore as means to a righteousness of one's own. But that is for him the root sin, because now an image is set in the place of God... in and with Israel...the man who validates rights and demands over against God on the basis of God's past dealing with him and to this extent is serving not God but an illusion (pp. 184, 186).

A close look at Bultmann (1952) and Kasemann (1969) in terms of their positions on the Jewish law as quoted above show support for Paul's attitude towards the Jewish law as evident in the verses quoted from Romans and Galatians earlier in this study. Their views show that a move to gain salvation by obeying the Jewish law leads one into sin on the one hand. On the other, the will of God is misunderstood in such a way that an attempt to achieve the demands of the law to attain righteousness is "root sin". This attempt is regarded as an "image" which is seen as an "illusion" that is set in place of God by those who try to achieve their righteousness through the obedience of the law. This negative

picture given to the law suggests that any ritual, practice or ceremony like circumcision as captured in Galatians 5:2 is valueless. Sander's (1983) view about Paul's positive and negative statements of the law unearth that when it comes to belonging to God, the works of the law is not needed except faith in Christ. He also points out that the acceptable conduct for people of God should be love for one's neighbour as stated in Galatians 5:14 which is quoted earlier.

However, Westerholm (1988, 2004) posits that what Paul means by the law is the Mosaic commandment which is a legal code clearly indicated in the Hebrew Bible is that is a means of life for anyone who accepts it, and for that matter, it is in place for one to see it as essential for salvation. He turns round to support Paul that salvation comes only by God's act of undeserved grace indicating that justification is by grace through faith alone but not by works of the law.

In view of the negative and positive statements quoted earlier from Paul in Romans and Galatians and the scholarly concerns in terms of Paul's perception of the Jewish law, one may not be wrong to suggest that Paul sets himself on horns of dilemma. This dilemma cannot be unified (Raisanen, 1983) due to Paul's conversion from Judaism to the Christian faith. However, Paul's view about the Jewish law as expressed in Galatians 5:2-4:

2 Listen! I, Paul, say to you that if you get circumcised, Christ will be of no benefit to you. 3 Now, I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obliged to obey the whole law. 4 You are

separated from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace (my translation),

shows that he seems to negate the law in favour of freedom for which Christ is said to, hence offered his believers as he says in verse 1, “For freedom Christ has set us free; therefore stand firm and do not subject again to a yoke of slavery” (my translation). Paul goes on in verses 13 -14 that

13 Indeed, my brothers and sisters, you were called to freedom; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but serve one another through love. 14 For the whole law is fulfilled in a word, “You shall love your neighbour as yourself” (my translation)

This suggests that although he seems to put the law on a low side in verses 1-4, he quickly repeats “freedom” in verse 1 again in verse 13 saying “freedom” should be expressed in loving one another (Longenecker, 1990) which he thinks fulfils the whole law as indicated in verse 14. Verses 13-14 appear to nullify the low side of the law which tries to project Christ’s freedom above the law in verses 1-4. The nullity suggests that the law can be made good in terms of obedience. This is why this study deems it fit to read Galatians 5. The reason is to ascertain Paul’s position on the law which is tied with circumcision in view of Christ’s freedom and implications for Christians in the Anlo Traditional Area. This is because Anlo Christians regard the ban on drumming as a traditional law with its religious undertone in the period of the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival. They also see the ban on drumming as a traditional religious belief and practice which is a yoke of oppression and as an infringement on their Christian belief and practice

as indicated earlier. Here, the seemingly Anglo Christians' religious belief and practice with regard to Christ has nothing to do with that of the traditional ban on drumming during the 'Hogbetsotso' festival. This reflects what Paul says in Galatians 5:4 "You are separated from Christ, you who could be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace" (my translation). This verse seems to draw a sharp demarcation between two classes of people: (a) those who deal with the belief and practice systems of Christ (b) those who accept the belief and practice systems of the Judaic law. The verse also suggests two forms of religion: (a) Christ's centered religion in terms of grace (b) religion that points to the law with regard to justification. This brings to focus Christ and the law.

In this respect, Paul perceives the law as the revealed will of God which he finds it difficult to reject. However, he thinks that life and holiness came through Christ and not from the law (Mckenzie, 1966). According to Smyth (1980), the Mosaic Law was not new to Paul however, "everywhere Paul went among the Jews of the Diaspora, the problem confronted him: what was the relationship of Christ to the old law?" (p. 82). He goes ahead and indicates that Paul's view in light of Christ and the law is stated in Galatians 5:4-6 which he quotes as

If you do look to the law to make you justified, then you have separated yourselves from Christ... in Christ Jesus whether you are circumcised or not makes no difference – what matters is faith that makes it power felt through love (p. 82).

He explains that although the Mosaic Law is vital in Christ's presence, Christ is the only way to salvation. He also indicates that the law "has now become irrelevant and, if taken as God's final word, actually destructive of the new life in Christ" (p. 82).

A look at the views of Mckenzie (1966) and Smyth (1980) in light of Paul's perception of Christ and the law shows one stand. This stand, on one hand, shows that Paul sees the law as the will of God which is vital and, on the other, resolves that life, holiness and salvation come through Christ alone and not the law. This suggests a distinction between two religions: (a) of Christ (b) of justification by the law as indicated earlier. In Galatians 5:13-14, Paul gives directive to those who belong to the religion of Christ. The directive employs them to use their freedom as an opportunity to serve one another through love which fulfils the whole law. This is the second time the word "freedom" is used in the selected text for this study (Galatians 5). Here, as Westerholm (1988, 2004) shows inconsistency about Paul's views with regard to the law, Mckenzie (1966) and Smyth (1980) are firm on their positions in terms of Paul's view about the law. As noted earlier, Westerholm (1988, 2004) says at one point that it is a means of life and essential for salvation and at another point, he indicates that salvation comes only by God's act of undeserved grace such that justification is by grace through faith alone but not by the works of the law. However, Mckenzie (1966) and Symth (1980) firmly state that Paul's view about the law shows life and holiness comes through Christ alone in terms of salvation.

In this regard, the reading of the text became necessary and it looked at how the use of the “freedom” set those who belong to the religion of Christ free from the demands of the other religions which deal with justification by the law as mentioned earlier. The implication of the reading was directed to the Christians in the Anlo Traditional Area who view the traditional ban on drumming in the period of the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival as an Anlo traditional religious law and an oppressive yoke that takes away their freedom in Christian belief and practice. In this wise, this study quickly looks at some secular and Christian world views of freedom which served as a background knowledge for the researcher before he conducted interviews with the traditional rulers and the Christian leadership in the selected traditional area. What it means is that on the one hand, the Anlo traditional rulers always hold the view that they have freedom to practice their belief and on the other hand the Christians usually perceive the traditional belief and practice with regard to the ban during the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival as religious which contravene their Christian belief and practice as noted earlier. Therefore, they think they have the freedom to disobey it for the sake of the Christian faith.

### **Secular and Christian world views of freedom**

This section examines some scholarly works on secular and Christian views on “freedom” which is one of the focal points of this study. Thus, a discussion of secular and christian world views of “freedom” is vital for this study as indicated earlier.

### **Some secular views on “freedom”**

Brookes (2006) defines “freedom” as “liberty, frankness, outspoken, unhampered boldness” (p. 591). According to Fagothey (1976), “Freedom in its broadest sense means absence of bonds, ties or restraints” (p. 137). The two meanings of “freedom” suggest a kind of situation in which a state, a group of people or an individual is not under a confinement or under any physical restraint.

Hitz (2005) makes it clear that when the ancient Greeks discovered the concept of political freedom, the perception of philosophers towards it was indifferent and they wondered whether it might not have been better left in oblivion. He goes on to say that Plato mocked the ideal of freedom because it disregards the good for established custom and law. He also pinpointed that on the one hand, Hobbes approves of the Greek idea of unrestricted freedom but on the other disapproves how the West applies it to the individuals. Hitz (2005) cites Raaflaub who argues that it was Persia’s invasion of mainland Greece in the early fifth century B.C. which led to the concept of freedom in the Greek political life. This invasion threatens foreign domination which brings about the need for independence and self determination of Greek city-states. In this context, the ideal of freedom is for the whole city-states not of individuals. However, the aftermath of the Persian wars paves the way for the Athenian empire such that Athenian democracy gives options for individuals (Raaflaub, 1994). In this light, those in the lower social class faced fewer restrictions in terms of speech and conduct to the extent that, in Athens, slaves live freely for



which Plato complains in *Republic VIII* that even the animals in a democracy do not seem to know their proper station (Hitz, 2005). Meanwhile, Hitz (2005) questions the ideal of individual freedom in terms of its social side effect of collective freedom and its role in Athenian justification of democracy as indicated by Raaflaub (1994).

Hitz (2005) also criticizes Raaflaub's (1994) position on the word "parrhesia" which means freedom of speech. Raaflaub's (1994) view of "parrhesia" is about unrestricted right of free expression of personal opinion in order to achieve full self-realisation, which shows democratic freedom. Although, Hitz (2005) agrees with Raaflaub's (1994) understanding of the word "parrhesia", he is not sure if the word constitutes an unrestricted right to freely expressing one's opinion. He thinks the freedom connected to the word is narrower than the freedom that enables one to freely say whatever he or she wants. In this regard, he indicates that the word narrowly means a freedom to speak the truth without reprisal or a privilege to give good advice to one's city. However, he concludes that "I do not know that separately or together they can amount to an unrestricted right to express one's opinion" (Hitz, 2005, p.599). This conclusion shows Hitz's (2005) uncertainty about Raaflaub's (1994) argument with regard to the ideal of individual freedom indicated earlier. This uncertainty seems to give credence to Raaflaub's (1994) view on individual freedom in relation to the right of expression of personal opinion that leads to full self-realisation in what he terms democratic freedom. In view of the definition of the word "freedom", Raaflaub (1994) and Hitz's (2005) views on the discovery of freedom in ancient Greece

unveil that the idea of freedom is conceived when foreign domination threatens a state, a group of people or an individual. In this wise, this study considers it prudent by conducting an interview with some of the custodians of the Añlɔland: his royal majesty the ‘Awoamefia’ of Añlɔ and the ‘Nyigbla’ priest at Añlɔga, ascertaining their views and how they feel about some Christians who freely disobey the ban on drumming and general noise making. Raaflaub (1994) and Hitz’s (2005) positions on the discovery of freedom in ancient Greece noted earlier supports one of the philosophical views of existentialism.

Existentialism is “a term covering a number of related philosophical doctrines... and holding that people, as moral free agents, must create values for themselves through action and must accept the ultimate responsibility for those actions...” (Brookes, 2006, p. 527). One of these philosophical views shows that it “constitutes an effort to rehabilitate man in his own eyes, to restore him to himself” (Jeanson, 1948, p. 27), which suggests personal liberty in light of “absence of bonds, ties or restraints” (Fagothey, 1976, p.137). This agrees with what Sartre, cited by Frechtman (1947) says that man is freedom. The understanding is that the nature of an individual is not a stagnant or a stationary object like a rock but full of potentiality to decide what is good for him or her. This portrays that the existence of man takes precedence over essence, suggesting one exists as a person before it can be said of him or her that he or she is such a kind of person (Killinger, 1961). Here, the potentiality of one to decide or to make a choice as a sign of his existence is indicative of freedom which spells out personal achievement of full self-realisation. This freedom shows that

one is to exist as a subject not as an object. However, some people regard this freedom as dreadful (Greene, 1948) in terms of the ultimate suffering which is associated with it. Those who regard the existentialist freedom with its responsibility as being dreadful, prefer slavery without suffering in order to be objects devoid of the consequences of self-determinism because, for them “Freedom dies at that point where man tries to bring his life into conformity with the visible instead of the invisible” (Roberts, 1959, p. 106).

The existentialists’ idea of existence that precedes essence which paves the way for one to choose as he or she ought to portrays them as real opponents of law (Fagothey, 1976). Implicitly, their oppositions

“Make no attack on governments or civil laws and strongly insist on man’s responsibility for the society in which he lives. But they assert freedom in such a way as to remove all basis on which any law could rest” (Fagothey, 1976, p.139).

Fagothey (1976) again makes a point that existentialism is not a school of thought but an attitude, he goes ahead to mention Soren Kierkegaard and Jean-Paul Satre as representatives of the theistic and atheistic forms of existentialism respectively. The picture here shows two classes of existentialists: those who believe in God and those who do not. However, they all have one basic attitude. This basic attitude accepts “freedom” and yet resists anything that promotes law.

Fagothey (1976) argues that the law is needed to eliminate vices and promote liberty or freedom. He makes it clear that this can be achieved when one is bound by different types of bonds and further claims that bonds that are

imposed by law are of a special nature. He rolls out three forms of freedom with their corresponding bonds:

1. The bond of external physical necessity like bar, chains or prison wall hinder bodily actions only and cannot negatively affect the inner act of the will of the person. This “act of the will” supports Sartre’s (atheist) work, “The Wall” cited by Kaufmann (1956) about a war prisoner who awaits his death and refuses to give information about the rebel leader. The information about the rebel leader was needed for the release of the war prisoner but his will to resist shows the triumphant act of his personal freedom which is an inner citadel which the captors cannot break (Killinger, 1961). This “act of the will” portrays freedom from such external force which is termed as freedom of spontaneity that corresponds to the bond of external physical necessity.
2. The inner determination of a being’s own nature imposes a bond on it which is referred to as internal physical necessity. This means an individual who lacks free will is subject to his or her own natural tendencies and instincts and acts according to what his or her nature prescribes. Freedom from this bond is termed as freedom of choice or free will which is the sole responsibility of the individual rational being.
3. Although moral bonds are moral laws as opposed to physical laws, they also impose “moral necessity” which is oughtness, obligation or

duty. Freedom from the oughtness, obligation or duty is called freedom of independence.

Fagothey (1976) also states that freedom of independence differs from the other two indicated in (1) and (2) above, because it is a perfection from external force and from the determinism of action in one's nature. However, he makes it clear that freedom of independence with regard to human laws is limited to political jurisdictions. This means that one is free from the laws of other political jurisdictions but the same person cannot have complete freedom of independence from the moral law which is conceived as rooted in universal nature (Fagothey, 1976). He quickly adds that the law makes people good because it shows them the necessary means to their last end. He also concludes that true freedom is to do what one ought and it is law that shows one where the ought lies.

Fagothey's (1976) position shows that freedom from bonds is possible but the freedom should be guided by law. His position, in one way, seems to support Plato's view as cited by Hitz (2005) that freedom downplays the value of established custom and law as indicated earlier. This contrasts with the basic attitude of existentialism which embraces freedom but negates anything that promotes law (Fagothey 1976) because one of the philosophical doctrines of existentialism as stated earlier indicates personal effort to achieve freedom (Jeanson, 1948). This paves the way for an individual to freely act in order to attain his or her freedom. This attitude of existentialism is sharply opposed on the grounds that

The mere fact that an act is done freely does not necessarily make it morally good. Freedom is one of the requirements of a morally good act, but it should also be the kind of act one ought freely to perform (Fagothey, 1976. p.142).

The quotation shows an ethicist's position such that a condition is attached to any free act that leads to freedom. The condition is explicit on good morality of an act which suggests an individual, group/organization or a state that seeks freedom should exhibit morally good act(s) to achieve it. In this regard, the secular world view of freedom which is discussed so far shows:

1. The idea of freedom is conceived when one senses a destructive element to his his or her situation.
2. Democratic freedom points to "parrhesia" which means unrestricted right of free expression of one's opinion that leads to full self-realisation
3. Existentialists declare freedom in a way to reject all basis on which any law could stand.
4. Ethically, law curtails freedom by imposing on it moral necessity which is oughtness, obligation or duty that man cannot ignore since he lives in a society.

The four points just stated above show political, philosophical and ethical aspects of secular world views of freedom which prepares the ground for the researcher to briefly look at the Christian view of freedom.

### **Some Christian views of freedom**

It is not out of place to cite the Bible when dealing with the Christian view of freedom because the Bible is the basic material for Christian theology. In Christian theology, the word “freedom” means the voluntary surrender of one’s autonomy to accept and follow the teachings of Jesus Christ (Foner, 1994). This portrays a personal conscious step to abide by the teachings of Jesus Christ in order to gain freedom. This supports McLoughlin’s (1968) claim that freedom means obedience to moral law which signifies the observance of the divine will. His position shows that slavery to sin is more oppressive than civil slavery. His Christian view of freedom shows that it is better for one to be free from slavery of sin than remain a civil slave. This means he sees nothing wrong about a Christian being a civil slave. Also, there is a clear indication of an individual effort to be free from sin. McLoughlin’s (1968) position on sin with regard to freedom seems to affirm Kierkegaard’s Christian existentialism, cited by Dru (1958), concerning individual consciousness that “the greatest good which can be done to any being, greater than any end to which it can be created, is to make it free” (p.112). Here, Kierkegaard’s Christian view suggests a call for individual freedom. He makes it clear that for one to be saved he or she needs to see himself or herself as a sinner alone before God in order to gain freedom. He also argues that since one seeks for freedom and integrity, it is rational to assert it from a divine being. This individualistic freedom from sin with regard to one’s integrity suggests a personal way of living a good life which reflects Mill’s (1859) view that “the only freedom which deserves the name is that of pursuing our own good

in our own way so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs or impede their efforts to obtain it” (p.16). This implies that one’s freedom can only be ideal if it does not hinder another person who strives to attain it. In this wise, this study considers it necessary by conducting separate interviews for the key traditional rulers (Awoamefia and Nyigbla priest) as well as some executives of the local council of churches at Anloḡa as a way of identifying their stance in pertaining to the view that as one exhibits freedom he or she should not deprive others of theirs (Mill, 1859).

McLoughlin’s (1968) view again hints that it is the responsibility of an individual to seek freedom from the slavery of sin. This freedom comes from a divine being or God. This idea of freedom from slavery of sin agrees with the eighteenth-century perfectionist creed of evangelical religion which insists that personal freedom takes precedence over other forms of freedom like the right of citizens to accumulate and hold property or the enjoyment of self-government by political communities (Foner, 1994). It can be said that the eighteenth-century evangelical creed views freedom as devoid of fleshy personal satisfaction. It suggests a type of freedom which should not be used to fulfill the desires of worldly things for personal enjoyment which political communities aspire to achieve. This echoes what Paul says in Galatians 5:13 “Indeed, my brothers and sisters, you were called to freedom; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but serve one another through love” (my translation).

In New Testament studies, one can say Paul talks about freedom in various ways as he specifically says, “For freedom Christ has set us free;



therefore stand firm and do not subject again to a yoke of slavery” (Galatians 5:1, my translation). This indicates a call for those in Christ not to submit themselves to slavery which is implicit in what he says in verses 3 and 4 about circumcision that is tied with the Jewish law. He quickly adds that the freedom gained in Christ should not be used for the flesh in verse 13 as quoted earlier. His position in verse 13 shows that he knows that the freedom can be used as a cloak for fleshy, selfish and self-seeking ends as clearly stated in verses 19, 20, and 21: “19 so the works of the flesh are visible... 20 hatred, quarreling, jealousy, anger, selfish ambitions,... 21 envy, drunkenness, carousing...” (my translation). Therefore, with reference to verse 13, the freedom should be expressed in the spirit of love as he indicates in verses 22 and 23 as involving joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

It can be said that Paul’s view of Christian freedom in the context of Galatians suggests a clear separation or movement from one religious belief and practice (Judaism) to another religious belief and practice (Christianity). This implies that those who ascribe to the Christian faith should put aside or avoid the practices of other religious beliefs that claim God as their divine being.

A look at the Christian view of freedom as noted above indicates:

1. Personal decision to lay down one’s autonomy for the sake of the teachings of Jesus Christ is freedom.
2. Freedom is obeying moral law which portrays observation of the divine will

3. It is better to be free from sin and remain a civil slave
4. Personal freedom takes precedence over other types of freedom which allows amassment of property or enjoyment of self-government by political communities.
5. Freedom is serving one another through love but not satisfying fleshly and self-seeking desires.

The five points relate to each other and they depict freedom as something which takes place when one consciously eschews self and embraces the ways of Jesus Christ. In so doing, this is obedience to moral law that enables one to be free from sin, guiding against accumulation of property and promoting the spirit of serving one another through love that negates fleshly desires.

Although the five points on Christian view of freedom relate to each other, there is something spectacular about them. The spectacular nature of the points is two fold:

1. Freedom from slavery from sin outweighs freedom from civil slavery. In this wise, the focus is on doing away with sin which enhances obedience to moral law with regards to the divine will, without caring about freedom from civil slavery. This paints a picture of imbalance between the “divine” and the “civil” such that freedom from the slavery to sin for the sake of the divine seems to be rated high at the expense of civil slavery. This implies that a Christian who is sure of his or her freedom

from slavery to sin should feel comfortable in his or her state of civil slavery.

2. Freedom does not clamour for wealth and satisfaction from political governance of communities. Political governance seeks to ensure the safety of communities which eventually affects individuals positively with regard to freedom. Implicitly, the political freedom is of less importance to the personal freedom that forsakes self and seeks biblical teachings of Christ. Here, a premium is placed on the teachings of Jesus Christ that gives freedom than that of political governance.

A look at the secular and Christian views of freedom brought to light in this study reveals some similarities and some dissimilarities.

### **Similarity**

The secular and Christian world views of freedom agree to good morality as one exhibits freedom. Secularly, an individual, a group or a state is free to act freely to achieve freedom on the altar of good moral. This is not different from the Christian view which points to obeying moral law as a sign of observing the divine will that spells out freedom. Both views uphold good moral as a vital ingredient that produces individual, a group or a state freedom. This suggests that any freedom which lacks good moral cannot be recognized as freedom in the Christian and secular sense of freedom. The freedom that is produced by good moral is guided by law as indicated earlier in the secular view of freedom. The implication is that freedom that lacks good moral is not driven by law. This suggests that law acts as a catalyst in producing the freedom that both views

cherish. This is why it is necessary to read the chosen text which seems to uphold freedom in Christ but not comfortable about circumcision that is tied to the whole law and implications for the Christians in the targeted traditional area.

### **Dissimilarity**

The contrast between the two views is based on what leads one to attain freedom. In the case of the secular view, foreign domination or colonial rule is one of the things that leads to freedom of a state. This is what translates into democratic freedom of unrestricted right of free expression of an individual's opinion within a state or community. This creates room for one to enjoy the benefits of self-government.

However, the Christian view points to slavery to sin which calls for personal freedom. This personal freedom overshadows enjoying benefits of self-government and accumulation of property. This freedom restricts an individual from satisfying fleshly desires, but encourages following the teachings of Jesus Christ while also serving each other through love. This is one of the reasons, this study is on course by reading the selected text (Galatians 5 which talks about "freedom") with the targeted Christian community and appropriate it in view of the situation in which they find themselves with regard to the ban on drumming and general noise making.

Unlike the secular view, the five points that indicate the Christian view of freedom stated earlier do not conflict with each other. This means there is agreement between the five points which can be woven together into a comprehensive whole. But the four points that depict the secular position on

freedom as indicated earlier do not agree, hence, they cannot be put together to portray a systematic view of freedom. For example the secular view of freedom which agrees that it is law that imposes moral necessity which signifies obligation or duty for humankind in a society conflicts with another secular view of freedom that removes all basis on which any law could stand. The similarity and dissimilarity of the secular and Christian views of freedom have given the researcher a fair knowledge about freedom before reading Galatians 5:1-26. Having indicated secular and Christian views of freedom and stated their similarity and dissimilarity, one can conveniently allude to the fact that the concept of freedom could mean different things to different people and it could not be ruled out in our modern world. The exercise of freedom may serve as a relief to an individual or a group of people who are under any kind of bondage. It can also serve as a threat to any individual, a group of people, a community or a state who have a kind of autonomy over a particular people.

In this wise, it is proper to assess the Anlo cultural perception of freedom in terms of religious beliefs and practice by paying a special attention to the ban on drumming in the period of the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival in this study.

### **African biblical interpretation**

In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century the Christian missionaries to Africa translated the Bible into African languages and taught Africans how to read it (Ukpong, 1996). The missionaries taught the Africans how to read the Bible “with their own eyes”, that is from the perspective of the Western culture, world view and life

experience, and then to appropriate its message to the African context (Ukpong, 1996). According to Ukpong (1996), since African biblical scholars have been trained in the tradition of Western biblical scholarship, they read the Bible through an interpretive grid developed in the Western culture and applied it to their own contexts. He laments that this has created a gap between scholarly reading of the Bible and the needs of the ordinary African Christians.

As a result, in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, African contextual hermeneutic approach to the biblical interpretation came up (Onwu, 1984). This time, the Western theology among others presented a challenge to break from the white man's Christianity (Mofokeng, 1998) paving the way for a theology that will reflect African content and expression. In effect, African theologians attended a conference in 1966 at Ibadan in Nigeria (Onwu, 1984) to decide on how to create African Christianity. It can be said that in creating African Christianity, one cannot brush aside biblical interpretation in terms of African content and expression. This is because African Christianity cannot be complete without making biblical interpretation meaningful in the African context.

In this wise, Ukpong's (1996) view just indicated above gives credence to West (1993) who says

Those who have heard the cry of the people for God to speak to them in their struggles and suffering have begun to develop a new way of reading the Bible. We call this Contextual Bible Study because we are trying to understand what the Bible is saying to South Africa context today. (p. 7).

West (1993) explains that the Contextual Bible Study does not mean they worship the Bible, but it is about reading and studying the Bible in both the church and community so that they can hear God speaking to them in the South African context. This means that West (1993) pays particular attention to the South African context during the apartheid era. In order to close the gap between the Western biblical scholarship and African Christians, Ukpong (1996) developed “inculturation biblical hermeneutic” which is a form of biblical interpretation that seeks to make the African and any socio-cultural context the subject of interpretation. Ukpong (1996) makes us aware that there are five components that make the “inculturation biblical hermeneutic” complete:

- 1) Interpreter
- 2) Context
- 3) Text
- 4) Conceptual framework
- 5) Methodology

The first component, “interpreter”, means an “interpreter” who is a trained reader in a certain context makes meaning of a text using a specific conceptual framework and its methodology (Ukpong, 1996). One significant thing about the five components is that the interpreter must be a trained reader or biblical scholar who is part and parcel of the Christian community who is capable of using scientific tool (methodology) to read any selected text. One difficulty or problem about Ukpong’s (1996) idea with regard to his first component (interpreter) is that it takes only a trained reader to interpret biblical

text. This means untrained African readers such as ordinary readers cannot interpret biblical text.

However, West (1993), proposed four commitments for the trained reader to help the ordinary reader in reading the biblical text. The commitments are:

1. A commitment to read the Bible from the perspective of the South African Context of the poor and oppressed.
2. A commitment to read the Bible in community with others from different contexts.
3. A commitment to read the Bible critically.
4. A commitment to individual and social transformation.

Looking at the four commitments, West's (1993) focus is on reading any selected biblical text with the poor and oppressed in the South Africa context. He refers to the poor and oppressed as ordinary people. Another meaning given to "ordinary readers" is those who are not trained (untrained or unscholarly readers) to read the Bible. This means that it is the sole responsibility of a trained reader to read the text with the ordinary people (untrained readers) to arrive at a meaning.

Although, both Ukpong (1996) and West (1993) indicated critical reading in view of African context by a trained reader or biblical scholar, there is a difference. The difference is that whilst Ukpong (1996) was silent on the "interpreter" (trained reader) reading a text with the poor and oppressed, West (1993) was emphatic on the "interpreter" reading the text with the ordinary



readers. Despite the fact that West's (1993) interpretive model focused on South African and the apartheid era (that era being over) his model can be applied today in any part of Africa and across the globe. This is because joint reading by scholarly and ordinary readers would help African Christians make meaning out of biblical texts they read with regard to their contexts. Draper (2001) supports (West, 1993) by saying "... the interpretation of the Bible and the theology we formulate are fundamentally determined by our social, economic and political context as readers" (p. 153). Draper (2001) also paints a picture of depending on the "context" of current readers in view of reading a text for meaning.

Patte and Grenholm (2000) also developed an biblical interpretive model which they call "scriptural criticism". They postulate the nature of the Bible as a "religious text" which matters for believers such that their interpretation of biblical text determines their behaviour in society. Although Draper (2001) agrees with Patte and Grenholm (2000) on the one hand, he disagrees with them on the other hand. The reason is that the position of Patte and Grenholm (2000) shows that the only acceptable reading of a religious text is reading it from inside the religious tradition (emic) as against reading it from outside the religious tradition (etic). In addition, Draper (2001) prefers the name "sacred text" to "religious text" Patte and Grenholm (2000). Again, Draper (2001) disagrees with how Patte and Grenholm (2000) would like to flatten the different ways in which the "trained reader" and "ordinary reader" approach a text. What it means is that unlike Patte and Grenholm, (2000), Draper (2001) insists that the way "the trained reader" would approach a text is not the same as the "ordinary reader". In

this wise, Draper (2001) indicates that the text must be read on its own term as located in a different context which he calls “distantiation” for which the reader puts his context aside for the text to speak on its own. Secondly, the reader, knowing his or her situation or background, relates to the communication offered by the text by analyzing his or her situation – this stage is what Draper (2001) calls “contextualization”. Thirdly, the reader decides on the nature of communication that takes place and its implications for his or her context. This calls for the reader to accept the meaning and implications for his or her context and the community. This stage Draper (2001) terms “appropriation”. These three stages are what Draper (2001) coined as “A Tri-Polar Exegetical Model”.

A look at the biblical interpretive models noted, one would agree that there is a need for a critical or scholarly reading of a text as well as the context of the reader. However, some of the models are limited to the text and the context of the trained reader (interpreter) which signify bi-polar model (two poles). For example Ukpong (1996) focuses on the “interpreter” using a critical tool to interpret a text with special regard to his or her context. Thus, for Ukpong (1996), it is the text and the context of the “interpreter” that matter most. Unlike Ukpong (1996), West (1993) raised the importance of reading the text with “ordinary readers” leading to individual and social transformation. This means that it takes both the trained reader and ordinary reader(s) to arrive at interpretation of any biblical text.

Draper (2001) following West (1993) proposes “A Tri-Polar Model” for biblical interpretation for which “appropriation” is a vital element. Unlike the bi-

polar (two poles), the Tri-polar model signifies three poles which are the text, the context of the reader or reading community and appropriation. It is against this backdrop that this study employs “A Tri-Polar Exegetical Model” by Draper (2001) and adopts Contextual Bible Study (West, 1993) tool for reading the selected text for this study with the oppressed Christians in the targeted traditional area with regard to the ban on drumming and noise making in general. As indicated earlier in the methodology, Draper’s (2001) Tri – PEM has three poles: distantiation, contextualization and appropriation.

### **Distantiation**

Distantiation is the exegetical stage where any chosen text for a study takes the central position. It is a state in which the reader or a reading community draws meaning out of a text by allowing the text to speak for itself. In this respect a reader who comes from a different context distances himself or herself from the context of the text (Draper, 2001). Here, both the text and the reader come from different backgrounds. In this wise, “exegesis should consider both the context of the text and how it came into being; and the structure of the text, and how it signals meaning and seeks to manipulate the reader” (Draper, 2001, p. 156). This means the reader or a reading community should respect and listen to what the text says in contrast to his or her context.

It is important to note that distantiation also allows diachronic and synchronic considerations of a chosen text. Although distantiation allows both diachronic and synchronic approaches in this study, the synchronic approach was

adopted for the reading of the selected text. This approach is a literary reading which recognizes reading the text itself which this study has employed. The characteristic use of the text as literary is the one that lifts them out of the context of their origin and read widely in any community outside their original context (Ellis, 1974). This shows that a text is characteristically written in a particular language for a specific reason in a community, but after the purpose for which it was written is past in the original community, it can be utilized in another context (present or future society) (Ellis, 1974). Although reading the text itself and in front of the text consider meanings of the text that are derived from the historical, cultural and sociological context of those who produced it (West, 1993), it focuses on “identifying and then using predominant themes, metaphors and symbols as an interpretive key to the New Testament” (West, 1993, p.4). This shows that the distantiation stage recognizes meanings of a text that are not limited to the past but the text can be read for possible meanings for the present and future context. It is against this backdrop that this study pays particular attention to the main theme, metaphors, key words and phrases in reading Galatians 5:1-26 in terms of the flow of thought (ideas), the literary form (parable, a letter, question, information) and how the form relates to the context of the text (Harrington, 1990). In this light, the principles that came out of the reading manipulate the present context which is the context of the targeted area of this study through the second stage of the Tri-PEM called contextualization.

## **Contextualization**

The ideal pillar at this level of the Tri-PEM is a text has no absolute meaning (Draper, 2001). This position comes into a sharp contrast to the view of Hirsch (1967) and Juhl (1980) that only the author's intention provides a criterion for only one interpretation or meaning for a literary text.

Draper's (2001) view supports Margolis (1965), Iser (1974) and Culler (1975) who posit that literary works have different ideas, convey a variety of different attitudes and have various incompatible meanings. Draper (2001) says, "while the author encodes rhetorical signals in the text to control and limit its meaning to suit his purpose, he/she can never achieve final closure" (p.156). What it entails is the context of the first readers of the text is different from the present or future reader or reading community. Therefore, the contextualization aims at analyzing and evaluating the context of the present or future reader or reading community in terms of their location and their background. This helps in determining what the text means for the present or future context. In this wise, contextualization in this study analyzed and evaluated the context of the area of study in light of the chosen text. This has created room for appropriating the text which is the final point of the Tri-PEM.

## **Appropriation**

Appropriation is the last stage of the interpretive process which calls for applying the meaning of the chosen text in view of the context of the reader or the reading community (Draper, 2001). This is the time that the reader or the

reading community is challenged by the principles that are drawn from the reading of the text with regards to their context. It is for this reason that in this work, the Tri-PEM was employed and the Contextual Bible Study which involved selected Christians. The issues that emanated from the reading of the text came into dialogue with the context of the selected Christians in the Aᅇᅇ Traditional Area. This served as a platform for Christians in the Aᅇᅇ Traditional Area to adopt informed practical steps in handling their beliefs and practices in relation to the ban on drumming in the period of the “Hogbetsotso” festival.

### **Organization of the study**

The entire study has been divided into six chapters:

- a) Chapter one covers introduction of the study which involves among other things, the background of the study, statement of the problem, the objectives, significance of the study, methodology and literature review.
- b) Chapter two deals with the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival of the people of Aᅇᅇ and their religious beliefs and practices.
- c) Chapter three presents issues on Christianity in Aᅇᅇ and the views of Christians on the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival.
- d) Chapter four surveys the content of Paul’s letter to the Galatians and distantiation of the selected text (Galatians 5).
- e) Chapter five focuses on contextualisation and appropriation of the chosen text.

- f) Chapter six concludes the work by highlighting the summary of the entire study, findings, general conclusions and recommendations.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE 'HOGBETSOTSO' FESTIVAL OF THE AŊLŊS AND THEIR RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

Generally, there are various views of freedom for which some have been indicated in the previous chapter. In this chapter, a particular attention was devoted to that of the AŊlŊ Traditional Area in relation to their religious beliefs and practices during the ban on drumming and general noise making in the period of the 'Hogbetsotso' festival. In this regard, this section looks at the current location of the people of AŊlŊ, some of their religious beliefs and practices and the religious significance of the 'Hogbetsotso' in exhibiting their freedom gained from King Agɔkɔli at Ŋɔtsie.

#### **Location**

The people of AŊlŊ form part of the Ewes, who migrated to the present South-Eastern part of the Republic of Ghana. Scholars such as Asamoah (1986), Amenumey (1997) and Kumassah (2009) differ on the origin of the Ewes who migrated to Ghana. However, they all agree on the final migration of the Ewes from Ŋɔtsie to their present location. They left Ŋɔtsie because of the unbearable wicked and harsh rule of king Agɔkɔli (Amenumey, 1997). One can say their exodus signifies political and religious freedom from the unbearable situations at Ŋɔtsie under King Agɔkɔli.



Currently, the main settlements of the chiefs and people of the Aᅇlɔ Traditional Area comprise ‘Duta blatɔ vɔade’ or ‘Gbɔta blatɔ vɔade’ meaning the major thirty six (36) settlements (Kumassah, 2009). However, Kumassah (2009) explains that the settlements have increased and are more than the original thirty six (36) settlements. Nukunya (1997) identifies the thirty six (36) settlements which increased with time as the Keta, Akatsi and Ketu districts of the republic of Ghana.

But the Ketu and Akatsi districts have been sub-divided, thus, one can conveniently say that the Aᅇlɔ Traditional Area includes the Keta municipality, Ketu South, Ketu North, Akatsi South and Akatsi North districts of the Republic of Ghana. The increment is due to the re-demarcation of districts, municipalities and metropolies due to population growth in the republic of Ghana.

### **Some religious beliefs of the people of Aᅇlɔ**

The split from King Agɔkɔli of Ɔɔtsie paved the way for political and religious freedom as indicated earlier, with its beliefs presently constituting part of the Aᅇlɔ culture. One vital aspect of the religious life of the people of Aᅇlɔ is their belief in ‘Mawu’ the creator or God, three groups of gods, ‘Yeve’, ‘Vodu’, ancestors and two kinds of magical art (Asamoah, 1986). The sky and earthly gods form the class of the first two groups of the gods. ‘Mawu’, who was the creator of the universe and mankind is the head of the sky god and earthly gods. Therefore, they perceive ‘Mawu’ as “the ultimate end towards whom all worship is directed” (Bansah, 2013, p. 96). Administratively, the people of Aᅇlɔ believe

there are two gods that are nearest to 'Mawu': 'Sogle' and 'Sodza' (Asamoia, 1986). The eldest son of 'Mawu' is 'Sodza', whom he sent in a form of fearful thunder and lightning to punish wrong-doers on earth. However, "Sogle, the female counter-part of Sodza, appear as a pleasant luminous lighting accompanied by gentle rolling thunder. Whenever Sodza roared and threatened to strike, she intervened pleading for clemency" (Asamoia, 1986, p.32).

The earthly gods are found in rivers, rocky slopes, caves, mountains, forests, big trees and the like. They are known as 'Trɔwo' among the Ewes. Their responsibility is to mediate between 'Mawu' or God and the human beings (Asamoia, 1986). Their responsibility allows them to bring punishment on an individual or a community. The punishment normally comes in the form of drought, strange diseases, violent storms and even death. An individual or 'Mawu' (God) can instruct the earthly gods to kill an offender any time.

The third group of gods, are guardian gods and their abode is 'Amedzorfe' which signifies the home of the spirits. Some of the guardian spirits are 'Aklama', 'Kpegbɔnɔla' and 'Dzɔgbe'. Their duties include directing the activities of every individual in accordance to his or her laid down destiny and protecting every individual from any pre-mature death.

The first two groups of gods which are headed by 'Mawu' the creator of the universe and mankind (Asamoia, 1986) among the Ewes, show that the people of Anlo know and relate to 'Mawu'. This implies that God in his own way reveals himself in various forms and shapes to his people (Kumassah, 2009). In

this view, “the wise men of every land and clime were always in revered relationship with the Supreme Being, taking messages from him to his people and sending their petition to him” (Kumassah, 2009, p. 130). Kumassah (2009) again explains that man in his attempt to be near to his creator, made images of the creator and have them close so as to send his/her supplications and prayers through them to the creator. He refers to these created images as “deities” and quickly adds that there are some deities which are found but not created. He also indicates both the created and found deities are handed over from one generation to another. Some of these deities in the Aɲlɔ Traditional Area are ‘Kli’, ‘Gbotanya’ and ‘Hafu’.

In this regard, one can say the gods that are headed by ‘Mawu’ and the deities in the Aɲlɔ Traditional Area signify the source of their religious beliefs and practice. ‘Kli’, ‘Gbotanya’ and ‘Hafu’ are important deities in the Aɲlɔ Traditional Area. These three deities were brought from Ɗɔtsie by their owner Togbi Kli a great spiritualist and a nephew of Togbi Wenya. It is important to note that during the final migration of the people of Aɲlɔ from Ɗɔtsie to their present location, it was one of the Togbi Wenya’s sons by name Agbana who led the advanced team while the rear group was led by Togbi Wenya himself (Kumassah, 2009). The old age of Togbi Wenya made the experienced elders: Sri, Akli, Dodi, Fuga, Atɔgolo, Adladza, Adedzenyaki, Atsu, Tsyo, Tse, Gbedze, Doe Kpono, Doe Setsi, Gble Akorli, Ahafia and Tsali to assist him as he was carried in a hammock by two powerful hunters: Atsu Etso and Tse Gbedze

of the Tovia clan. This shows that Togbi Wenya and his nephew Kli who owned the three vital deities, were special personalities in the history of the people of Aᅇlɔ.

The three deities played and are still playing special roles in Aᅇlɔland. The Kli deity, which bears the name of its owner Togbi Kli, was noted for its capability of determining a habitable place for settlement. Therefore it was used “as a pathfinder and performed the functions of the modern compass in navigation during their migration from Ɔɔtsie to Aᅇlɔ” (Kumassah, 2009, pp. 130-131). The ‘Gbɔtanya’ deity was used as a guard to ward off spiritual and physical enemies from the Aᅇlɔ Traditional Area. ‘Gbɔtanya’ is also consulted on important state issues such as the burial and installation of the Awoamefia the King of the traditional area. Again, it is consulted before the celebration of the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival in order to ensure success and smooth performance of the activities during the festival. In times of adversities such as pestilence, drought, wars, famine and the like, ‘Gbɔtanya’ again is consulted and appeased for solution, which reverses the situation to normal. Today, ‘Hafu’ which is the third deity is placed at Anyako in the custody of the head of the ‘Klevi’ clan. Apart from these three important deities other gods or deities were discovered at Atiteti and this made Atiteti an important traditional town in the area. The deities found at Atiteti are ‘Gbli’, ‘Korvi’, ‘Nuyanu’, ‘Lagbenutsu’ (which were erected at Anyanui), ‘Wudu’ (was erected at Atiteti) and ‘Tunu’ (Kumassah, 2009). It can be said the religious belief system of the people of Aᅇlɔ serves as premise for

their exercise of freedom in worshipping ‘Mawu’ and exhibition of their religious beliefs.

In this wise, the exodus of the people of Aɲlɔ from Ɔɔtsie under the harsh conditions of King Agɔkɔli to their present location portrays their independence in terms of freedom as noted earlier. This gives them freedom to install their own king and practice their religious beliefs, which are based on ‘Mawu’ the creator, the gods, the deities and the ancestors without hindrance from anybody. This shows their strong belief in ‘Mawu’ the creator, the deities and the gods.

The belief in ancestors signifies life after death and it is one of the vital aspects of the religious life of the people of Aɲlɔ. Although they cannot see their ancestors physically, they believe that they are always in close contact with their spirits. The functions of the ancestral spirits comprise protection, punishment for those who misconduct themselves and they are consulted for guidance in the times of hardships. They protect against accidents, evil spirits and calamities. Traditionally, some of the religious practices of the people of Aɲlɔ are exhibited during the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival.

### **The ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival and its religious significance**

The ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival, as we have it today, was instituted by the fifteenth (15<sup>th</sup>) Awoamefia (King) called Togbi Adladza II of the Aɲlɔ Traditional Area who reigned from 1957 to 1997. According to Kumassah (2009), the name ‘Hogbetsotso’ is coined from three significant words: i) “Ho” which means uproot, rise up or move, ii) “Gbe” meaning day, and iii) “Tsotso”

which means crossing over. In this wise, ‘Hogbetsotso’ means “the day our ancestors moved out, uprooted their crops, gods, treasures and crossed over to their present home” (Kumassah, 2009, p. 151).

One of the vital and spectacular features of the exodus from Ɔɔtsie was how Togbi Kli carried the three deities (Kli, Gbɔtanya and Hafu) in his haversack to the present location. It shows a kind of freedom in terms of commitment to religious beliefs and practice which cannot be compromised. This religious commitment seems to be one of the aims for the ‘Hogbetsotso’ because the festival is a means of re-creating the past and “is deeply rooted in the history, tradition and culture” (Nukunya, 1997, p. 105).

There are many activities and prohibitions which take place in the period of the festival. Some of these activities are religious. As indicated earlier, the independence gained from Ɔɔtsie under King Agɔkɔli was a kind of freedom to exhibit their beliefs for which they think nobody can eliminate in the traditional area. Some of these religious practices are elaborated annually during the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival, ‘State divination’ (Kumassah, 2009), ‘nugbidodo’ which is reconciliation and peace, ‘dɔdɔde’ meaning general cleaning, and ‘vuse’-ban on drumming and general noise making.

The ‘State divination’ is the first religious activity that marks the beginning of the ‘Hogbetsotso’ period. This activity is a religious practice because it is undertaken by recognized and distinguished traditional seers chosen from different parts of the Aɔɔ Traditional Area. They determine the rituals that

should be carried out before the commencement of the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival. When the rituals are indicated by the seers, the traditional priests perform the necessary ceremonies and invoke the gods. The ‘State divination’ is brought to an end at Atiteti (a typical Anlo traditional town) by the seers who perform general annual sacrifices. This implies that the ‘State divination’ is the religious practice that paves the way for the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival.

The next activity that takes place after the ‘State divination’ is ‘dɔdɔde’ which means general cleaning that is carried out in the whole traditional area (Kumassah, 2009). The clean up exercise takes place in early August to October. Although the exercise signifies sanitation programme, it has a religious significance. The ‘dɔdɔde’ begins at Atiteti where the seers always gather to complete the ‘State divination’ that ushers in the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival. It begins at Atiteti because it marks the Western coastal boarder and the estuary of the River Volta. In the coastal area, the ‘dɔdɔde’ ends at Aflao which is the Eastern boundary of the traditional area. After Aflao the ‘dɔdɔde’ continues to hinterland from Atiavi to Abɔlɔve-ŋɔlɔfi and finally gets to the main Islands in the Keta lagoon from Atito and ends at Alakple.

The ‘dɔdɔde’ is a ritualized activity in every settlement in the area under study because it begins with a message being sent to the chief and elders of the next village or town to get ready and receive the rubbish from their neighbours (Kumassah, 2009). Togbi Boni, the spokesperson of the current Awoamefia Togbi Sri III (the king), clearly states that it is the Awoamefia who gives order to

the chiefs and elders for the commencement of the ‘dɔdɔde’ (Personal communication, April 18, 2015). The handing over and receiving of the rubbish is done in the afternoon on a market day at the site of the ‘Du Legba’ the town god of the next village or town. When the rubbish is collected in a town or a village, the chief and elders pray to the gods to remove all forms of disasters like drought, famine and war. This is followed by three gunshots. After the prayer and the gunshots, it is the duty of the youth to carry the rubbish to the shrine of ‘Du Legba of the next village as the people shout ‘Neho!, Neho!, Neho!’ which means rise up and leave. The chief and elders of the receiving town or village receive the rubbish and listen to the commands from the seers in terms of prohibitions and what they must do in order to satisfy the gods. Disobedience to the gods “results in disasters such as diseases, drought, famine and warfare, all which threaten human life and continued existence of the state e.g. never to commit adultery and murder” (Kumassah, 2009, p. 153). After taking the commands, the chief gives order for the burning of the received rubbish which signifies the beginning of his town or village’s ‘dɔdɔde’ as those who handed over the rubbish go home in great silence and they are not allowed to turn and look back since such an act is an invitation to evil spirits to follow them back to their houses. In every village or town, the ‘dɔdɔde’ is carried out by sweeping and cleaning houses, shrines, markets, churches, community halls, public buildings and offices (Kumassah, 2009).

The religious significance of ‘dɔdɔde’ shows that it is the gods that give commands or directives to humans and also help them in dealing with health



issues and natural disasters such as drought and famine. This is because the religious aspect of 'dɔdɛdɛ' includes prayer to the gods to remove pestilence from the traditional area; the firing of the three gunshots; dumping and burning of the rubbish at the shrine of 'Du Legba' the town god; and the will to comply with the commands from the gods that come through the seers to the people. Togbi Boni vividly puts it that it is the duty of 'Du Legba' in every village or town to protect each town in the traditional area (Personal communication, April 18, 2015). Since the 'Hogbetsotso' festival marks the beginning of a new year, the instructions that are sent by the gods through the seers are supposed to determine or influence the conduct or practices of the people in traditional area. In this wise, it is presumed that failure to satisfy the gods in this direction brings disaster as pointed out earlier. The prohibition that follows 'dɔdɛdɛ' immediately is the traditional ban on drumming and general noise making. In order to get the concept of the ban on drumming and general noise making clearly, there is the need to look briefly at another important religious activity which is also performed during the period of the festival. This activity is called 'nugbidodo'. 'Nugbidodo' means reconciliation and it is performed on the Thursday that precedes the grand durbar which falls on the first Saturday in November each year. 'Nugbidodo' calls for making reconciliation and peace among the people of Aɲlɔ. There is a belief in Aɲlɔ that God is 'love' and for that matter 'peace' is the attribute of that 'love'.

The 'nugbidodo' which is a peace and reconciliation ceremony is performed at a special spot called Agɔwɔvɔnu the place "where Togbi Wenya

performed the ritual which established the Aṅlɔ state when he arrived from Ɗɔtsie during the exodus. It is one of the holy sites in Aṅlɔ state” (Kumassah, 2009, p. 157). According to Togbi Boni, the ‘nugbidodo’ calls for settlement of disputes and togetherness among the chiefs and the people in the Aṅlɔland. On the day of ‘nugbidodo’, the divisional chiefs, senior chiefs and elders of the traditional area assemble and accompany the Awoamefia who dresses as the chief priest of the Nyigbla god to the holy spot amid drumming, dancing and singing. This shows that the Awoamefia is both the spiritual and physical leader of the traditional area. The Awoamefia and his retinue circle the holy ground thrice before taking their seats. The Awoamefia presents a bottle of schnapps to the traditional priests who come from the Lafe and Amlade clans. The priests make successive libation as they invoke the spirit of Togbi Wenya and Adedzenyaki the co-founders of the Aṅlɔ state, the spirit of the first King Togbi Sri I and the spirit of the second King Togbi Adladza I, soliciting their presence in the reconciliation and peace ceremony. In making the libation, the priests ask for the blessings of the gods and the ancestors for the people in the traditional area. As the first water is poured out of the calabash, women from the Nyegbla shrine sound a cry then the schnapps is also poured on the ground. This paves the way for the ritual officials to pile all the herbs and other items used for the peace and reconciliation ceremony. The Awoamefia is invited to the pile of herbs to name his grievances against his three traditional military wings under his command: ‘Dusi’ the right wing, ‘Dome’ the middle wing and ‘Mia’ the left wing. The Awoamefia pleads with the gods, ancestors and the living people that

if the grievances are the results of misunderstanding and confusion among the people of Añlɔ and if any person should bear him ill-will, the initiators of such misunderstanding and confusion should be buried beneath the pile of herbs never to resurge, as the women of the Nyigbla shrine repeat the cry (Kumassah, 2009). The three traditional wing chiefs are also invited in turn to give their respond to the Awoamefia. The wing chiefs name their grievances on behalf of themselves, chiefs serving under them and the people under their control. Again, the wing chiefs plead with the gods that if their grievances are the cause of disunity and disaffection among the people of the traditional area they should be buried under the herbs (Kumassah, 2009).

After the grievances, the ritual officials pray over the herbs and put them in a special wooden pan called ‘afianu’ and pour water on them. As the herbs are mixed and stirred sacred, purification and reconciliation incantations (the ‘nugbeyigbeyi’) are uttered. When the herbs are properly mixed, the Awoamefia is invited to sprinkle the spiritually purified water on his wing commanders, other chiefs, traditional priests and priestesses and all who hold important positions in the administration of the Añlɔ State. The people then take their turn in sprinkling the special water “on the Awoamefia as they intone the sacred word ‘Nugbeyigbeyi’. Finally all others present sprinkle the water on those with whom they have had a special grievance” (Kumassah, 2009, p. 161).

Immediately after the sprinkling, three rams are slaughtered to atone for the sins of everybody in the Añlɔ Traditional Area. The slaughtered rams are shared among the three traditional wings. This reflects the belief among the Ewes

of southern Ghana that human beings are born sinless. However, humans become sinful by their personal acts of wrongdoing, some of which “may be the breach of prohibitions which originate from society and be directly against other human beings” (Gaba, 1997, p. 96). Gaba (1997) also notes that some breach of prohibitions are in contravention of stipulated injunctions from one’s object of worship. In this light the, ‘nugbidodo’ ceremony is concluded by a reconciliation address by the Awoamefia who emphasises the significance of the peace and reconciliation (nugbidodo) ceremony. He also tells and encourages the people to forgive each other, show love and maintain the fresh peace and blessing bestowed on them by ‘Mawu’ the creator and the ancestors. After the address, he leaves by circling the holy place three times with his retinue.

Considering the religious significance of the ‘Nugbidodo’ ceremony in the period of the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival, one observes that the sprinkling and the slaughtering of the three rams indicate a renewal flame of goodwill in terms of peace and reconciliation among the people of Aɲlɔ. It also signifies revitalization of relationship between them and ‘Mawu’ the creator to whom they give ultimate worship (Bansa, 2013). The reason being that the people of Aɲlɔ believe and worship ‘Mawu’ (God) before the advent of the Christian faith.

### **Ban on drumming**

The traditional ban on drumming and general noise making is an important prohibition in the period of the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival for the people of Aɲlɔ. It lasts for more than one week. It is during the period of the ban that the

traditionalists and the Christians clash as both parties are not ready to compromise their freedom in religious beliefs and practices as stated in the introductory part of this study. According to Kumassah (2009), it is the Awoamefia who lifts the ban. Although Kumassah (2009) and other scholars quoted in this work are silent over the religious aspects or implications of the ban, the Christians perceive it as a religious practice which does not conform to their belief and thus consider it as an infringement on their freedom of worship. This is why this study seeks the grass root information from the custodians of the Aŋlɔland: the Awoamefia, the Nyigbla priest, and the spokesperson of Avadada of the Aŋlɔ Traditional Area, on the significance of the ban.

In this wise, the current Nyigbla priest as at the time of this study, Togbi Asiapim Nyigblanua Eha II, makes it clear that the name Nyigbla is a corrupted form of the original Nyegbla which means “bring it” (Personal communication, February 8, 2015). In this respect, Nyigbla will be spelt Nyegbla for the rest of the study. Togbi Asiapim Nyegblanua Eha II also says that it is the Nyegbla that places a ban on drumming and noise making. He goes on to say that the ban originated with Israel where Nyegbla declares himself as ‘Jahwoe’ whom the Israelites know as Jehovah and who gave the staff to Moses which turned to snake. Togbi Asiapim Nyegblanua Eha II again makes the point that the Nyegbla stool was brought from Israel to Goaso in Egypt, and then to Ɔɔtsie. Tetteh Kponoe who was a maternal nephew of Togbi Wenya brought it from Ɔɔtsie to

the present location of the people of Aᅇᅇ in 1865 (Personal communication, February 8, 2015).

According to Togbi Asiapim Nyegblanua Eha II, on the arrival of Nyegbla in 1865, there was a fierce battle in which Nyegbla supported the people of the area against the people of Ada. The reason was that the Ada people who were staying with the Aᅇᅇ people refused to obey the ban on drumming and general noise making as instituted by Nyegbla. After the battle, Nyegbla asked the people of Aᅇᅇ if they would obey the ban on drumming and noise making. Togbi Wenya and the then Avadada gave positive response to Nyegbla which consolidates the ban since 1865 to date (Personal communication, February 8, 2015). On that note, Nyegbla finally ordered that the ban should start in May to June every year.

Owing to the above, the ban on drumming and general noise making as instituted by Nyegbla became a traditional religious belief and practice for the people in the Aᅇᅇ Traditional Area and thus, demands strict observance that nobody can eliminate. However, Togbi Asiapim Nyegblanua Eha II explains that there was an amendment of the ban in 1906 by Nyegbla at Aᅇᅇᅇga. He goes on and says the amendment came because of one Traditional Priest of the area by name Kpoxolo who went to Anyako, a typical Aᅇᅇ town, where there were church and school and got baptized after a sudden death of his beloved daughter. He also explains that when Kpoxolo returned to Aᅇᅇᅇga from Anyako with the Bible, Nyegbla was very happy. Nyegbla, as a sign of his happiness, put Kpoxolo

in charge of only the coastal strip of Aɲlɔga and instructed that there should be drumming, singing and dancing throughout the year to enable children to go to school (Personal communication, February 8, 2015).

Nevertheless, Nyegbla maintained the ban at the lagoon side of Aɲlɔga. According to Togbi Asiapim Nyegblanua Eha II, the ban was to enable Nyegbla to bestow bountiful blessings on the whole Aɲlɔland. In order to make the ban effective at the lagoon area at Aɲlɔga, Nyegbla put three gods: Dutorkonyi, Gbeaku and Godzo in charge to see to its implementation (Personal communication, February 8, 2015).

The understanding here is that Nyegbla's ban on drumming and general noise making was neither totally eliminated at Aɲlɔga nor the Aɲlɔ Traditional Area. It can also be said that Nyegbla created room for formal education and the Christian faith to thrive on the Aɲlɔland as the coastal part of Aɲlɔga was exempted from the ban. This is a clear indication that Nyegbla saw something good about formal education and the Christian faith for the people in the traditional area.

According to Togbi Asiapim Nyegblanua Eha II, the exemption from the ban was short lived. He explains that during the reign of Kofi Hayibor, who was installed by Togbi Kugblenu Nyegblanua Agortimevi I as Awoamefia of Aɲlɔ under the stool name Togbi Sri II, there was a serious drought for three (3) years. The drought dried the lagoon and brought incredible famine in the entire

traditional area. There was a divination to ascertain the cause of the drought and Nyegbla said that the king and the people of Aɲlɔ offended him. In this wise, they sent for Togbi Tenge Dzokoto, the chief of Anyako who came and pleaded with Nyegbla to avert the drought. Nyegbla agreed on two conditions: i) that the Awoamefia should restore the white cloth used for him (Nyegbla) instead of the black cloth ii) that the coastal portion of Aɲlɔga should revert to obeying the ban on drumming and general noise making (Personal communication, February 8, 2015). Nyegbla also decreed that all the thirty six (36) states of the Aɲlɔ Traditional Area must diligently observe the ban. Togbi Tenge Dzokoto agreed to the conditions and the decree, and took an oath with Nyegbla to end the severe drought to enable him (Togbi Tenge Dzokoto) travel back on the lagoon by canoe to Anyako. On that day, Nyegbla allowed a heavy down pour of rain which filled and overflowed the lagoon and paved the way for Togbi Tenge Dzokoto who travelled back in a canoe on the lagoon to Anyako. The heavy down pour and its flood was termed as ‘Tenge tsi’ which means Tenge’s flood in the Aɲlɔ Traditional Area to date. In this regard, Togbi Asiapim Nyegblanua Eha II emphatically says, the ban on drumming and general noise making was fully enforced by the then traditional rulers: Awoamefia, Avadada and Nyegblanua, in the thirty six (36) towns of the Aɲlɔ Traditional Area in 1907 to the present day. He also indicates that the enforcement was to enhance total wellbeing of the people living in the entire traditional area. Therefore, the traditional rulers who are the custodians of the Aɲlɔland expect everybody living on the land of Aɲlɔ to obey the ban in order to bring blessings from Nyegbla, who is Jehovah in the



period of the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival (Personal communication, February 8, 2015).

It is important to note that the way in which the ban on drumming and noise making in general was enforced by the key traditional rulers of Añlɔ in 1907 as indicated earlier portrays it as a traditional religious law which nobody can abolish. The enforcement comes as “a rule of action by authority” (Brookes, 2006, p. 848). This quotation is part of the definition of ‘law’ quoted in chapter one of this study with its four deductions which the study adopts as one of its working tool. What it means is that the definition of ‘law’ and the four deductions from it which this study uses show that a ‘law’ is consensually propounded and promulgated by acceptable body of opinion leaders in any human institution. In this wise, the ‘law’ becomes an indispensable element for the community as it is coined from practice or observance that shows persistent attitude of the people in the community. The understanding here is that, in the case of the people of Añlɔ, the three key traditional rulers in 1907 realised and carefully examined the severity of the hardship their offence brought on them by Nyegbla, hence, the enforcement of the ban which came as a religious law in the traditional area.

Togbi Asiapim Nyegblanua Eha II’s explanation unveils that the ban on drumming and noise making in general as instituted by Nyegbla which became a traditional religious belief and practice for the people of Añlɔ is now a religious law which must be obeyed by everybody living in the Añlɔ Traditional Area

during the 'Hogbetsotso' festival. He explains the clear reason of the ban is to bestow blessing on the Añlɔland for the wellbeing of the people in the traditional area.

Togbi Boni who is the spokesperson for the Awoamefia Togbi Sri III and Avadada categorically states that there are three (3) types of bans on drumming in the Añlɔ Traditional Area (Personal communication, April 18, 2015). He goes on to say the three types of the bans come from the Priests of the three deities: (i) Nyegbla at Afife (ii) Tsali at Tsiamé (iii) Kli at Klikor. He also notes that people who are affiliated to the three deities at Afife, Tsiamé, Klikor and anywhere in the traditional area are obliged to obey the ban anytime it is placed on drumming.

Togbi Boni explains that the people of Añlɔ believe in total spiritual preparation before the actual grand durbar of the 'Hogbetsotso' festival. He adds that spiritual preparation must be done in a serene atmosphere devoid of drumming and noise making in general. He again indicates that the festival marks a beginning of a new year in the traditional area, therefore, the spiritual preparation takes place in order to plead with 'Mawu' for forgiveness of sins committed in the previous year (Personal communication, April 18, 2015). It is the serenity that is needed for the spiritual preparation that calls for the ban on drumming and noise making in general. He also makes it clear that the ban comes from Togbi Sri III who is the current Awoamefia during the time of this study. He again points out that the duration of the ban depends on the

Awoamefia's discretion that takes one month or fourteen days within the period of the 'Hogbetsotso' festival.

Togbi Boni laments that some Christian denominations, that he tags as 'new churches', do not comply with the ban on drumming and noise making in general with regards to the Aɲlɔ traditional spiritual preparation as indicated earlier. At this point, he indicates that the people of Aɲlɔ believe and worship God before the advent of the Christian faith in the Aɲlɔ Traditional Area.

However, he points to the fact that some Christian denominations do obey the annual ban. He terms these denominations as "missionary churches" which are the Evangelical Presbyterian Church and the Roman Catholic Church. He goes on and pays tribute to these missionary churches for bringing development into the traditional area and the entire nation (Ghana). Some of these developments he identified are: schools, colleges, hospitals and now universities (Personal communication, April 18, 2015). He makes a remark that the 'new churches' are not contributing to the development of the society, yet they are the ones who do not comply with the ban during the period of the festival. The 'new churches' regard the ban as devilish and their refusal to obey it generates into clashes between the natives of the traditional area and the 'new churches'. Togbi Boni again observes that Christians have freedom to their religious beliefs and practices, but it must be done in view of cultural practices and usages. This means Christians can worship God the way they want it but they must comply with the ban on drumming and noise making in general in the time of the 'Hogbetsotso' festival as a sign of obedience and respect to the king

in the Aŋlɔland. He makes reference to Paul's epistle to Titus in the New Testament of the Bible that kings must be respected (Personal communication, April 18, 2015). He also indicates the ban is not devilish as members of the 'new churches' see it because within the period of the ban the people of Aŋlɔ spiritually seek the face of 'Mawu' by talking to him and seeking for forgiveness as mentioned earlier. He again says 'Mawu' to whom they pray during the ban is the same as the missionaries' or the Christian God that the 'new churches' worship. Therefore, he does not understand why the 'new churches' term the serene period declared during the period of the festival in Aŋlɔ for praying to the same God as evil.

The Awoamefia Togbi Sri III emphatically says the other bans on drumming that come from the three Priests as noted earlier at different times in the traditional area have nothing to do with that of the 'Hogbetsotso' festival (Personal communication, April 21, 2015). He clearly states that Christians in the traditional area are not under any obligation to obey those bans that come from the Priests of the three deities identified earlier. He substantiates his position that Christians do not belong to those deities so there is no need for them to comply. He quickly adds that the ban on drumming and noise making in general during the period of the 'Hogbetsotso' festival comes from him to everybody in the Aŋlɔ Traditional Area. According to the Awoamefia Togbi Sri III, he expects individuals, social groups and religious groups living in the traditional area to obey his ban during the period of the festival (Personal communication, April 21,

2015). He maintains that his ban is not deity oriented in other words it does not come from any deity in the traditional area.

He also makes reference to different festivities that cut across the globe such as the Jewish feasts, Christmas and Easter festivities which are celebrated by Christians throughout the world. In this wise, he points to the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival as a period for stock taking for the people living in the Aɖɖɖ Traditional Area. He says the duration of his ban is only two weeks in a year for which he thinks it is not too much for the people living in the traditional area to respect and obey. Togbi Sri III again makes it plain that his annual ban during the period of the festival does not have religious undertones as some Christians coin it. But it is a call for an examination in terms of strengths and weaknesses throughout the previous year and forging ahead in view of making projections for the new year since the festival marks a beginning of another year as noted earlier (Personal communication, April 21, 2015). He indicates that this examination is meant for individuals, households, human organizations and the entire traditional leadership of the area towards the development of the area. Therefore, he thinks Christians who believe and associate his ban in the period of the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival to that of the other deities like Nyegbla and the rest which they regard as devilish are making serious mistake. The Awoamefia’s stance calls for a look at Christian beliefs and practices of the Aɖɖɖ Christians and the way they view the activities of the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival in the next chapter.

## Conclusion

This chapter specifically throws light on three issues: the geographical location of the people of Aᅇᅇ, their religious beliefs and practices and the religious significant of their ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival. The people of Aᅇᅇ migrated from Ɔᅇᅇsie to their present location since they could not bear the unfavourable rule of king Agokᅇli at Ɔᅇᅇsie. The migration signifies their political and religious freedom to install their own king and practice their religious beliefs.

In their present location, they based their belief and practices on Mawu the creator, gods, deities and ancestors. The three deities (Kli, ‘Gbotanya’ and ‘Hafu’) they brought from Ɔᅇᅇsie played and are still playing positive roles in Aᅇᅇland. The functions of the deities include warding off spiritual and physical enemies, giving directives on vital state issues like the burial and installation of Awoamefia and giving guidance for the celebration of the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival. The people of Aᅇᅇ also benefit greatly from the ancestral spirits. The ancestral spirits protect the Aᅇᅇ people against evil spirits, accidents and other forms of calamities. Again the ancestral spirits punish the deviants in the Aᅇᅇland. The religious practices such as ‘dᅇdᅇdᅇ’, ‘nugbidodo’ and ‘uuse’ of the people of Aᅇᅇ are exhibited during the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival.

The definition of ‘Hogbetsotso’ stated earlier shows that it is a re-creation of the exodus of the Aᅇᅇ people from Ɔᅇᅇsie to their present location. The religious significance of the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival is explicitly embedded in the

activities and prohibitions which mark the period. The activities and prohibitions include state divination, ‘nugbidodo’ which is reconciliation and peace, ‘dɔdɔdɛ’ meaning general cleaning and ‘uuse’ which is ban on drumming and general noise making as noted earlier. The state divination determines the rituals to be performed before the beginning of the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival. ‘Dɔdɔdɛ’ which is the general cleaning ends at the site of ‘Du Legba’ the town god of every village or town where prayers were offered with three gunshots for removing all forms of disaster. ‘Nugbidodo’ is reconciliation and peace ceremony which takes place at the holy side in the Aɲlɔland. The Awoamefia who is the spiritual and physical leader dresses as the chief priest of the state and rituals are performed for reconciliation and forgiveness among the chiefs and people of Aɲlɔ. In the period of ‘Uuse’ which is ban on drumming and general noise making no elaborate ritual is performed. Although the current Awoamefia Togbi Sri III categorically said the ban is not deity oriented and has no religious undertones, Togbi Boni and Togbi Asiapim Nyegblanua Eha II the Aɲlɔl traditional priest indicated religious sentiments. The traditional priest clearly stated that in 1907 Nyegbla fully enforced the ban on the entire Aɲlɔ state to date and the then three key traditional rulers: Awoamefia, Avadada and Nyegblanua accepted it for the Aɲlɔ state. The enforcement of the ban by Nyegbla was due to an offence committed by the then king and the people of Aɲlɔ. Togbi Boni emphatically said spiritual preparation in a serene atmosphere devoid of drumming and general noise making before the grand durbar of the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival is vital. He said it is

the serenity for the spiritual preparation that calls for the ban on drumming and general noise making which comes from Togbi Sri III the current Awoamefia. Togbi Sri III who is the current Awoamefia at the time of this study clearly said his annual ban must be observed by everybody including Christians living the traditional area. Again, Togbi Sri III (the Awoamefia) said he and nobody can put a stop to the ban on drumming and general noise making in the period of the 'Hogbetsotso' festival in the Aŋlɔland. If the reason given by the traditional Nyegbla priest for the full enforcement of the ban in 1907 is true, then the current three key traditional rulers: the Awoamefia Togbi Sri III, Togbi Boni the spokesperson of Avadada and Togbi Asiapim Nyegblanua Eha II will find it difficult to put a stop to the ban. Togbi Boni made it clear that the Aŋlɔ people believe and worship 'Mawu' the creator (God) before the advent of the Christian faith in the traditional area. He said Christians who do not obey the ban should be obedient and observe it since nobody will be exempted from the ban.

It is clear that the current key traditional rulers in the Aŋlɔ traditional area are eager to perpetuate the ban on drumming and general noise making during the 'Hogbetsotso' festival. It is for this reason that this study, sought the views of Christians on the 'Hogbetsotso' festival in relation to their belief and practices in the traditional area in the next chapter of this study.



## CHAPTER THREE

### CHRISTIANITY IN Aᅒᅒᅒ AND THEIR VIEWS ON THE 'HOGBETSOTSO' FESTIVAL

The previous chapter throws light on the 'Hogbetsotso' festival and the religious beliefs and practices of the people of Aᅒᅒᅒ. This chapter deals with the inception of the Christian faith in Aᅒᅒᅒ, the religious beliefs and practices among the Aᅒᅒᅒ Christians and how the Aᅒᅒᅒ Christians view the traditional religious practices in the period of the 'Hogbetsotso' festival. In this wise, the focus here is three fold: (i) the advent of the Christian faith and how it was accepted by the traditional rulers and the people of Aᅒᅒᅒ, (ii) religious beliefs and practices of the Aᅒᅒᅒ Christians and (iii) the Aᅒᅒᅒ Christian views on the traditional religious practices during the period of the 'Hogbetsotso' festival.

#### **The advent and acceptance of the Christian faith in the Aᅒᅒᅒ Traditional Area**

The Bremen missionaries who began their evangelistic work at Peki in the Volta Region, of the present day Republic of Ghana, could not convert a single person to the Christian faith before the outbreak of the war between the people of Peki and Akwamu (Wiegrabe, 1936). However, the missionaries who were confident in winning converts moved their camp to the southern part of the region and arrived at Dzelukope which is a typical town in the Aᅒᅒᅒ Traditional Area on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1853 (Wiegrabe, 1936) as indicated earlier in the

background of the study. According to Wiegrabe (1936), on the arrival at Dzelukope the missionaries, who were Dauble and Plessing, went to Keta amidst a heavy down pour of rain. The two missionaries were not discouraged by the rain. They encouraged themselves by saying “Midoe kpɔ, eye miakpɔ be Yehowa fe dome nyo; woayra n̄utsu, si sii tso” which literally translates as ‘try it, and you will see the kindness of God and blessed is the one who takes refuge in him’.

It is important to note that the missionaries were trades men, for example shoe makers and carpenters (Agbeti, 1986). Ansre (1997) also indicates that some of the missionaries were farmers. Therefore, it was not a surprise that the two missionaries that arrived at Keta embarked on a building project. Dauble had a severe headache and died exactly four months after their arrival at Keta. He was buried on 26<sup>th</sup> December, 1853 at Keta (Wiegrabe, 1936). However, another missionary by name Brutschin joined Plessing at Keta which resulted into the continuation of the building project. They encountered some difficulties during the execution of the project. One of the difficulties was when a man who was sent by the missionaries to buy wood was severely punished and the woods were seized by the Awoamefia or the King of Ān̄lɔ. The King justifies his action for the fact that after the missionaries had arrived and went to Keta they failed to pay him homage at Ān̄lɔga the traditional capital of the entire traditional area. In this light, the King sends for the missionaries to come to him with alcoholic drink. According to Wiegrabe (1936), the missionaries agreed to visit the King but

Plessing makes it clear to the King that he would come without the alcoholic drink because of its' destructive nature.

There was a great confusion when the missionaries went to visit the king at Aɲlɔga. The confusion came up because Plessing breaks one of the Nyegbla's taboo as he rides on a horse in Aɲlɔga. The people were furious to an extent that they beat one of their elders mercilessly who led the missionaries for the fact that he failed to educate the missionaries on the taboo (Wiegrabe, 1936). However, the King receives them well. He also makes an inquiry from the missionaries with regard to establishment of school in Aɲlɔga and if school fees would be paid or not. As security of the people of Aɲlɔ was paramount to the King he asked the missionaries why they leveled or made the roof of their building flat. The King wanted to know if their intention was to put powerful guns on the top of their building. But the missionaries' answer negates the King's view of the manner in which the roof of the building was made (Wiegrabe, 1936). The missionaries left the King at Aɲlɔga for Keta in peace. A quick look at the inquiry that the King made from the missionaries shows that he was only interested in formal education and security of the people of Aɲlɔ because he did not ask for establishment of a church in Aɲlɔga.

Wiegrabe (1936) makes an important point that "Ke Aɲlɔga ganye trɔsubɔsubɔ fe mɔ sese vasede fe 1906 me" which literally translates 'Aɲlɔga remained as a stronghold of idol worship until 1906'. This corresponds with what Togbi Asiapim Nyegblanua Eha II disclosed during the interview the researcher

conducted with him on the 8<sup>th</sup> February, 2015 at Aɲlɔga. During the interview, Togbi Asiapim Nyegblanua Eha II noted that Nyegbla was happy with Kpoxolo a Traditional Priest who was converted to the Christian faith at Anyako and brought the Bible to Aɲlɔga in 1906 as indicated earlier. This implies that the Christian faith came to Aɲlɔga in 1906 after the missionaries had paid homage to the King.

The missionaries' visit to the King at Aɲlɔga and how he allowed them to leave for Keta in peace as stated earlier paves the way for a vigorous evangelism in the traditional area. This suggests that the missionaries were given the nod by the traditional rulers to minister in the Aɲlɔ territory. This marks the birth of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in the Aɲlɔ Traditional Area hence the first Christian denomination established in the traditional Area. In this regard, the missionaries spread the gospel in Keta and other villages of Aɲlɔ. Therefore, it is not far from right for one to say that the Evangelical Presbyterian Church was the first Christian denomination that spread the gospel for that matter the Christian faith in the Aɲlɔ Traditional Area.

The premise of their missionary work was based on the four thematic areas of the North German Mission Society: proclamation of the gospel in West Africa, establishment of schools, healing the sick and studying the local languages and cultures (Anyako E. P. Church 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration brochure, 2007). Ansre (1997) notes that the Bremen Mission's move to evangelize West Africa was an inspiration they took from the Pietist Movement and the Christian

Awakening which took place in the United States of America in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Wiegrabe (1936) also makes it clear that the evangelistic message of the missionaries was based on the great commission which Jesus Christ gives to his eleven disciples at Galilee on a mountain

16 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had directed them. 17 And when they saw him they worshiped him; but some doubted. 18 And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always to the close of the age.” (Matthew 28: 16-20 R S V).

Although the king of the Anlo Traditional Area allowed the missionaries to spread the gospel, there were some clashes between the missionaries and some people including the traditionalists in the course of their evangelism. According to (Wiegrabe, 1936), one of the clashes took place at Kedzi where members of the ‘Yeve’ cult chased and threw coconut husks and stones at the missionaries. At another time, a traditional priest who was asked to repent and give his life to Jesus Christ asked the pastor if Nyegbla and Jesus Christ are the same the pastor’s answer was in negative, so the traditional priest says

Kpɔ da trɔwɔ kata menye naneke o, Yesu ha menye naneke o.  
Nyigbla deka koe wole be, woasubɔ. Wo ha va subɔe, ekema

maganɔ vevie be, naganɔ hia kam dokuiwo alea gbegbe, anɔ tsatsam le xexeame kata anɔ yiyimi o. Nyigbla lakpɔ wo nuɖuɖu gbɔ na wo (Wiegrabe, 1936,pp. 10-11).

This literally translates as “all deities are nothing and Jesus is nothing, only Nyegbla is worthy to deserve to be worshipped. You too come and worship him so that it will not be necessary for you to bother yourself by evangelizing the whole world because Nyegbla will supply all your needs”. However, the missionary work went on successfully such that in 1855 four converts to the Christian faith (Evangelical Presbyterian Church) were baptized at Keta.

Another clash occurred in 1860 at Keta between the church and the traditional priest (Wiegrabe, 1936). The cause of the clash concerned a ban on the use of gun which was placed by the leader of traditional priests for six (6) months. The pastors sent a message to the priest that the church would always obey the king of the traditional area but not a priest of any deity. In the period of the ban a thief invaded the mission house and pastor Plessing gave a warning shot into the air to drive the thief away but there was no reaction from the traditional priest. Wiegrabe (1936) indicates that pastor Plessing on a different occasion gave another gun shot when the ban was still in force, so the traditional priest under the influence of the powers of the deity took a big club, ran to the mission house and hit the head of one of the pastors who had a big and deep cut. People who accompanied the priest rushed and pulled down the fence wall of the mission house, pulled out the cross which was erected on the tombs of the missionaries who died at Keta and filled the well that supplied water to the

missionaries with sand. They also tried to break the doors and windows of the house but they could not (Wiegrabe, 1936).

It can be said that the interaction that generates into question and answer between the traditional priest and the pastor as indicated earlier, suggests two different religious views: (i) the statement the traditional priest made concerning Nyegbla and Jesus Christ shows that he was Nyegbla's priest and held the views (beliefs and practices) of Nyegbla. The manner in which he urges the pastor to come and worship Nyegbla by saying "...Nyigbla deka koe wole be woasubɔ..." (Wiegrabe, 1936, p. 10) which literally translates, 'only Nyegbla is worthy to be worshiped', suggests that the beliefs and practices of Nyegbla are different from that of Jesus Christ of the Christian faith, (ii) the pastor's answer to the traditional priest "Kpao!" (Wiegrabe, 1936, p. 10) which literally means, 'no' shows that his Christian views (beliefs and practices) are not the same as that of Nyegbla.

Again, the ban on the use of guns for six months from the traditional high priest at Keta and the message that reacted to it from the pastors as indicated earlier reflects a tension between two different religious fronts which are the Nyegbla beliefs and practices on the one hand and Christian beliefs and practices on the other hand.

Another point worthy of note is that the tension and clashes between the traditionalists and the Anɔlɔ Christians we see today started from 1860 at Keta and another one at Kedzi as noted earlier. Although the Bremen missionaries encountered challenges and problems during their evangelistic endeavours they

succeeded in planting many congregations throughout the traditional area consequently, it is not out of place for this study to briefly look at some activities in other words beliefs and practices of the Christian church in the Aᅇlᅇ Traditional Area.

### **Aᅇlᅇ Christian beliefs, practices and views on the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival**

This section deals with interview conducted with the leadership of the Aᅇlᅇga local council of churches and other two ministers of some of the churches who do not belong to the council. These leaders are Rev. Agbeko, the minister of the Church of Conquerour and the chairperson of the Aᅇlᅇga local council of churches, Rev. Bokordedzi, the minister of the Global Evangelical Church, Dornogbor branch in Aᅇlᅇga and the vice chairperson of the council, Elder Abbey Richard, of Perez Chapel International and the secretary of the council, Rev. Deku, Dickson Kofi, the minister of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church at Aᅇlᅇga and Rev. Fr. Mikado, the Priest of the Roman Catholic Church at Aᅇlᅇga. The denominations of the last two ministers do not belong to the local council of Churches in Aᅇlᅇga. The interview concerns the Aᅇlᅇ Christian beliefs, practices and how they view the activities in respect of the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival. The interview was divided into three main parts: (i) beliefs (ii) practices (iii) views on the activities of which the ban on drumming and general noise making is given special attention during the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival.



## Beliefs

The leaders of the local council of Churches and the two ministers whose denominations do not belong to the council as noted earlier, claim that the Anlo Christians believe in the Bible and God who is one but in three persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Rev. Deku explains that the Christians in Anlo believe Jesus Christ represents God on earth and through him they become the children of God. Rev. Bokordedzi states that Anlo Christians also believe in the family system which they exhibit through mixing freely with the non-Christians in communal activities such as funerals. He goes on to say that when there is a funeral in Anloga the Christians freely participate regardless of the deceased's traditional or religious background. Rev. Bokordedzi again indicates that the Anlo Christians believe that God exists. He explains this with a belief in the Anlo traditional sector that God speaks therefore, when something mysterious happens the traditionalists go to the shrines to ascertain the cause of the mystery. What he means is that before non-Christians convert to the Christian faith they seek information from the gods in the shrines however, after converting to Christianity they understand and know better that it is only one God that exists but not gods.

Elder Abbey makes a point that the Anlo Christians believe in serving and worshipping God through the Lord Jesus Christ. He quickly adds that Anlo Christians believe that it is only through Jesus Christ that one can get to God the Father, unlike the traditionalists who believe that getting to God is by offering

different types of sacrifices as portrayed in the Old Testament (Personal communication, April 20, 2015).

Rev. Agbeko indicates that although the traditionalists claim to believe in God, but they do not believe in him because they do not follow and practice the teachings of the Bible. However, Rev. Bokordedzi puts it that the traditionalists believe in God but how they should exhibit it is what they do not know in other words the channel they use to show their belief in God is different from that of the Christians. Rev. Fr. Mikado also clearly says the traditional rulers know and believe in God except the belief in Jesus Christ which is new to them. He explains that the traditionalists know God through the things that surround them like forests, rivers, big trees and the like. Therefore, anytime they see these things like huge trees or rivers they understand that there is a force that creates them and controls them.

They call this force 'Mawu' which means the greatest one who overcomes everything. It is for this reason that the traditionalists go to forest or rivers to meet and commune with God (Mawu) because they believe that his presence is in the forest or the river. Therefore, the traditionalists do reserve some forests where no hunting or farming take places as they serve as traditional worshiping spots (Personal communication, April 21, 2015). Rev. Deku vividly puts it that traditionalists were worshipping God before the Bremem missionaries brought the Christian faith at Peki and left Peki for the Aṅlɔ Traditional Area. He indicates that the traditionalists did not reject the missionaries and this makes it possible for Christianity to spread in the traditional area to date.

When it comes to whether the God who Christians believe is the same as that of the traditionalists, Reverends Agbeko, Deku and Rev. Fr. Mikado share the view that the God the Aṅlɔ Christians believe is the same as the one the traditionalists believe. However, Rev. Bokordedzi categorically states that the traditionalists' god in whom they believe is different from the one the Christians believe. He substantiates his position that the traditionalists have different names for their god such as 'Nyegbla', 'Koku', 'Afetor Ku', 'Adzima' unlike the Christian God who is having only one name 'Mawu'. When the researcher tries to find out from him if 'Mawu' is the same as the Christian God and the other ones that he mentioned are deities, he explains that although the Aṅlɔ traditionalists call God 'Mawu', they use it as the general name for the numerous gods as noted earlier (Personal communication, April 20, 2015).

Although Rev. Fr. Mikado maintains that the God in whom the Aṅlɔ Christians believe is the same as that of the traditionalists, he clearly says that the way the traditionalists reach out to God is not right with the way the Aṅlɔ Christians do it. This supports the view of Rev. Bokordedzi as already indicated that the channel the traditionalists use to show their beliefs in God is different from that of the Aṅlɔ Christians.

Here, it can be said the baseline is that the Aṅlɔ Christians believe in God through Jesus Christ which corresponds to the central Christian belief. The Aṅlɔ Christians also believe in family system which they exhibit through communal activities. They also believe in serving and worshipping God and reading the Bible

as their guide. Largely, the Anlo Christians also agree the traditionalists knew, believed and worshiped God before the inception of the Christian faith. However, the point of departure is that the traditionalists do not reach out to God through Jesus Christ and the way the traditionalists put their belief in God into practice. In this view, there is the need to briefly look at the practices of the Anlo Christian beliefs.

### **Practices**

Rev. Fr. Mikado says that the name 'Christian' is an indication that the conduct of those who bear it must be like that of Christ. He underscores the fact that Jesus Christ himself did not call his followers Christians but he called them apostles or disciples. He goes on to say that since the disciples of the early church daily put the teachings of Jesus Christ into practice, the non-Christians saw their way of life in other words their conducts and called them 'Christians' meaning their conducts were in conformity with that of Jesus Christ (Personal communication, April 21, 2015).

Rev. Fr. Mikado makes another point that in celebrating mass during worship in the Roman Catholic Church, mass is divided into several parts. One of it concerns the word of God which is divided into three segments: (i) from the Old Testament (ii) from the epistles like Paul's letter to a particular church (iii) from the gospels. When the gospel is about to be read by the priest, the congregants make the sign of the cross three times: (i) on the forehead (ii) on the mouth (iii) on the heart. The first sign of the cross on the forehead means that

God should grand understanding of the word to the hearer, the second one on the mouth shows that the word that is understood should be proclaimed by the hearer who understood it and the third one that falls on the heart indicates that the hearer of the word of God should daily put it into practice (Personal communication, April 21, 2015). He continues that after the missal or the worship, the priest normally says 'go in peace' which does not mean the congregants should go home, eat and have a good time but it means they should go and spread the word of God as preached by the priest.

In this wise, he explains that the individual proclamation of the word of God is not only by the mouth but through conduct. The conduct is about the daily lifestyle each Christian put into practice in the community he or she finds himself or herself. This practical lifestyle concerns things like cordial relationship with everybody regardless of the person's traditional or religious background. He discloses that the cordial relationship includes forgiveness, helping the needy and the sick as taught by Jesus Christ. He also notes that this is how the Christians in the Roman Catholic Church in Añlɔga and other stations in the traditional area are putting into practice their belief in the God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. He quickly adds that in all his congregations in the Añlɔ Traditional Area, usually some non-christians see their conducts which make them convert to the Christian faith by giving their lives to Jesus Christ (Personal communication, April 21, 2015). The understanding here is that Christians in Rev. Fr. Mikado's congregations in the traditional area put their belief in God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit into practice by spreading the word of God and their daily

relationship with others as taught by Jesus Christ. This shows that the Christian practices of the Roman Catholics in the traditional area are drawn from the teaching of Jesus Christ as indicted in the Bible.

Rev. Agbeko the minister of the Church of Conquerour as already noted, puts it that the members of the his church in the Anlo Traditional Area practice their belief in God by teaching the Bible which agrees with Rev. Fr. Mikado's position as earlier stated. According to Rev. Agbeko, since members of his church believe in the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ they are also expecting his next coming therefore, they are preaching the word of God so that the non-christians can also partake in Jesus' coming. Here, the emphasis is more on evangelism unlike that of Rev. Fr. Mikado of the Roman Catholic tradition where apart from the evangelism attention is given to the needy and the sick as noted earlier.

Rev. Deku of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church and Rev. Bokordedzi of the Global Evangelical Church, took almost a common position on the practices of their churches in the traditional area. Rev. Deku says that his congregations put their belief in God into practice in a form of worshiping him (God) on Sundays with praises, prayers, reading of scripture and preaching. He also talks about morning devotion which takes place throughout the week days and meeting on some evenings for Bible study. Likewise, Rev. Bokordedzi points out that the commitment of his congregants in the traditional area are prayer meetings, Bible study meetings, home cells and participation in social activities (for which he mentioned only funeral as stated earlier) for the

development of the area. Here, the practices of the churches are geared towards building up the congregants but in the case of Rev. Bokordedzi the congregants join in activities that promote relationship in the community.

Elder Abbey of Perez Chapel International, indicates that his members in the traditional area portray their beliefs in God through the way they dress, relate, talk and how they do things because Christianity is not a religion but a way of life. He explains that 'religion' does not specifically talk about how to do something but culture does it because culture is a way of life. He goes on that since culture is a way of life Christianity is also a way of life as it directs people what to do and how to behave. When the researcher wants to know the meaning of religion he could not say it but he maintains that Christianity is a way of life as culture but not a religion (Personal communication, April 21, 2015).

When it comes to the issue of what gives the Anlo Christians freedom to practice their beliefs, Elder Abbey emphatically says that it the Bible. He makes it clear that it is only the Bible that gives freedom to the Anlo Christians to practice their beliefs because the Bible is the manual book of life and the constitution for Christians. He maintains that as the Bible shows the way, it gives freedom to the Christians in the traditional area to go all out and make exploits for the Lord without fear.

According to Rev. Agbeko, belief in God and faith give Christians who are in the Anlo Traditional Area the freedom to carry out their activities. He says it is faith that propels the Anlo Christians to perform their activities without fear

and they know very well that nothing can stop the work of God in whom they trust and believe. He points out that faith in God is a powerful tool that gives freedom to Christians to execute God's plans on earth and nothing can overcome it (Personal communication, April 18, 2015).

Rev. Fr. Mikado puts it that belief and baptism in Jesus Christ are the things that pave way for Christians to share in the three fold ministries (priest, prophet and king) of Jesus Christ as indicated earlier. He categorically states that it is by the virtue of baptism that gives Christians freedom to put their beliefs into practice. In this regard, his members of the Roman Catholic Church in the traditional area freely preach the good news without fear as they share in the universal priesthood in Jesus Christ.

The positions taken by Rev. Bokordedzi some how fall in line with that of Rev. Fr. Mikado. Rev. Bokordedzi also notes it is Christ Jesus who gives freedom to the Anlo Christians to exhibit their beliefs daily. The reason being that Jesus saves Christians from their sins and set them free from the authority of the devil and his forces. Therefore, the Christians in Anlo use the freedom gained in Jesus to freely put their beliefs into practice boldly with the confidence that the devil and his forces cannot prevail over them (Personal communication, April 20, 2015).

On the part of Rev. Deku, the freedom that members of his church use to put their beliefs into practice comes from two fronts which are spiritual and physical. In the case of the spiritual front it is Christ Jesus who died, resurrected



and now living with the Father who gives freedom for his congregants to demonstrate their Christian beliefs. He indicates that it is Jesus who gives the authority to make disciples by preaching the good news throughout the world. In this view, it is Jesus' authority that gives freedom to the members of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in the traditional area to practice their beliefs. Physically however, he posits that although Jesus gives freedom by his authority, traditional rulers also give them freedom to practice their beliefs. He quickly explains that when the Bremen missionaries introduced Christianity for that matter the Evangelical Presbyterian Church into the traditional area, the Awoamefia and the chiefs received, accepted and allowed them to propagate the Christian faith which has come to stay (Personal communication, April 19, 2015).

This confirms what Wiegrabe (1936) states as already indicated in this study. Here, the understanding shows that the Evangelical Presbyterian Church gives recognition to the fact that the traditional rulers play a role in their freedom in practicing their belief in Jesus Christ. It is not far from right to say that Rev. Deku's congregants know that it is the traditional rulers who give them conducive environment to function in terms of their beliefs but the freedom for practicing the beliefs come from Jesus Christ.

The brief Anglo Christian beliefs and practices show support and confirmation of the central Christian beliefs and practices as pointed out earlier. They believe in God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Bible and they also believe in family system which has to do with relationship that leads to

participation in social activities for community development. It is clear that the Christians in the traditional area put their beliefs into practice through worship in which they pray, fast, study the Bible, proclaim the good news, care for the needy, sing, drum and dance. It also shows that all the ministers interviewed agreed that what gives them freedom to practice their beliefs is Jesus Christ, except Rev. Deku the minister of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church who adds by noting that physical freedom also comes from the traditional rulers. In this wise it is not out of place to briefly look at their views on the traditional practices in other words activities during the 'Hogbetsotso' festival.

### **Anlo Christian views on the traditional practices of the 'Hogbetsotso' festival**

Elder Abbey who is the secretary for the local council of churches in Anloga as already stated, notes that 'dɔdɔdɛ' which is one of the practices during the period of the festival is good however, he finds a problem with it. The problem is that it is done only once in a year, for him it should not be occasional but frequent throughout the year. He explains that since 'dɔdɔdɛ' is a general cleaning in order to get rid of filth throughout the traditional area its frequency would help keep the traditional area clean and free from communicable diseases. But doing it once in a year, he opines, can never achieve its purpose.

On the issue of the ban on drumming and general noise making which is another activity during the period of the festival, Elder Abbey categorically points out that the Anlo Christians have serious problem with it. He make a point

that the traditionalists are forcing the Christians to do something which is against their faith. He explains that the Bible says if something is not good for you to eat there is no need to give it to someone to eat. Therefore, if the traditionalists think that the activities they perform during the period of the ban is good for them they should not impose it on the Christians because Christians do not impose their practices like prayer and fasting on the traditionalists. It is for this reason that Christians should not be forced to obey the ban on drumming (Personal communication, April 21, 2015). He continues that the traditionalists understand they can reach out to God through offering sacrifices but the Anglo Christians believe it is only through Jesus Christ that one can get to God. He also says the constitution of the republic of Ghana talks about freedom of worship which he interprets it as 'you are free to worship whatever you like but not to the detriment of others' (Personal communication, April 21, 2015). It is for this reason that they resist the ban on drumming. He indicates that they believe in worshipping God by singing and drumming as God says it in the Bible, so there should not be restriction on drumming. He also states that although at one time the police commander of the area advised them to use the period of the ban to pray they did not see reason with him because they know that praising God with drums is a good thing which nobody should prevent.

Although Rev. Bokordedzi agrees that the traditional rulers are the custodians of the land he disagrees with them in view of the ban on drumming that covers Christians. He boldly states that the Christians in the traditional area are not against the traditional ban on drumming and general noise making but

what they dislike is the extension of the ban to their chapels where they worship (Personal communication, April 20, 2015). Like Elder Abbey, Rev. Bokordedzi talks about the constitution on the issue of freedom of worship. He makes a point that although the traditionalists give them the freedom to worship they are limiting the freedom by not allowing them to drum and pray in tongues in the period of the festival. He also notes that God want them to worship him with musical instruments like drums and he quotes Psalms 100 from the Bible to support it. In this respect, he goes on to say that if the traditionalists stop them from drumming and they obey it, it means the god of the traditionalists is more powerful than the Christian God (Personal communication, April 20, 2015). He emphatically indicates the reasons why they resist the ban: (i) the way the ban was placed without giving them prior information (ii) the diversity in which the ban was placed – in 2014 the ban was announced by Agbotadua Togbi Boni on the radio. When the announcement was traced to the Awoamefia Togbi Sri III he says he knows nothing about the ban. When they went to Avadada he also says a different story (iii) the ban was placed with a threat that those who disobey will be beaten.

When the researcher tried to find out whether the observance of the ban can negatively affect Anlo Christian beliefs and practices Rev. Bokordedzi answers ‘no’ and ‘yes’. In the first place, he says ‘no’ because his understanding is that Christians can use the period of the ban to wait on God since the Bible is not taken away from the Christians. What he means by waiting on God is fasting, praying and studying the Bible with singing without drumming in the

chapel. In the second place, he says 'yes' for the reason that different activities come with different messages for example somebody may receive miracle through the word of God or through drumming and singing. He explains that people come to church with different motives and he uses the woman with the blood issue in the New Testament, who decided to touch the hem of Jesus' garment which she did and got her healing. He goes on that in the same way someone can decide to be healed through drumming and singing. He maintains that God knows why he wants to be worshipped with drumming and singing therefore, if they are attacked when drumming in their chapels God will defend them. At this point the researcher draws his attention to the annual clashes but he quickly says, if the ban is placed because of the gods of the land the traditionalists should allow the gods to fight not human beings as they have been doing. On this note, he concludes that obeying the ban means compromising their Christian beliefs and practices.

According to Rev. Agbeko, (the chairperson of the council) Anlo Christians will always and wholeheartedly uphold and support positive activities which are geared towards developing the traditional area like fund raising for projects during the 'Hogbetsotso' festival. However, he kicks against negative activities such as 'nugbidodo' and the ban on drumming and general noise making which contrast their Christian beliefs and practices. He notes that the 'nugbidodo' is associated with sacrifices that contrast Christian worship. In the case of the ban he states that it is one of the rituals which the traditionalists perform that stands against Christian practices. He also agrees with Elder

Abbey's view that the ban is an imposition on the entire Christian denominations in the traditional area in terms of Christian beliefs and worship. When it gets to whether the observance of the ban will negatively affect their Christian beliefs and practices, he says it will never affect their salvation but it will negatively affect their beliefs and practices. He supports this by referring to 1 Corinthians that if eating of meat which is offered to idols will affect new converts there is no need to eat it.

Rev. Fr. Mikado points out that every system or religion celebrates festivals. He goes on that in the Bible there are some festivals such as the Passover feast which commemorates the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt under king Pharaoh. Likewise, the 'Hogbetsotso' festival is to commemorate the exodus of the Anlo people from the hardships at Tetsie under king Agokoli. He indicates that in life one must know his origin (where he comes from), where he is and where he is going.

He agrees that in the case of the 'Hogbetsotso' festival, there are some activities that take place before the grand durbar which crowns it. He likens these activities to that of Christianity during the Easter celebration. He notes that during the period of Easter there are some activities that precede the Easter Sunday. He indicates that in the Roman Catholic Church, the period for the activities is termed 'lent' which means preparation before the actual Easter Sunday. The lent has three important pillars in the Roman Catholic Church. In the Roman Catholic Church, these pillars comprise three important activities: (i) fasting (ii) kindness in a form of sharing things to people (iii) prayer (Personal

communication, April 21, 2015). Rev. Fr. Mikado also states that the Easter period ends on the Pentecost Sunday for the members of the Roman Catholic Church which means that there are activities before, during and after Easter Sunday. He notes that since Easter signifies commemoration of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, members of the Roman Catholic Church pay important attention to its activities than that of the celebration of Christmas. He gives the reason that without the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ there will be nothing like Christianity today. Likewise, the 'Hogbetsotso' festival is a vital period of commemoration that is why the traditionalists and the people of Aṅlɔ give prominence to the activities that are performed during the period of the festival (Personal communication, April 21, 2015). However, he agrees with Rev. Agbeko that some of the activities are not favourably to the Aṅlɔ Christians especially the ban on drumming and general noise making. Rev. Fr. Mikado goes on and makes it clear that other activities like 'nugbidodo' and 'dɔdɔde' do not worry the Aṅlɔ Christians like the ban. He also notes that in every Christian denomination in the traditional area singing, drumming and dancing play vital role during the time of worship. Therefore, the ban is regarded as an imposition and an infringement on their freedom of worship hence the disobedience of the ban by some denominations which normally leads to serious misunderstanding and clashes between the traditional faithful and the Christians.

Interestingly, Rev. Mikado says that at one time when the ban was placed, his congregants wanted to disobey but he confidently told them that the Bible says if it depends on Christians they should live in peace with everybody.

He also quoted 1 Corinthians 8 which says one should not eat meat offered to an idol which will cause another believer in the Christian faith to fall. At this point he says he explained issues to his congregants and they started obeying the ban to date. He goes ahead that the reason why some Christian denominations do not observe the ban is they think observing it is tantamount to obeying and practicing the Aṅlɔ traditional beliefs from which they converted to the Christian faith. At this point, he refers to Galatians 5 (which is the selected text for this study) which talks about circumcision and uncircumcision and he says what it simply mean is love for each other and he particularly, pinpoints verse 26 which he says, it instructs that nobody should offend each other.

On the issue of whether observance of the ban by the Aṅlɔ Christians will negatively affect their beliefs and practices, Rev. Fr. Mikado categorically states that observance of the ban will not in anyway affect one's Christian life negatively in terms of beliefs and practices. He explains that if Aṅlɔ Christians actually know and believe in God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and put this belief into practice, obeying the ban will never affect them negatively except if they do not know the God in whom they believe and what they practice.

Although Rev. Deku agrees with the others that the ban is an imposition of Aṅlɔ traditional beliefs on Christians, his stance falls in line with that of Rev. Fr. Mikado. This is because he says his congregants in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in the traditional area do observe the ban. He goes on that Saint Paul asks Christians to live in peace with others for that matter his church



thinks there is the need to respect the traditional rulers because they were worshiping God before the Bremen missionaries came to the area. He makes it clear that this respect does not mean that his church practices the traditional beliefs. When it comes to whether the observance of the ban will negatively affect the Christian beliefs and practices, he says drumming and singing are not the only means of worshiping God. He continues that “even if someone asks you not to speak he does not deny you from relating to God”. He notes that the clashes that result due to disobedience from some Christian denominations is not good for the Christian faith. On the issue of how the clashes between the churches who disobeyed the ban and the traditional rulers were resolved, Elder Abbey, Rev. Bokordedzi, Rev. Agbeko and Rev. Fr. Mikado made it plain that the local council of churches’ leadership went to the traditional rulers but it could not be resolved.

When the researcher, posed question regarding lessons that the Christians in the traditional area learnt from the clashes, there were various views. Here, Rev. Bokordedzi says the Christians learnt to be armed and vigilant. Elder Abbey indicates that the churches with low population do come together for worship to form a strong force during the period of the ban. Rev. Agbeko puts it that the churches learnt to be united.

In looking at the way forward, Rev. Bokordedzi and Elder Abbey indicated that there should be memorandum of understanding between the churches and the traditional rulers. Rev. Agbeko’s view was that the churches should maintain their ground until the traditional rulers agree to exempt them

from the ban. According to Rev. Fr. Mikado, there must be unity in the traditional area because the people of Anlo are one. Therefore, the factions that are involved in the annual clashes should live in peace so that the festival which is supposed to be a joyous occasion would not generate into pain and bring division among people in the traditional area. Rev. Deku's position is that those who resist the ban should see reason that it is not only drumming that counts for worshiping God. He goes on that Christians can use the period of the ban to pray to God because they are not invited to take part in the traditional rituals. He notes that the Bremen missionaries did not bring drums therefore drumming did not form the major part of their worship. He laments that members of the local council of churches seem to think that since the Evangelical Presbyterian Church and the Roman Catholic Church do not belong to the council, the two churches are supporting the traditionalists rather than the two churches cherish to live in peace with everybody. When the researcher asked him if it will be possible for the Evangelical Presbyterian Church to talk to other churches to see reason with them in obeying the ban, he says that is the right thing to do. However, he goes on to say since the other churches regard the two churches as unspiritual it will be difficult to do it. He regrets there is no common understanding among Christian churches "though we use the same Bible and bear the name of Christ".

### **Conclusion**

The key issues in this chapter are the advent of the Christian faith in Anloland, beliefs and practices of Christians in Anlo and the views of Anlo

Christians on the traditional religious practices in the period of the 'Hogbetsotso' festival. The Bremen missionaries were the first to bring the Christian faith to Anloland.

The traditional rulers led by the then Awoamefia accepted and allowed the missionaries to spread the gospel in the area. Although the missionaries encountered clashes with the traditional faithfuls, their main achievement was the establishment of Evangelical Presbyterian Church in the traditional area. Presently, there are many Christian denominations in the Anlo Traditional Area. Some of the denominations belong to the local council of churches. Today, the beliefs and practices of the Anlo Christians are not different from the central Christian beliefs and practices. The Anlo Christians believe in God the father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and the Bible. They practice their beliefs through worship by praying, fasting, singing, drumming, dancing, studying the Bible, proclaiming the good news and caring for the needy. It is their belief in Jesus Christ that gives them freedom to exhibit their beliefs. Again, it is only Rev. Deku who realized that the traditional rulers also give the Anlo Christians physical freedom to practice their beliefs. Therefore, he thinks it is necessary for Christians to observe the ban which will not negatively affect Christian belief and practice.

One can conveniently say that the Anlo Christians have a mixed view in terms of the activities the traditionalists perform, especially the ban on drumming and general noise making during the 'Hogbetsotso' festival. The

reason is that on the one hand, the leadership that belongs to the local council of churches, regard the rituals that are performed during the period of the ban as traditional beliefs and practices that are not in conformity with the Christian beliefs and practices. They also think the ban negatively affect their beliefs and practices and contravene their freedom of worship as enshrined in the constitution of the Republic of Ghana. Therefore, they disobey the ban that leads to clashes and serious injuries this reflects the basic attitude of both theistic and atheistic existentialism: in one way it accepts “freedom” and in another way resists anything that promotes law as discussed earlier in the literature review of the study. On the other hand, the leaders of the churches who are not part of the council consider the period of the ban as a vital time for prayer and fasting with Bible study because since they are (Christians) not invited to witness or take part in the rituals that are performed by the traditionalists. They also know and understand that the ban and the rituals do not and will never have negative impact on their Christian beliefs and practices. The reason is that during the period of the ban they are not prevented from two important things: (i) worshipping God with songs of praise with clapping of hands, prayer and Bible study (ii) relating to God and man on individual bases. In this light, one can conclude that the Anlo Christians have a divided front when it comes to the traditional ban on drumming and general noise making.

Since the Anlo Christians read the Bible it is good to look at the content of Paul’s letter to the Galatians before reading Galatians 5 which is selected for

this study and its appropriation to the Anlo Christians who belong the the local council of churches.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### SURVEY OF PAUL'S LETTER TO THE GALATIANS AND DISTANTIATION OF THE SELECTED TEXT

#### Introduction

The last chapter dwelt on the interviews conducted for some executive members of the local council of churches at Anloga and two ministers whose denominations do not belong to the council. The interviewees read the Bible to guide themselves and their congregants. This chapter briefly handles the content of Paul's letter to the Galatians by looking at the major themes and issues in each chapter before settling on the selected passage for this thesis.

Galatians 1:2 is explicit on the recipients of the letter. The verse 2 points to the fact that the letter is addressed *Tais ecclesiasts Galatias* (to the church of Galatia). The Greek word *ecclesia* used in verse 2 means "assembly or church" and it shows that the letter was directed to a particular class of people. The word *ecclesia* is used by different people to refer to different categories of groups of people. People like Euripides, Plato and Herodotus used the word *ecclesia* in the 5<sup>th</sup> Century B.C. (Schmidt, 1964). On the one hand, the word *ecclesia* was used to refer to assemblies of the citizens which were convened in various cities at frequent intervals (Coenen, 1975).

On the other hand, Paul uses the word in his letters to address specific local gatherings of believers in the Christian faith in different cities such as Corinth (1Corinthians 1:2). Wainwright (1962) argues that there is an implicit

Trinitarianism in the way Paul understands and uses the word *ecclesia*. He goes on that Paul uses the word to show:

- (i) God's people
- (ii) Christ's body
- (iii) The temple of the Holy Spirit.

Erickson (1993) simply puts it that the concept of *ecclesia* in the New Testament points to all Christians who gather or meet at a particular place for activities concerning their faith with regard to the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ who died and reconciled them to God.

A look at the meaning of the word *ecclesia* and how it has been used by some scholars as indicated earlier, one can conveniently say that in Galatians 1:2, Paul uses it for those who ascribed to the Christian faith in Galatia. This shows that Paul specifically addressed God's people who were believers in Jesus Christ in Galatia as stated in Galatians 1:3 "Grace and peace to you from God our father and the Lord Jesus Christ..." (NIV). Although Paul addresses his letter to the Galatians it was not clear where the letter was sent (Bart, 2004).

The uncertainty of the destination of the letter was due to the fact that: originally Galatia was part of north – central area of Asia – Minor which is the present day Turkey (Ngewa, 2010). Galatia was also a sparsely populated region that was linked by Romans with densely populated area of the south with cities like Lystra, Derbe, Iconium and Pesidian Antioch (Bart, 2004). According to Bart (2004), the Romans called this whole area Galatia "even though the name

had earlier been used only to refer to its northern portion” (p. 332). Ngewa (2010) put it that in Paul’s era, Galatia could be the original Asia-Minor that was initially known as Galatia or the larger province that was added. Today, this is the uncertainty that possesses the problem in terms of the recipients who Paul addressed.

However, some commentators like Cole (1965) notes that Paul wrote to the Northern Galatians. This view was supported by the view that the Northerners had a reputation and willingness to serve as mercenaries rather than being loyal to a single cause. This agrees with Paul’s accusation with regard to believers in Galatia who were ready to change Paul’s gospel to another gospel.

There is a counter view from other commentators like Bruce (1982), George (1994) and Longenecker (1990) that Paul addresses the south Galatia churches. The reason for this position was that Paul personally established churches in Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe and refers to those who were converted to the Christian faith there as his spiritual children. The argument ranges on but it is not the core for this chapter or this work. As indicated earlier, the paramount concern for this chapter is a brief look at the major issue(s) or theme(s) in Paul’s letter to the Galatians and the distantiation of Galatians 5.

### **Main issue(s) in Paul’s letter to Galatians**

This section briefly looks at the contents of Paul’s letter to the Galatians in view of major theme(s). It also throws light on the selection of Galatians 5 for this study. Galatians 5 is one of the divisions of the undisputed letters of Paul to



the Galatians. Many scholars like Betz (1988), Bruce (2002) and Martyn (1998) already did some work on the date and occasion of the letter. The concern here is about a critical look at the issues that Paul handled.

The first division of Paul's letter to the Galatians serves as a warning to the Gentiles who accepted the Christian faith in Galatia not to depart from the gospel of Christ, which brings justification by faith, and accept another gospel (1:6-8). The second part deals with Paul's visit to Jerusalem and his conflict with Peter at Antioch on religious grounds with regard to Jewish dietary laws (2:1-2, 11-21). The third section handles the supremacy of faith over the custodial function of the law, in which the law cannot annul the previous covenant promises (3:1-11). Division four of the letter is about the analogy of the heir and also traces the movement of the believer from the slavery of the law to sonship (4:1-31). The fifth part dwells on Christ's freedom from a yoke of slavery, resistance to circumcision in relation to the whole law and antagonism between flesh and spirit (5:1-26). The sixth part which is the last, deals with ethical responsibility on the part of the Galatians who gained freedom in Christ through the spirit and were justified by faith (6:1-18).

A close look at the divisions in view of Paul's letter to Galatians is indicative of a clash between two religious concepts which are Judaism and Christianity. The content of the letter reveals what Paul perceives to be wrong with traditional Judaism which demands that the identity of the people of God must be associated with the practices of the Jewish law which calls for circumcision and dietary regulation.

In the first part or chapter of the letter, Paul refers to some people in Greek as *hoi tarassontes* which means “the agitators” or “the troublemakers” Galatians 1:7. These agitators were influencing the Gentile Christians in Galatia to abandon the “gospel of Christ” and turn away from the “grace of Christ”. The major issue here is living in the grace of Christ and maintaining the gospel of Christ. In this light, Paul was astonished about how the believers in Galatia were influenced against the “gospel of Christ” to embrace another gospel that he describes as “no gospel”. The picture here is a distinct opposition coming from what Paul termed “another gospel” (Galatians 1:7a) against what he calls “gospel of Christ” (Galatians 1:7b). The understanding here is that Paul was the bearer or preacher of the “gospel of Christ” while that of “another gospel” were the agitators or “troublemakers”.

Bruce (2002), observe that Paul mentions the agitators in every chapter of his letter to the Galatians by saying

Right at the beginning of his letter, instead of thanking God for his addresses as was his standard practice, he speaks rather of his astonishment that they were in the process of abandoning the God of Grace and the gospel, due to the influence of some who were stirring up trouble by plumulgating a mutation of one, true gospel (p. 25).

Bruce’s (2002) statement just quoted underscores two opposing views: another gospel as against gospel of Christ as mentioned earlier. On the one hand, the proponents of “another gospel” in Galatia “were telling the Galatians that

Paul had presented a gospel, but not the best gospel. Theirs is much better and will offer a faster cure for their spiritual problems than the one Paul preached” (Ngewa, 2010, p. 16). On the other hand, Paul also declares that the “gospel of Christ” that he preached to the Galatians was not man made, that is, not received from any man and that it was a Gospel that he was not taught by someone. He substantiates his declaration that he received it as a revelation from Jesus Christ for the Gentiles (Galatians 1:12, 16). He goes on to state that after receiving the revelation he did not go to the apostles in Jerusalem to be taught by them but he rather went to Arabia (Galatians 1:17). In this light the first division sets the tone for the major issue: “another gospel” which disagrees with the “gospel of Christ”.

In the case of the second division of Paul’s letter to the Galatians, the three apostles: James, Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars of the early Church gave Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship. They also allowed Peter and Barnabas to preach to the Gentiles (Galatians 2:9). When Paul began executing his mission, a conflict arose between Paul and Peter in terms of Jewish dietary laws (Galatians 2:11 – 15). Paul explains that one ought to “know that a person is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ” Galatians 2:16 (NIV). Here, “the works of the law” and “faith in Jesus Christ” are two different projections. The way Paul projects them shows that “the works of the law” and “faith in Jesus Christ are incompatible in terms of justification before God. This is because in 2:12 to 13 with reference to Peter, Paul says:

For before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group (NIV).

The pronoun “he” in the text just quoted refers to Peter. Peter’s attitude in the text shows that he seems to be on horns of delimita. This was because at one time he ate with the Gentile Christians but at another time he avoided the Gentile believers and ate with those who belonged to the circumcision party. But looking at how he boldly ate with the circumcision group (who came from James) in the presence of both the Gentile Christians and the circumcision team indicates that he was comfortable with the circumcision group. This was indicative of two groups: the circumcision group and Gentile Christians. The circumcision group simply means Jewish Christians and the uncircumcised group refers to the Gentile Christians (Ngewa, 2010).

According to Ngewa (2010),

Paul deliberately refers to them in this way...that these people were proud of their circumcision and would have liked to require the Gentiles to be circumcised too. They do not seem to have raised this as an issue in Antioch, but what they did do was make it clear that they expected Peter and the other Jews there to obey the full law. Part of this law was that Jews would never share meals with Gentiles. Peter gave in to their pressure and began to avoid associating with Gentiles (p. 71).

The circumcision group succeeds in luring Peter to their side but Paul promptly reacts in favour of the Gentile Christians.

What comes out clearly is an intra-religious debate between two powerful groups in terms of their religious beliefs and practices. This is because the group that (Galatians 2:12) stood for circumcision could be seen as one aspect of the “works of the law”. Unlike the circumcision group, the Gentile Christians in Galatia were not practicing circumcision. In this wise, it is convenient to say that the intra-religious debate is between the two different groups as indicated earlier: “the works of the law” and “faith in Jesus Christ”.

Consequently, the Jews who stood for circumcision were comfortable with “the works of the law”. Here, the conflict between Peter and Paul indicates that Peter who was a leader at one time identifies himself with those who believed and practiced the law. In another vein, Paul who claimed to be an apostle sent not from man but Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:1) was uncomfortable with “the works of the law”. Therefore, he stood for “faith in Jesus Christ” with regards to the Gentile Christians.

Paul sustains the debate in the third segment of his letter to the Galatians. He makes it clear in Galatians 3:10 that those who practice the works of the law are under a curse. He substantiates it by quoting Deuteronomy 27:26 “cursed be he that confirmeth not all the works of the law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen” (KJV). He goes on in Galatians 3:11 that nobody is justified by the law before God and he gives a reason for it by appealing to Habakkuk 2:4b

“but the just shall live by his faith” (KJV). Here, Paul’s position in Galatians 3:10 shows that he does not understand why Christians in Galatia seem to turn away from his gospel that they received for the Jewish circumcision which has to do with the obedience to the law. The first part of the verse 10 “for all who rely on the works of the law” (NIV), point to some people who think that God can accept them in view of their performance of the law. This class of people thinks they can attain their own righteousness by fulfilling the requirements of the law hence refusing to accept the righteousness that God makes available in Christ (Cranfield, 1975).

Fuller (1963, 1966, 1971, 1977) thinks anyone who tries to gain righteousness by legal works tries to bribe God. He goes on to say that bribery contrasts what is stated in Deuteronomy 10:17 “for the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of Lords, the great, the mighty and the terrible God, who is not partial and takes not bribe” (RSV) and Deuteronomy 27:25 “cursed be he who takes a bribe to slay an innocent person’. And all the people shall say, Amen” (RSV). Here, the two verses just quoted indicate a curse pronounced on anyone who breaks the law in terms of taking a bribe.

Therefore, it is no surprise when Paul points to the same Deuteronomy 27:26 as quoted earlier against relying on the law. He quickly adds that relying on the law does not make one justified before God (Galatians 3:11). He solidifies his position in verse 13 that Christ comes to redeem from the curse of the law. In verse 14 he vehemently pronounces that Christ redeems in order to bring Abraham’s blessing to the non-Jews. This shows that anyone who accepts

Christ's redemption from the curse of the law can live without the works of the law and still be justified before God. Paul excellently explains a point in verse 17 that the law that was introduced four hundred and thirty (430) years later does not nullify the covenant with its promise established by God with Abraham. He indicates that what was promised in terms of the covenant, might be given to those who believe in Jesus Christ through faith in verse 22.

In this respect, one can conveniently say the debate which is noted in the first part of the letter through the second part does not change and it heightens in the third section of the letter. As indicated earlier in this third division, the level of the debate shows that those who rely on "the works of the law" are under a curse since they do not continue to do everything written in the book of the law. On the other hand, those who live by "faith in Jesus Christ" are justified (without the law) before God.

The state of the debate is not different in the fourth section of the letter. The debate is presented in a form of analogy of an heir and from slavery of the law to sonship. Here, the picture given to the debate, shows that the law in view of circumcision was discredited through an allegorical interpretation of Abraham and his two sons. One son was by a slave woman (Hagar) and the other by a free woman. The slave woman represents Mount Sinai bearing children of slavery which corresponds to the present city of Jerusalem while the free woman represents Jerusalem above and she bears children of promise who are free from slavery. This depicts two categories of people:

- i. A woman in slavery with her children
- ii. A woman in freedom with her children of promise.

The woman in slavery who represents Mount Sinai reflects the law in terms of circumcision on the one hand. On the the other hand, the state of the woman in freedom indicates “freedom” from the slavery for that matter the law. Here, the difference is clear such that there is no way the children of slavery can share in the inheritance of the children of promise who are free. This difference, paints a picture of a tension between the woman in slavery and the one in freedom.

In the fifth part of letter which is chosen for this study it gives an emphatic statement about the debate. The statement with other sentences in the division indicates a way forward for tackling and dealing with the debate. The emphatic statement and supporting sentences talk about:

- i. Sustaining the freedom gained in Christ Jesus and never to submit again to a yoke of slavery (verse 1).
- ii. Anyone who receives circumcision is bound to obey the whole law which is tantamount to falling away and separation from Christ Jesus (verse 3 – 4).
- iii. In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of any value but faith that works through love (verse 6) and
- iv. The whole law is fulfilled in a word which is one should love his or her neighbours as himself or herself (verse 14),



The debate that runs through the first four divisions of the letter points to “the works of the law” which stands in a sharp contrast to “faith in Jesus Christ” as noted earlier. The fifth section of the letter does not affect the debate, it upholds it and goes ahead by making categorical statements in terms of handling the debate. Section six which is the last part of the letter rules on the debate. This last division gives a mixed view about circumcision by repeating part of what is stated in 5:6 and 6:15 which notes that neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means much or of paramount importance. Unlike what the second part of 5:6 says, the second part of 6:15 clearly says “what counts is the new creation” as against “circumcision or uncircumcision”. Here, the focus is on “new creation” however circumcision is not condemned. The mixed idea about circumcision is that on the one hand circumcision does not receive a favourable nod in 6:12 – 13 and on the other hand circumcision is placed at the same level with uncircumcision. This sustains the tension that cuts across the whole letter for which a rule was given as stated in 6:16 “peace and mercy to all who follow this rule ...” (NIV). One can say that the rule is 6:15 “Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is the new creation” (NIV) which precedes 6:16 as quoted earlier. The understanding of the rule is whether one is circumcised or not he should hold onto “the new creation” 6:16b (NIV) like 5: 6b “faith that works through love” (my own translation). Here a premium is placed on “the new creation” in other words “faith that works through love” but not on circumcision or uncircumcision.

## Summary

The axis on which the six divisions of the letter to the Galatians revolves is an internal religious problem (conflict) in a form of debate which underpins two different religious positions that permeate the entire letter. The first part unveils the two opposing views: “the gospel of Christ” which Paul stands for and defends which abhors “another gospel” which agitators or troublemakers whose names were not given proclaims. It means the debate is between “the gospel of Christ” and “another gospel”. The second aspect of the letter refers to the debate as “faith in Jesus Christ” which opposes “the works of the law” in respect of justification before God. The debate shows a clear distinction between those who believed in Jesus Christ and those who were comfortable with “the works of the law” and stood for circumcision. Paul categorically identifies himself with those who believed in Jesus Christ without circumcision but Peter who was in dilemma in other words inconsistent at a point associates himself with the circumcision group which eventually generates into conflict between him and Paul. In the third part of the letter, the debate indicates that those who depend on “the works of the law” are under a curse but those who live by “faith in Jesus Christ” without the law are justified before God. The fourth division of the letter gives allegorical picture of the debate in form of a woman in slavery with her children as a representation of the law in view of circumcision on the one hand. On the other hand, a free woman with her children of promise who are free from the slavery of the law. Section five of the letter which is the main concern for the study gives categorical statement which is supported by other sentences. The categorical

statement and its auxiliaries about the tension indicate perpetual stay in freedom gained in Christ whilst obedience to the whole law means falling away which is separation from Christ, circumcision or uncircumcision is not necessary but faith that works through love and fulfilling the whole law is loving each other. The sentences are indicative of dealing with the debate. The final segment of the letter tries to give a ruling in view of the tension. The ruling is clear that both circumcision and uncircumcision do not count but the “new creation” is the main issue that counts. The new creation reflects faith that works through love in 5: 6b. The rule does not condemn circumcision but places value on the new creation in other words faith that works through love.

### **Conclusion**

A look at the divisions of the letter to the Galatians shows internal conflict between two strong religious groups which are Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians. The contents of the letter reveals what Paul perceives to be wrong with traditional Judaism which demands that the identity of the people of God must be associated with practices of Jewish law which call for circumcision and dietary regulations. He considers the demands of the law as both curse and slavery. Nevertheless, Paul comes out strongly with a concept of Christ’s freedom from the yoke of slavery on the basis of faith. He vividly deals with the Jewish religious rite of circumcision and the whole law but urges the Galatian Christians to exhibit the freedom gained in Christ by loving each other which signifies the fulfillment of the whole law. The way by which Paul reacts to circumcision with regard to the whole law but turns round to uphold fulfillment

of the whole law by showing love to one another in the fifth part of the letter creates room for handling the clash as indicated earlier.

### **Why study Galatians 5**

As indicated earlier the first four divisions which set the tone for the clash talk about a warning to the Gentiles who accepted the Christian faith in Galatia not to depart from the gospel of Christ which brings justification by faith and accept another gospel. It goes on with the conflict between Paul and Peter at Antioch on religious grounds with regards to Jewish dietary law. It continues with the supremacy of faith in Christ over custodial function of law in which the law cannot annul the previous covenant law. It ends with analogy of the heir and slavery of the law to sonship. This is different from segments five and six of the letter. While part six deals with what can be termed as ethical responsibility on the part of the Galatians who gained freedom in Christ through the spirit and were justified by faith, division five points to a number of issues which include: maintaining freedom gained in Christ Jesus and drawing away from a yoke of slavery, resistance to circumcision in relation to the whole law, loving one another in order to fulfill the whole law and dealing with the antagonism between flesh and spirit.

Explicitly, Galatians 5 focuses on issue which is different from Galatians 1 – 4 and 6 with regard to the internal problem in the whole letter. Paul's letter to Galatians portrays an imminent danger of adulterating the concept of freedom which he had taught them (Douglas, 1990). However, in Galatians 5 Paul

entreats the Christians in Galatia to stand firm in their new found freedom and not to place their necks again under a yoke full of bondage. He cautions them against the Jewish religious rite of circumcision which is bound to the keeping of the whole law. Nevertheless, he stipulates how Christians should conduct themselves in order to keep the freedom in their show of love to each other which sums up the whole law. This seems to show a kind of inconsistency with regard to freedom which calls for resistance to circumcision that is tied to the whole law and the use of the same freedom to fulfill the same whole law. This seemingly inconsistency points to handling of the problem in other words intra-religious clash that runs through the entire letter to the Galatians. It is against this backdrop that Galatians 5 is chosen for this study and its appropriation for Christians in the targeted traditional area.

### **Appropriateness of Galatians 5 for Anlo Christians**

The reason why Galatians 5 and its appropriation for Christians in the chosen traditional area is relevant is because of the way it addresses the theme of freedom from the yoke of slavery. The exercise of freedom is a relief to any individual or group of people who are under any kind of bondage. For example, the position of the agitators mentioned in Galatians 1:7 and 5:10 shows that those who accepted the Christian faith must be circumcised to qualify them as people of God. However, Paul teaches that the freedom gained in Christ does not require circumcision which relates to the whole law in Galatians 5. Here, Galatians 5 portrays freedom in a Christian's life which calls for resistance to circumcision in relation to the Jewish law. However, the text also talks about the use of

freedom to fulfill the whole law which is summed up in its exhibition of loving a neighbour as oneself in 5:4.

In this wise, 5:1– 4 show rejection of circumcision in view of the whole law however 5:14 seems to favour the whole law as it talks about how the whole law can be fulfilled by showing love to one another. This shows the way forward for handling the headache over circumcision in relation to the whole law. Reading Galatians 5, therefore provides way for handling the annual tension created between Christians and traditional authorities in the Anlo during the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival. The reason is that today, the Bible is generally used by many people across the globe. People of different religious persuasions such as the Christians, Moslems and the Traditionalists refer to the Bible when it is necessary. In the case of Christians the Bible becomes their main book of instruction for which Christians in the Anlo Traditional Area are not exempted.

It is observed that the Christians in the said traditional area regard the traditional ban on drumming and general noise making in the period of the “Hogbetsotso” festival as a yoke of oppression and as an infringement on their Christian freedom as stated earlier in the background of this study. The ban annually brings misunderstanding between the traditional rulers and a segment of the Christian community that results in clashes in which members of both parties at times, sustain various degrees of injuries. Although Galatians 5 does not talk about traditional or religious ban on drumming it indicates a kind of tension between two different religious practices. The understanding is that there is an element of tension in Galatians 5 and that of the traditional rulers and

Christians in the selected traditional area. In the case of Galatians 5, the tension seems to concern some Jewish Christians who demanded that Galatian Christians should obey the act of circumcision which is a religious belief (in view of the whole law) in Judaism which Paul strongly opposes. On the part of the Christians in the traditional area of study, the annual tension come in the period of the ban on drumming and general noise making which they regard as traditional belief and religious law that contravenes their Christian belief and practices. In this wise, there is dissimilarity between the tension in the area of study and those in Galatian 5 about intra-religious debate. In Galatians 5, the religious debate seems to be between some Jewish Christians and Christians in Galatia but in the Anlo Traditional Area it is between Christians and traditional rulers. Despite the dissimilarity there is a similarity between the Anlo Christians and that of the Galatians 5 with regard to the tension. The similarity is the religious undertone that underscores the debate in Galatian 5 and the one between the Christians who do not observe the ban and traditional authorities in the Anlo land. Therefore, reading Galatians 5 can be appropriated for the Anlo Christians in view of the tension that generates into annual clashes during the Hogbetsotso festival.

### **Structure of Galatians 5**

Some scholars such as Bruce (2002) caption Galatians 5 as “Christian freedom, flesh and spirit” (pp. 228 – 239), Betz (1988) talks about “the centrality of the notion of freedom” (p. 255) in Galatians 5 and Martyn (1998) comments on “called to freedom” in Galatians 5:13 as “they are set free from all that

formerly enslaved them, the cursing law, sin, the element of the cosmos...” (p. 485).

While Martyn (1998) structures Galatians 5 as

- i. A warning verses 2 – 12
- ii. Daily life in wartime verses 13 – 24
- iii. Exhortation verses 25 – 6:10

Betz (1988) puts it as:

- i. A warning against acceptance of the Jewish torch verses 1–12
- ii. A warning against corruption by the flesh verses 13–24
- iii. Recommendations in form of *sententiae* verses 25 – 6 : 10

and Bruce (2002) have it as

- i. Christian freedom verse 1–12
  - a. The law demands total commitment verses 2 – 6
  - b. Stern words for the trouble makers verse 7 – 12.
- ii. Flesh and spirit verses 13 – 26
  - a. The way of love verses 13 – 15
  - b. Walking by the spirit verses 16 – 18
  - c. The works of the flesh verses 19 – 21
  - d. The fruit of the spirit verses 22 – 26



The scholarly structure(s) of Galatians 5 reflect the caption and comments the scholars give to Galatians 5 as noted earlier in order to suit their view about the text.

However, in this study the researcher formulates and uses the following structure:

- i. Freedom in Christ by faith and uselessness of circumcision verses 1 – 6
- ii. Hard words and punishment for the agitators verses 7 – 12
- iii. The use of freedom to fulfill the whole law verses 13 – 15
- iv. Opposition between the spirit and flesh verses 16 – 18
- v. The works of the spirit verses 19 – 21
- vi. The fruit of the spirit verses 22 – 26

In this respect, the distantiation or reading of the selected text for the study takes into consideration the structure designed for the study.

### **Critical tool for reading the text**

It is already noted in the methodology section of this study that the synchronic approach which is a literary reading was employed for reading the selected text. This approach allows the text to speak for itself and enables the reader to distance himself or herself from the context of the text (Draper, 2001). As explained earlier, the characteristics of text as literary is the one that lifts them out of the context of their origin and read widely by any individual or community outside the original context of the text (Ellis, 1974). It focuses on noting and using predominant themes, metaphors and symbols as an interpretive

key to the New Testament (West, 1993). This shows that meanings of texts are not limited to the past but the text can be read for possible meanings for the present and future context. In this wise, this study looks at the content of the chosen text by employing the main theme(s), metaphors, key words and phrases in reading the text, in view of the flow of thought (ideas), the literary form (a letter, parable, question, information) and how it relates to the text (Harrington, 1990). In this light, the principles that came out after reading the text were considered alongside the Anlo context with regard to the second state known as contextualization of the Tri-PEM as noted earlier.

### **The text**

1. For freedom Christ has set us free; therefore stand firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery. 2 Listen! I Paul say to you that if you get circumcised, Christ will be of no benefit to you. 3 Now, I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obliged to obey the whole law. 4 You are separated from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace. 5 For through the spirit by faith we expectantly await for the hope of righteousness. 6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of any value but faith that works through love.

7 You were running well; who hindered you from obeying the truth? 8 This persuasion does not come from the one who calls you. 9 A little yeast affects the whole lump. 10 I have confidence in the Lord that you will take no other view; but he who is troubling you will bear the punishment. 11 But if I,

brothers and sisters, still preach circumcision, what reason am I still being persecuted? In that case the obstacle of the cross has been abolished. 12 I wish those agitators would castrate themselves. 13 Indeed, my brothers and sisters, you were called to freedom; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but serve one another through love. 14 For the whole law is fulfilled in a word, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself”. 15 But if you bite and exploit one another, see to it that you are not consumed by one another.

16 But I say, walk in the spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For the flesh desires against the spirit, and the spirit desires against the flesh, for they are opposed to each other, so that you cannot do the things that you want. 18 But if you are being led by the spirit, you are not under the law.

19 So the works of the flesh are visible: sexual immorality, impure motive, indecency, 20 idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, quarreling, jealousy, anger, selfish ambitions, divisions, party spirit, 21 envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like, I warn you just as I warned you before that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. 24 And those who belong to Jesus Christ have crucified the flesh together with its passions and desires. 25 If only we live by the spirit let us also walk with the spirit. 26 Let us not be boastful; provoking one another and envying each other (my own translation).

### Exegesis of the text

The exegesis of the text reflects the researcher's structure of the text as indicated earlier.

### Freedom in Christ by faith and uselessness of circumcision – verses 1 – 6.

*Tē* that opens the text is a dative (indirect definite article) which means “For or to the” and it points to the noun *ēleutheria* which is ‘freedom’. Therefore, *Tē ēleutheria* can be comfortably translated “For the freedom” portraying the word “freedom” as an abstract noun. Wenham (1965) indicates that “the commonest use of the dative case is to denote the person *to* or *for* whom anything is done, i.e. “the indirect object etc” (p. 34). However, “the dative *Tē ēleutheria* is peculiar. It is not a dative of cause and instrumentality, but one of “destiny and “purpose” (Betz, 1988, p. 225). In like manner, Bruce (1988) indicates that the dative *Tē ēleutheria* is best taken as instrumental, because the article specifies a particular liberty. In this respect, “the dative is less likely to be a dative of design or destination as though the sense were for liberty Christ has liberated us” (Bruce, 1982, p. 226). Here, it seems Betz (1988) and Bruce (1982) are not categorically sure of the dative *Tē ēleutheria* “for the freedom”. Wenham (1965) again notes another use of dative: “it can also be used for instrument by which something is done” (p. 46).

In this wise, the way the dative *Tē ēleutheria* was used in the first part of verse 1 does not denote a person to or for whom anything is done but it shows an instrument “by” or “with” which something is done. If this is so, *Tē ēleutheria*

“for freedom” can conveniently be interpreted and understood as “with freedom”. Here, it is “with freedom” that *hēmas Kristos ēleutherosen* which means “did Christ set us free”. Therefore, the first part of verse 1 *Tē ēleutheria hēmas Kristos ēleutherosen* can be interpreted and understood as “with freedom did Christ set us free” (Vine, 1996, p. 255). What it means is that the combination of the noun *ēleutheria* “freedom” and the verb *ēleutheroō* “to make free” stresses the completeness of the act showing the aorist tense *ēleutherosen* indicating that the act of “setting free” was done once for all by Christ (Vine, 1996).

In this sense *Tē ēleutheria* as translated as “For freedom” in this study gives preferable meaning and indicating that in order not to bring us into another or any bondage Christ did liberate us. Now, going by Wenham’s (1965) second use of dative *eleutheria*, “freedom” is an instrument used by Christ for the act of “setting free” which is not going to be repeated. This shows Christ Jesus’ perpetual relief from a specific adverse situation for his followers. The second part of the verse throws light on this adverse situation: “a yoke of slavery” (Cousar, 1982, p. 111). The word “slavery” in the phrase signifies hardship which Cousar (1982) describes as “wearisome burden”.

The phrase “yoke of slavery” in the second part of verse 1, echoes a common rabbinic expression ‘yoke of the torah’, used of proselytes as they assumed the responsibility of Judaism, but understood by Paul as a “wearisome burden”. On this backdrop of “slavery” “freedom” is used as an instrument to set one free.

In this light, the word “freedom” and the sentence “therefore, stand firm and do not subject again to a yoke of slavery” all in verse 1 show a “ringing declaration of Christian freedom, against falling into the trap of Jewish law” (Longenecker, 1990, p. 235). The concept of freedom was employed by Paul and “he emphatically places it at the beginning of the section on ethical exhortation and thus in the center of the argument” (Betz, 1988, p. 255). In verse 1, how “freedom” is used shows there is no need to submit to slavery.

Although, commentators are torn between whether verse 1 should be connected with 4:21 – 31 as its conclusion, a transition statement which can be attached to either the end of the previous passage or the beginning of the a new one, or a new section which was expected to begin, a look at the verse shows that the call to “freedom” is in its own right a mark of fresh idea in 5:1-26 which is different from the previous one in 4:1-31. Therefore, “freedom” clearly becomes the central idea or the pivot throughout the passage under study.

In order to maintain the issue of “freedom in Christ” the emphatic personal pronoun *egō* “I” along with the name Paul is used in verse 2. It shows a form of authority with regard to a specific warning against *peritomé* “circumcision”. The word “circumcision” is mentioned three (3) times in verses 2 – 6: two (2) times as verbs and one (1) times as a noun. How “circumcision” is used implies that those concerned had not yet received it. The consequence of receiving “circumcision” is explicitly expressed in the verb *ōphēleō* “benefit” in the future tense “Christ will be of no benefit to you” in the second part of verse 2. The future tense shows that the consequence “has an eschatological as well as

a present reference. That is to say in the last judgement, Christ will not be their saviour if they opt for the law in place of him” (Garlington, 2007, p. 141). The idea of “circumcision” in verse 2 is tied with the issue of “the whole law” in verse 3 which says “...every man who accepts circumcision ...is obliged to obey the whole law”. There is also a categorical statement in respect of the “law” in verse 4 “You are separated from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace”. Now the personal pronoun *ego* “I” in verse 2 and “I testify” that begins verse 3, and portray “a more formalized oath formula” (Garlington, 2007, p. 141), illustrates the level at which the concept of “freedom” as introduced in verse 1 is maintained and preferred to “circumcision and the whole law”. Verse 2 portrays two divergent concepts of covenant: (a) the old Mosaic covenant that deals with “circumcision” in terms of the law and (b) the new Christ’s covenant that deals with “freedom”. This throws light on two important ideas which are legalism and freedom in Christ. What it means is that to submit to the old Mosaic covenant is to imply that the new covenant initiated by Christ is null and void. Now, a choice of “circumcision” points to the obligation of obeying the whole law as indicated in verse 3, which means a separation from Christ in verse 4.

The phrase “Obliged to obey the whole law” in verse 3 is indicative of the “law” as a packaged deal such that one of it cannot be separated from another. This reflects Deuteronomy 5: 29 – 33 and 7:12 – 13 which talk about obeying all the commandments and covenant that has a link with the commandments. It means that all must be obeyed if one is under the “law”. Put

in another way, one is not free to pick and choose from among the commandments what he or she wishes. The phrase calls for doing the whole law as the obligation and privilege of those within the covenant. However, Fung (1988) says Paul's view is that to undergo circumcision is to embark on a secondary road to salvation, and this direction will necessarily result in failure because no one can keep the whole law. The argument is that circumcision cannot be divorced from obedience to the law. It means when one receives circumcision, he declares his own identify with Judaism for that matter, he is bound to keep the whole law (Cousar, 1982).

Meanwhile the categorical statement in verse 4 quoted earlier explicitly points to two consequences for anyone who is justified by the law. The consequences are: (a) separation from Christ and (b) falling away from grace. According to Cheung (2007), anyone who depends on Christ for his justification cannot then accept circumcision; he goes on and says that

A person who tries to be justified by law has “fallen away from grace”. To “fall from grace” does not mean to lose the favorable disposition on an important person, although it is true that any one who tries to be justified by law cannot find favour in God. Rather, here the expression means that law and grace are mutually exclusive as principles by which one seeks justification before God (p. 108).

Cheung's (2007) argument is that “law” and “grace” are two different principles. While the principle of “law” has to do with “obedience” which signifies “work”, “grace” which does not involve “obedience” to the law, comes



from Christ (Cheung, 2007). Now, the first consequence which concerns parting with Christ comes to a full force when the principle of “law” functions. Unlike in verse 1 where “Christ” sets one free, in verse 4 one is separated from “Christ” on the bases of adherence to the “law”. The picture it paints is that “law” and “Christ” are two projections by Paul. A point which should not be forgotten was “circumcision” is closely related to the “law”. Therefore, reacting against “circumcision” is reacting against the “law”. In this wise, receiving circumcision means a separation from Christ’s freedom as stated makes available in verse 1. Now, the second consequence “fallen away from the grace” takes place when one refuses to “stand firm” in the “freedom” indicated in verse 1. Standing firm in Christ’s freedom is what helps one not to fall from the “grace, “Grace” does not desire to be justified by obedience or works of the law because Christ has already set the stage in terms of freedom. This indicates an idea of freedom from ethnic or religious law which deals with the religious act of circumcision. The idea here means those who are in Christ are free from the religious practice of circumcision which is tied to the whole law.

The main “idea” that flows from verses 1-4 shows that “a yoke of slavery”, mentioned in the second part of verse 1, points to the issue of circumcision and the whole law addressed in verses 2 – 4. It implies that circumcision and obedience to the whole law depict “a yoke of slavery” which is stated in verse 1. In this way, the “freedom” in verse 1 is a type of freedom from circumcision and the whole law. The use of *gar* in verse 5 highlights a contrast between those who are trying to be justified by the law in verse 4 and those who

by faith are hoping for righteousness in verse 5. Verse 5 is pregnant with words like *hemeis* “we”, *pneumatic* “through the spirit” *ek pisteos* “by faith” and *apekdechometha* “await”. *Hemeis*, “we” which is emphatic first person plural personal pronoun suggests a particular class of people. The way it is used in Paul’s letter to the Galatians, probably refers to Jewish Christians as “we Jewish Christians” (Garlington, 2007, p. 143). This means that in contrast to justification by the law, this class of people through *pneuma* “Spirit”, they expectantly await by the help of the “faith” in Christ for righteousness. The function of the verbs *apekdechometha* “await” and *elpizo* “hope” portray a future eschatological expectation of righteousness. Cousar (1982) vividly puts it as

...the truly worthwhile accomplishments, however, are God’s. His hope for righteousness cannot be forced by human achievements as if it were only the accumulation of so many kindly deeds. God will act to set things right in the world and to confirm the favorable judgement on his people, but it will happen in his own good time (p.116).

Cousar (1982) explains that by the use of “we”, Paul identifies himself with those who expect God’s righteousness in the future. In this wise

...righteousness will be brought up its crown in conclusion at the end of this age. “Righteousness”, as normal in the Bible, designates a standing in a relationship –that of the covenant – as well as one’s commitment to the relationship as embodied in the “fruit” of perseverance (Garlington, 2007, p. 143).

The position of Cousar (1982), shows that righteousness cannot be attained through personal efforts with regards to the Christian faith. Garlington (2007) clearly explains “righteousness” as a “standing relationship” which he compares to covenant that calls for commitment in the vehicle of perseverance. Verse 5 is categorical that it is through the spirit by “faith” that one “hope” and “wait” for “righteousness”. If Garlington’s explanation of “righteousness” is valid, then it takes “faith” to be “righteous” which signifies a particular “relationship” which is being hoped for. Here, one can say “faith” becomes a precious ornament for anyone who awaits “righteousness”. Verse 6 strongly supports the importance of “faith” as it looks down on both “circumcision and uncircumcision”. The prepositional phrase that opens verse 6, *en gar Kristo lesou* “for in Christ Jesus”, puts “Christ Jesus” on a peculiar pedestal. This peculiarity can be deduced from the “neither” phrase that follows: “neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of any value”. It means “in Christ Jesus” circumcision and uncircumcision are not necessary. This phrase “in Christ Jesus” may be paraphrased in the words “in the religion of Jesus Christ or to the believer in Christ Jesus” (Burton, 1910). In this respect, the phrase affirms the valuelessness of circumcision to the believer in Christ and illustrates how it repudiates the legalistic principle and the authority of the Old Testament which clearly states that circumcision is the seal of covenant (Genesis 17:14) between God and his chosen people in such a way that any of the chosen people who will not receive it shall be cut off from his people because they however broken God’s covenant (Burton, 1910). Therefore, the main idea the first part of the verse tries to project

is that being in Christ Jesus is what matters. If this is true then one can assume that both circumcised and uncircumcised who are “in Christ Jesus” or “in the religion of Christ” are in good standing with Christ. This is because, it is not uncircumcision or circumcision that makes one right with Christ, but rather it is believing in Christ Jesus. The phrase that ends the verse 6 *alla pistis di agapēs energoumenē* “but faith that works through love” points to what it takes to be “in Christ Jesus”. This is because the conjunction *alla* “but” that begins the phrase negates circumcision or uncircumcision in the preceding phrase and upholds “faith” with regards to being “in Christ Jesus”.

Choi (2005) argues that the phrase “faith that works through love” refers to Christ’s faithfulness working powerfully through his self-giving love to humanity on the cross. He concludes that “faith” in “5: 5 and 5: 6 refers to the faithfulness of Christ, not to the Christian’s act of faith in Christ” (p. 489). This means that the phrase should not be interpreted as an ethical principle with regards to Christian behaviour but as Christ’s faithfulness for humanity which he shows through his sacrificial love he demonstrated by dying on the cross.

Nevertheless, the use of “faith” in the second part of verse 6 which is in contrast to “circumcision and uncircumcision” in the first part of the verse is indicative of a position that one takes in relation to Christ Jesus. This portrays an openness of mind which enables one to believe in Christ Jesus but not in any other thing like circumcision. “Faith” in verse 6 is to be exercised by human beings. How the prepositional phrase “in Christ” is used in relation to “faith” shows that “faith” is a requirement that one need to exhibit but not circumcision

which has legal undertones. In this respect, “faith” proceeds from a person who is already justified through faith in Christ (Cheung, 2007). The combination of the idea of “faith” and “love” in the phrase “faith that works through love” is not dormant but it acts in the form of “love”.

It implies that “love” is the product of “faith” in such away that “faith” finds expression in the one who possess it. In this light verse 6 can be understood as in Jesus Christ, “faith” that is shown in love is what matters but not “circumcision”, because “love” is set in opposition to “circumcision”. A look at verses 1-6 shows a summon to freedom, warning about the shortfalls of circumcision and the whole law, the prospect of future righteousness and faith that functions in the form of love but sidelines circumcision. Here, the understanding of verses 1 to 6 points to two ideas which are (i) legalism and freedom (ii) freedom from ethnic or religious law. The expression “for freedom Christ has set you free” that negates the act of “Circumcision” is sustained by the expression *etrechete Kalos* “You were running well” in verse 7.

### **Harsh words and punishment for the agitators verses 7 – 12**

The function of *etrechete* “running” in verse 7 is a metaphor in the context of athletic (Garlington, 2007). In the athletic sphere, one needs to “run” according to specific rules in order to win a crown. Paul uses this athletic metaphor as a spiritual progress (Bruce, 1982) to show how the people in Galatia were performing in Christ Jesus. The metaphor “running” as used in verse 7 seems to reflect the thought in verses 1-6 that justification in Christian life is a

matter of “faith” which is necessary for standing firm in “Christ’s freedom”. The word *Kalos* “well” which follows the metaphor “running” is an adverb. *Kalos* “well” (adverb) qualifies the metaphor which is a verb “run”. It shows how the “running” was done. Here, the metaphor “running” with regards to “well” suggests a positive attitude towards “faith” (verse 5) which awaits for the hope of “righteousness” and expressed in “love” (verse 6).

However, the second part of verse 7. *Tis humas enekomen te aletheia me peithesthai* “who hindered you from obeying the truth?”, shows something different in respect of the positive nature in which the “running” takes place. *Tis* “who” is a nominative interrogative pronoun referring to a person or group of people who “hindered” the recipients of the letter from obeying the “truth”. The content of verses 7-8 shows that the “hindrance” has turned “the Galatians away from following the plain truth of the gospel, whether they know it or not” (Cole, 1965, p. 143). The use of the metaphor and the adverb in relation with the word “hindered” raises two issues” (a) at one time the Galatia Christians were “running” “well” (b) the positive running was interrupted by human agent. The expression “but he who is troubling you will bear the punishment” (verse 10b) shows a future chastisement for those who were responsible for the “hindrance”. The use of the word “circumcision” with regards to the phrase “the obstacle of the cross has been abolished” in verse 11 throws light on two points which are (a) resistance to circumcision and those who championed it is intensified (b) acceptance of circumcision nullifies the effectiveness of the cross. It means that acceptance of “circumcision” which is tied to the whole law depicts lawfulness

on the one hand that implies rejection of the cross which signifies justification by faith in Jesus Christ. On the other hand, resistance to circumcision and those who championed it in relation to the whole law reflects lawlessness. The word “who” which runs through verses 7-10 points to “agitators” in verse 12. The content of the phrase “those agitators would castrate themselves” in verse 12, sparks serious emotion against the “agitators” who were hindering the Galatia Christians because of the word “castrate”. This shows that the agitators were responsible for the championing the act of circumcision in view of the whole law. The function of the word “castrate” in the verse echoes Leviticus 21: 20 and Deuteronomy 23: 1 which prevent males whose sexual organs had been mutilated from entering the assembly of the Lord. In this wise,

Circumcision (so its advocates urged) was a necessary qualification for membership of the people of God; castration was a disqualification. So that ... Paul would be saying; ‘I wish those people who want to qualify you for membership would disqualify themselves (Barrett, 1985, p.70)

Neyrey (1990) vividly puts it that the word “castrate” or “mutilate” means “cut off a profound curse” (p.192), from the covenant of Israel, as indicated in Leviticus 21: 20 and Deuteronomy 23: 1. However, in view of the text under study, the idea the word portrays does not concern the assembly of Israel because it is used as a Mosaic principle which ironically relates to the new covenant community that can be defined as the assembly of Christ. Neyrey (1990) goes on that “mutilation symbolically suggests Paul’s desire that these heretics be cut off from the church, made shameful, and rendered permanently

unclean. Permanent removal from the holy body, then is the ritual described in 5:12” (p.192). This means that the use of the word “castrate” does not mean that the “agitators” should physically castrate themselves. Dunn (1993) expresses this view as “Paul express the wish that a rite understood as one of dedication and commitment to Yahweh might become one which excluded from the presence of Yahweh (in the worshipping assembly)” (p. 283). On the part of Witherington (1998) “What Paul is really referring to here is the agitators inflicting the oath, curse upon themselves, and so cutting themselves out of the covenant community rather than cutting off the Galatians from the Christian community” (p.374). In respect of the quotations with regard to the use of the word “castrate” in verse 12, one could deduce that the term means the proponents of “circumcision” should rather count themselves out of grace indicative of separation from Christ for that matter the hope of “righteousness” in order to set the Galatia Christian free in their freedom in Christ (verse 1). The picture in verses 7 to 12 shows Paul’s concern for Christians in Galatia to obey the truth as against the position of the agitators who wanted circumcision that deals with the whole law. This, points to the agitators as those who accepted circumcision and were lawful unlike Paul who stands for obedience to the truth as he disregards circumcision which relates to the whole law. Paul’s negative attitude toward circumcision and the whole law reflects lawlessness in view of obedience to the law.

#### **Use of freedom to fulfill the whole law verses 13 – 15**

The key words in verses 13-15 are *ēleutheria*, *sarki*, *agapē* and *nomos* which means “freedom”, “flesh”, “love” and “law”. The word *eleutheria*



“freedom” is used for the second time in verse 13 which is pregnant with three issues: reminder to the call of “freedom”, caution in view of the “flesh” and demonstration of “love”. While the use of “freedom” in verse 1 shows total separation from legalism in relation to circumcision, in verse 13 the idea is about the appropriate use of “freedom”. The way “freedom” is used in verse 13 shows that “Christian freedom is in danger of being undermined by presuming on the grace of God through licentious living resulting in moral chaos” (George, 1994, p. 376). Unlike verse 1, “freedom” in verse 13 has moral responsibility. The “freedom” should not be used as an opportunity for the “flesh”. This shows that “The freedom of God has both aspects; otherwise it is not God’s freedom” (Dunn, 1993, p. 287). According to Jewett (1971), “flesh” can be understood as “everything aside from God in which one places his final trust” (p. 103). The content of verse 13 eschews the negative use of the “flesh” on the altar of “freedom”. The understanding here is that “freedom” should be exhibited in “love” by way of serving humanity. It means “freedom” should be put in action by a particular class of people for the benefit of all humankind. The word *agape* “love” is used earlier as an expression of “faith” in verse 6, but used in verse 13 as a demonstration of “freedom”. *Agape* “love” is used for the third time in verse 14 where Leviticus 19:18 and Mark 12:31 are quoted. In verse 14, the expression “for the whole law is fulfilled in a word”, that precedes the use of the word *agape* “love” shows that the “whole law” is embedded in the word “love” as clearly stated in Mark 12:31 “The second is this, you shall love your neighbour as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these” (R.S.V). The

pronoun “you” points to the followers of Jesus Christ. It also reflects John 13:34-35

A new commandment I give you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another (RSV)

This shows that “it was, of course, Jesus himself who preeminently fulfilled the law by taking on the form of a servant and in love gave himself as a ransom for many” (Garlington, 2007, p. 154). However, the phrase “in a word” which fulfils the law in Leviticus 19:18 as quoted in Galatians 5:14 indicates that it is those who follow Christ Jesus who are required to fulfill the whole law through the demonstration of “love” to humanity. The idea of “freedom” in verse 13 in relation to the “whole law”, as compared to “love” in verse 14, supports the concept of “freedom” in verse 1 which negates circumcision in view of the whole law in verses 2-3 in a peculiar way. The peculiarity is that “freedom” in Christ which abhors circumcision on the grounds of the “whole law”, turns round to accept the whole law on the grounds of “love”. It uplifts the “whole law” as a vital entity which needs to be upheld by those in Christ Jesus by exhibiting it in a form of “love” to humanity.

The alternative to “love” which fulfils the law is clearly stated in verse 15. In verse 15, the words “bite”, “exploit” and “consume” depict an animal like behaviour of biting, devouring and consuming. According to Witherington (1998), the verse describes a formula “first the animal bites the prey, then it

tears at the flesh of the victim, then finally it consumes its prey” (p. 384). Here, the content of the verse shows that if those in Christ Jesus put aside the love for humanity, they will engage in selfish ambitions which will not promote neighbourliness. The present tenses in the verse such as *dakno* “bite”, *katesthio* “exploit” suggest a free-fight-for-all attitude in a form of violence. Here, it is the demonstration of “love” that can restore the sanity of serving one another among those who exercise their “freedom” in Christ. This implies that standing firm in the “freedom” gained in Christ calls for diligent service to humanity but not an opportunity for the “flesh”. In this wise, the way the key words in verses 13 to 15 are used project an idea of love for humanity in terms of freedom.

### **Opposition between the spirit and the flesh verses 16 – 18**

The word “flesh” is again mentioned in verse 16. This time it is used in contrast to the word *Pneuma* “spirit”. The use of “flesh” in verse 13 cautions Christians in Galatia against using their freedom as an opportunity for it (flesh). In verse 16, the verb *peripateo* “walk” which is also used as a metaphor, indicates how to avoid using the “freedom” in verse 13 for the “flesh”. The use of the metaphor ‘walking’ in verse 16 is typical of its occurrences in the Old Testament such as Exodus 19:20 ‘and you shall teach them the statutes and the decisions, and make them know the way in which they must walk and what they must do’ (RSV). It is a covenantal language to show that the “walking” was particularly in God’s laws or statutes. In verse 16, the metaphor “walking” is used in the expression “But I say, walk in the spirit”. Now “walk” in the spirit is another way or form for those who exhibit the “freedom” in Christ to conduct

themselves not according to the whole law (laws and statutes as in Exodus 19:20) but by drawing strength from the spirit. According to Betz (1988), “defending this life against the forces of evil can only mean letting the power of spirit do its work against its opposite force, the flesh” (p. 278). Fee (1994) capitalizing on the dative case of *Pneumati* “spirit” says it may be either instrumental -walk by means of or empowered by the spirit on the one hand and locative use – walk in the realm of the spirit on the other hand. The way the active voice of the verb “walk” is used in relation to “spirit” denotes that the believer in Christ needs to act responsibly but independently against the opponent the “flesh”. Here, the believer needs the “Spirit” as an aid in his actions against the desires of the “flesh”. This shows a partnership between the “Christian” and the “Spirit”. What it means is that the “spirit” does not automatically take away the desires of the “flesh”. This shows that “... living life in the spirit does not prevent one from having fleshly desires, but it does give one the power to avoid acting on these desires and so bringing them to completion” (Witherington, 1998, p. 393).

The phrase “so that you cannot do the things you want” in verse 18b, underscores the opposition between the “spirit” and the “flesh”. The passive phrase in verse 18 “being led by the spirit” with regards to the phrase “you are not under the law” indicates the “spirit’s” presence which quickens the believer to function. It implies that those under the law lack the presence of the “spirit”. The issue of the “law” reflects verses 3-4 where everyman who accepts circumcision is obliged to do the whole law and be justified by the law. Here it is a personal effort that is needed for obeying the whole law. Obeying the whole

law portrays living right or being in a good relation with God. In this light, failure to obey the whole law means a separation from God.

In this context, separation from God can subject one to the desires of the flesh but one who is being led by the “spirit” is not under the law. The phrase *hupo nomon* “under the law” signifies an obligation to act according to the dictates of the law in other words obeying what the law demands. If obeying the law puts one right with God, then the law in itself is not bad. It means the law is a guide for appropriate living which helps to relate well with God. Here the onus is on the one under the law either to obey or disobey it. Likewise it is the “spirit” that enables one to act in a way in order to say “no” or “yes” to the desires of the “flesh” this is paramount to those who exercise their “freedom” in Christ.

Therefore, one who allows himself or herself to be led by the “spirit” does not need the law as a guide to be right with God. It means by the leading of the “spirit” he or she is being assisted to do what is right by not yielding to the desires of the “flesh”. Although the “spirit” and the “law” seem to achieve one goal, the process toward achieving the goal differs. Under the law one needs to act independently in obeying it (law) in order to be right with God. In the case of the “spirit”, one is aided or led to avoid the desires of the ‘flesh’. Since one is aided, the onus is on him or her to allow the “leading” of the spirit because as noted earlier the passive phrase “being led by the spirit” is not automatic. It means one needs to take the decision whether to be led or not. Therefore, both the one who is being led by the “spirit” and the one who is “under the law”, have roles to play in order to avoid the desires of the “flesh”.

### **The works of the flesh verses 19 – 21**

The opening part of verse 19 *ta ergates sarkos* “the works of the flesh” shows that the “flesh” is capable of doing ‘works’ and the word *phanera* which means “visible” indicates that the works of the “flesh” are “visible” meaning it can be seen by humanity. Verses 19-21 contain sixteen (16) manifestations of the “flesh” which can be classified into five segments: illicit sexual desires, undesirable spiritual activities, ill feeling towards a neighbour, distortion of community consciousness and greediness. These manifestations which can also be referred to as vices of the “flesh” portray the ways in which the desires of the flesh (verse 16) comes to practical forms in life situations. Bayes (2000) indicates that the fleshy works in verses 19-21 find their counterparts in the Old Testament. The “works of the flesh” in verse 19 reflects the phrase “the works of the law’ in Galatians 2: 16; 3: 2, 5, 10, which points to those who are ‘under the law’ as earlier seen in Galatians 5: 18b.

This suggests that “the works of the law” are the works of the flesh. It means that those who are “led by the spirit” are not under the works of the flesh, because it is the “spirit” that aids them against the “flesh”. Here, two factors co-operate against the “desires of the ‘flesh’ they are the human element (the believer in Christ) and the “spirit”. In the case of those who are “under the law” it is only the human element alone that works against the “flesh”, because the “law” is just a guide to show what not to do but does not co-operate against the “flesh”.

Illicit sexual desires form the first segment of the “works of the flesh’ it includes sexual immorality, impure motive, indecency. These fleshy works “display more graphically the self-centeredness and rebellion against god’s norm that mark all the others as well” (George, 1994, p. 392). The undesirable spiritual activities as works of the “flesh” are idolatry and witchcraft. These activities show substitutes for God for that matter Jesus Christ. Another form of fleshy works is ill feeling towards a neighbour which are hatred, quarrelling, jealousy and anger. These attitudes strain relationship among individuals. Distortion of community consciousness is the fourth segment of fleshy works which are selfish ambition, divisions, party spirit. They are destructive to community peace and are capable of destroying community cohesion. The word *hairesis* in the New Testament, simply means a “party” or a “sect “. It is also used in Acts 5: 17 which echoes “the party of the Pharisees” in Acts 15: 5 “Then some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, “The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to keep the law of Moses” (NIV). It seems these were the people urging Galatian Christians to circumcise. Their action is termed as party spirit which is also a work of the flesh. When emotions and words are misunderstood, a party spirit and division between church and community take place which creates chaotic situations in communities. The last form of “works of the flesh” is greediness which manifest in envy, drunkenness and carousing. These “works of the flesh” portray a grudging attitude that cannot bear to contemplate someone else’s property (Bruce, 1982). It shows that the individual or group of people desires so much of something that it is taking away

from others within the community. This indicates too much want, and too much desire to find or to achieve that want. Longenecker (1990) makes it clear that in the case of drunkenness, the reference is not to the drunken revelry but to “carousing or orgies such as accompany bouts of drinking and the festivals honoring the god of drink...” (p. 257). In verse 13, a clear warning is given to those who were called to freedom to never use “freedom” as an opportunity for the “flesh”. This shows that those who gained freedom in Christ should always do away with the works of the “flesh” as indicated in verse 19. This seems to refer to a festal processing in honour of Dionysus (or Bacchus), the god of drink. The phrase “those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God” in verse 21, shows that the inheritance depends on the “Spirit” and not the “flesh”. The reason is that the “flesh” relates to the “works of the law” as seen earlier by the act of circumcision (5: 3). Here, the issue of “the works of the flesh” in verses 19 to 21 in relation to the use of “freedom” as regards the “flesh” in verse 16 creates awareness that freedom in Christ abhors fleshly desires.

### **The fruit of the spirit verses 22 – 26**

The word *de* “but” which forms the first part of verses 22-26, contrasts verses 19-21. The phrase *ho de karpos tou pnematos* “But the fruit of the spirit” points to specific element different from the previous one which is the “works of the flesh” (verse 19). The word “but” as indicated earlier underscores the incompatibility of “the fruit of the spirit” and the “works of the flesh”. The word “fruit” is used as a metaphor because “spirit” is not a tree that can bear “fruit”. It refers to the life-style that the “spirit” enables one to exhibit. The singular



*karpos* “fruit” as compared to the nine life–styles shows unity in diversity with regards to the “spirit”.

The nine life-styles which are referred to as “the fruit of the spirit” form “a unity consisting of three sets of three concepts ...” (Betz, 1988), the first set which comprises love, joy and peace can be attributed to God, Christ and man, the second set which includes kindness, goodness and patience are required of man and the last set which contains faithfulness, gentleness and self –control are three famous virtues from Hellenistic ethics. The first life–style *agape* in the first set is the same word which is used four times in the text. All the four times *agape* “love” is used in the text, it portrays a role to be played as an exhibition of “freedom” gained in Christ. This is an indication that “walking” in the “spirit” calls for self sacrifice that leads to voluntary living in the “freedom” by serving each other (verse 13) through love devoid of fleshy works, which George (1994) describes as “daily dying to the flesh, and vivification, continuous growth through the new life of the spirit” (pp. 404- 405). In verse 13, love is used as an exhibition of “freedom” and in verse 22 it is used as “fruit of the spirit”. Verse 25 makes it clear that one who lives in the “spirit” also walks with the “spirit” and verse 26 concludes by warning against envying each other which is one of the works of the flesh that contrasts “love” as a “fruit of the spirit”. Here, verses 22 to 26 point to a lifestyle which is fruit of the spirit which reflects exhibition of “freedom” in the form of love.

## Conclusion

The word “*eleutheria*” freedom is the reason for the act of “setting free” by Christ once and for all. The concept of “freedom” as introduced in verse 1, is the central idea in the text. This concept negates the Jewish rite of circumcision that relates to the whole law, which is seen as a form of slavery. However, obedience to the law means being in a good relationship with God. While the principle of the “law” deals with obedience which signifies work, “grace” does not require justification by obedience or works of the law. This shows that the “law” in relations to “circumcision” and “grace” are incompatible with regards to freedom in Christ. In Christ what matters is faith that works through love but not circumcision or uncircumcision. Therefore, the requirement in Christ is “faith” that one needs to exhibit through “love” but not uncircumcision or circumcision with legal undertones. In this vein, it would be better for the circumcision party to exclude themselves from the covenant community rather than preventing the Galatian Christians from “freedom” in Christ.

Although, “freedom” in verses 1-12 abhors circumcision with the whole law on the grounds of faith that works through love, verses 13-15 portray the use of “freedom” at two levels which are caution against the “flesh” and demonstration of “love” to humanity as a way of fulfillment of the whole law. Here, the “whole law” becomes an indispensable element which should be exhibited through “love” by those who gained “freedom” in Christ. Anything that falls short of the exhibition of this “love” suggests self-ambition and violence which are obvious and are attributes of living in the “flesh” which

undermines good neighbourliness. The desires of the “flesh” contrast the fruit of the “spirit” and those who are “led by the spirit” are not “under the law”. While the “law” guides one to relate well with God, the “spirit” helps one to exhibit acceptable life –styles in society (the fruit of the spirit). It implies that those who are “under the law” and those who are “led by the spirit” have to act in order to put aside the desires of the “flesh”. This shows that it is possible for those who gained “freedom” in Christ to yield to the desires of the “flesh”, if they do not “walk” in the “spirit” or are not led by the spirit”.

In this wise, the ideas that emerge from the reading of the text (Galatians 5) are:

1. Freedom from ethnic or religious laws
2. Legalism and freedom
3. Lawful and lawless people
4. Love for humanity and freedom
5. Freedom in Christ abhors fleshly desires
6. Fruit of the spirit and freedom.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONTEXTUALIZATION AND APPROPRIATION OF THE TEXT

#### Introduction

The previous chapter deals with the exegesis of the text which unearthed issues for this chapter. In the first place, this chapter uses the ideas that came up from the interpretation of the text for contextualization of the said text among Christians drawn out from different denominations that belong to the local council of churches at Anloga. Secondly, this current chapter appropriates the text to the selected study area. Contextualization is the second pillar in the Tri-PEM adopted for the study. The ideas that emerged from the interpretation of the text as noted earlier are:

- i. Legalism and freedom
- ii. Freedom from ethnic or religious laws
- iii. Lawful and lawless people
- iv. Love for humanity and freedom
- v. Freedom in Christ abhors freshly desires
- vi. Fruit of the spirit and freedom

In this respect, this study employs West's (1993) Contextual Bible Study (C.B.S) approach that revolves on four commitments of a trained reader. These commitments are:

- (i) Commitment to read the Bible from the perspective of the poor and oppressed
- (ii) Commitment to read the Bible in a particular community with different context
- (iii) Commitment to read the Bible critically
- (iv) Commitment to read the Bible for personal and social transformation

### **Facilitation process**

The researcher visited the area of study three times which led to the formation of the C.B.S. group. During the visits, the various pastors whose denominations belong to the local council of churches at Anloga were consulted with regard to the formation of the study group. Each pastor consulted by the researcher agreed to send not less than two (2) congregants to participate in the reading of the text. They also decided that the C.B.S. should be conducted in the chairperson's (Rev. Agbeko) chapel that is the Church of Conquerors. In all, the researcher arranged for twenty (20) participants to form the study group.

However, some pastors could not honour their promises so only fifteen (15) people participated in the C. B. S. Rev. Agbeko who is the chairperson of the local council of churches was very instrumental in helping the researcher in forming the study group. Each member of the study group was sent to the study center (Church of Conquerors) by his or her pastor as pointed out earlier. The researcher allowed the participants to select a secretary who wrote the names of

the participants with their denominations, their educational background, their marital status and their various roles in their congregations. He also recorded what transpired during the reading process.

The Ewe language was used as a medium of expression throughout the reading process. In this respect, the text under study was read three times in the Ewe language by two participants and the researcher before the studying of the text. Throughout the reading process, the researcher served as the ‘trained reader’ for the participants who were the ‘ordinary’ readers. The researcher explains West’s (1993) concept of the C.B.S. for the study group. During the reading process, the researcher briefly explains the literary context of the text to the ordinary readers. In the course of the reading process, the researcher read the C.B.S. questions and explained them to the participants. This guides the participants in reading the selected text.

### **Background of the study group**

The participants who formed the study group came from seven different denominations that belong to the local council of churches at Anjɔga. These denominations were:

- (i) Bethel Evangelical Ministry, at Tunu a town in the traditional area.
- (ii) Life Healing Ministry
- (iii) Cornerstone Power Church International
- (iv) Church of Conquerors

- (v) Assemblies of God
- (vi) A.M.E Zion Church
- (vii) Global Evangelical Church

The fifteen participants who took part in the C.B.S were:

- g) John Akpatsu and Sabla Moses from the Bethel Evangelical Ministry
- ii) Joseph Futagbi, Geogina Sallah-Futagbi and Eric Agbessitornu from Life Healing Ministry
- iii) Atsu Helegbe and Monica Adjetey from Cornerstone Power Church International
- iv) Beauty Amlavia and Mrs. Edith Akosua Agbeko from Church of Conquerors.
- v) Philip Dogbatse, Benjamin Sagodo and Gayheart Sena Kumedzro from Assemblies of God.
- vi) Kwaku Trinity Doe-Dartey from A.M.E. Zion Church
- vii) Samuel Azasu and Wonder Tugba from Global Evangelical Church.

The picture here shows that two (2) participants came from the Bethel Evangelical Ministry, three (3) from the Life Healing Ministry, two (2) from Cornerstone Power Church International, two (2) from Church of Conquerors, three (3) from Assemblies of God, one (1) from A.M.E. Zion Church and two (2) from Global Evangelical Church. Therefore, the total number of the participants who read the text was fifteen (15). Comprising four (4) females and eleven (11) males.

Out of the fifteen participants one was a post graduate degree holder in Education, three were first degree holders in Agriculture, English Language, Economics and Psychology, four were diploma holders in Administration and Education, three of them were Senior High School graduates, one Junior High School graduate and one without formal educational background. The marital status of the participants showed that eleven are married but four are not married. While four of the participants are members of their denominations eleven held leadership positions such as deacons, deaconesses, women ministry leaders, youth leaders, Sunday school teachers and praise leaders.

The researcher sought the consent of the participants with regard to their willingness to partake in the Contextual Bible Study. They consensually agreed and were aware of their names being mentioned in the study.

### **C.B.S questions on Galatians 5:1-26**

The questions for the C.B.S on the text reflected the ideas that emerged from the exegesis of the text as indicated earlier in chapter four of this study. Although, the questions were set in view of the ideas, they were also in tune with the four commitments of the C.B.S pointed out earlier. Therefore, the questions for the C.B.S were in four sections.



## Contextualization of the text

### Section A

The question in this section demands from the study group to analyse the text under study such that they can bring out their own understanding about what the text says.

#### 1. What does this text talk about?

The study group came to a consensus that the text throws light on four essential aspects of Christian life: (i) law and the Holy Spirit (ii) freedom in Christ (iii) in Christ circumcision does not lead to righteousness (iv) obedience to the law is by loving others.

##### i) Law and the Holy Spirit

A member of the group by name Atsu Helegbe strongly indicates that the text talks about the law which does not make one holy but the Holy Spirit. He goes on and explains that the law that the text talks about is the Mosaic law in the Old Testament which relates to circumcision purposely made for the Jews. He also makes a point that the Mosaic law was to make those who ascribe to it holy. However, he notes that in the text under study (Galatians 5: 1-26), it is clear that the law cannot lead to holiness rather it is the Holy Spirit that is capable to help and make one holy.

## ii) Freedom in Christ

On the question of freedom in Christ, Philip Dogbatse says that the text is about freedom that is in Jesus Christ and it comes only when the Holy Spirit makes one holy. This means that if the Holy Spirit does not make someone holy the person cannot gain that freedom in Christ. He substantiates his stance that one's state of holiness sets him or her free from the law. He says Christians are to use and guard their freedom in Christ in a way to ignore anyone who would want to confuse them with the law. In this vein, he makes a point that there are some laws in the traditional area that oppress Christians.

## iii) In Christ circumcision does not lead to righteousness

A member of the study group - Eric Agbessitornu says the whole text shows that in Christ circumcision does not lead to righteousness because it is a special covenant between God and Abraham. In this wise, he says it is faith in Christ that helps an individual to be righteous but not circumcision. He sees circumcision as a kind of slavery in terms of the law that does not give freedom to act.

## iv) Law and love

Many members of the group agree that what Paul is teaching in the text is that obeying the law is the same as showing love to others. They believe showing love is an exhibition of freedom in Christ Jesus.

## Section B

Here, the questions are to enable the participants to see the text as coming from a context that is different from their own context.

### 1. What does the text say about freedom and ethnic laws and religious laws?

Edith Agbeko a member of the study group emphatically says the law in the text relates to the Abrahamic covenant which deals with circumcision for the Jews before the birth of Jesus Christ. She notes that before the birth of Jesus Christ the Jewish law was in full force but the people could not thoroughly obey it. Another participant, Philip Dogbatse indicates that the Jews could not fully obey the law because it became a yoke and enslaves them but the coming of Jesus Christ has removed the yoke of enslavement for that matter the law. He also states that Christ's removal of the law paves the way for one to live by faith in Christ Jesus and be obedient to Christ's guidance. Edith Agbeko explains the removal of the Abrahamic covenant that is associated with the circumcision and the law came because of the blood that Christ shed on the cross. She also indicates that in the physical act of circumcision under the law blood was part of it just as Christ shed his blood. However, Christ's blood serves as a substitute for that of the physical circumcision in terms of the law. Therefore, the law is not necessary because Christ shed his blood to buy freedom from the law.

Sena Kumedro a participant quickly adds that since Christ set us free and gives us freedom we should not allow the law to have effect on us. Another

member of the group Joseph Futagbi says the freedom given by Christ is a new directive for one to love his or her neighbour as stated in verse 14 of the text under study. Beauty Amlavia a participant of the group supports Joseph with the view that the one who sets one free is the one who gives new laws. Again, Sena Kumedro states that “there are various laws but it is very important for us to understand that Christ bought freedom for us therefore we must live in it and maintain it”. In this wise, many members of the group agree to it that there are many laws in the the traditional area that negatively affect Christians.

However, Sabla emphatically indicates that freedom and ethnic law or religious law are the same. He supports his point that obedience to the law is a step in the right direction which eventually leads to freedom. He also says that what Paul is saying about freedom and ethnic or religious law in the text is that obeying the law gives freedom. Atsu Helegbe is of the view that the fact that Christ has set one free, the freedom should not lead him or her into sin. He adds that the use of Christ’s freedom should not be an obstacle to non-christians. Eric Agbessitornu supports the view that freedom should not lead to sin by quoting Romans 6: 13-14, the verse 14 says “For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under the grace” (NIV). He explains that Christ gave grace for one to do what he or she could not formerly do. Here, the group consensually indicates that there are certain things in life that lead to sin such as the ban on drumming in the traditional area but they maintain that the freedom gained in Christ should not be one of those things that lead to sin.

**2. Mention some of the laws that pertain to your traditional area.**

Benjamin Sagodo indicates that the ban on drumming and shallot sowing are some of the laws in the traditional area. He especially says the ban on drumming is the one that disturbs Christians a lot in the traditional area. Other two participants of the study group John Akpatsu and Sena Kumedzro also mentioned that no sweeping and throwing of water at night are laws in the area.

**3. Will observance of the ban on drumming and general noise making negatively affect your Christian worship?**

Edith Agbeko of the Church of Conquerors indicates that observance of the ban will seriously affect Christian worship negatively. She supports her view that, the ban is an imposition of Anlo traditional and spiritual law on Christians. She further argues that this spiritual law is in sharp contrast with what the Bible says that God should be worshiped with praise. Although she quotes 1Peter 2: 13

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13 submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme, 14 or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. 15 for so is the will of God, that with welding ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: 16 As free and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. 17 Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God and honor the king (KJV)

that kings should be respected on the one hand, she strongly disagrees with the observation of the ban on the other hand due to the following negative effects:

- i. It demeans or lower God before non- Christians.
- ii. It makes non-Christians regard God as ineffective and inferior to that of the traditionalists.
- iii. It can prevent people from converting to the Christian faith.

She explains drumming plays a significant role in Christian worship such that it even leads people to accept Jesus Christ hence their conversion to the Christian faith. Therefore, if the ban is observed it will hinder someone's conversion to the Christian faith on a day which falls within the period of the ban.

Moses Sabla of Bethel Evangelical Ministry is also with the view that the ban is a powerful religious and spiritual law which traditional authorities force Christians to obey annually. He puts it that since the ban is a powerful Anglo spiritual law it would negatively affect Christians if they observe it. He adds that in the past songs of praise brought victory to those who worshipped God. He substantiates his point by referring to Joshua 6 which talks about the fall of Jericho wall. He boldly says in those days trumpets made of animal horns were used to praise God. According to Moses Sabla, Jericho fell because of the trumpets that the Israelites used to praise God therefore praising God with musical instruments today is vital in Christian worship. He states that today, drums are used for praising God for that matter there is no need for Christians to

observe the ban. He points out that today; praising God with drums is a powerful spiritual tool for breaking and destroying spiritual walls. In this vein, he concludes that the main reason why the observance of the ban will negatively affect Christians is that it will prevent the falling of spiritual walls which daily rise against Christians and their worship. He explains that the role the trumpets played in the fall of Jericho was not different from the role drums do play in Christian worship today. John Akpatsu quickly supports Edith Agbeko and Sabla Moses. He claims that the observance of the ban will destructively affect the spiritual wellbeing of the Christians in the traditional area. In an attempt to prove his claim he says in Daniel 6, Daniel defied the king's order and prayed three times a day with his windows widely opened. He posits that anytime prayer takes place a powerful noise is generated which facilitates a communication with God. This communication prompts God to act positively to anyone who prays. He continues that in the like manner, the noise that emanates from drumming creates a spiritual platform for God to act in many ways especially healing the sick. He maintains that if Anlo Christians observe the ban it will negatively affect their worship because it will prevent people from receiving their healing. He says the ban is full of traditional and spiritual implications for which Christians should avoid. He asks a rhetorical question "why do traditional rulers place the ban?" He goes on that the period of the ban enables traditionalists to perform some spiritual rituals. Therefore, the observance of the ban on the part of the Christian will mean they are in full agreement with the traditional rituals that take place during the period of the ban which will affect the spiritual wellbeing of

Christians. Samuel Azasu also agrees with the view that observance of the ban by Christians will bring negative effects to the Christian worship. Although he agrees with the view, he sees reason that drumming is not the only requirement for effective Christian worship. He says the Bible teaches on praising God with songs and musical instruments and Christians are brought up with it. He notes that drumming brings a special vim and fulfillment in Christian worship. He thus also supports the question “why the ban?” as indicated earlier. He ends it by saying although the observance will not negatively affect individual relationship with God in terms of Christian worship it will generally reduce the dynamics of worship when Christians meet for worship today.

However, Monica Adjetey of Cornerstone Power Church International emphatically says observance of the ban will never in any way undermine or negatively affect individual or collective Christian worship. She also bases her premise on 1Peter 2: 13-15 like Edith Agbeko as quoted earlier. Unlike Edith Agbeko, Monica Adjetey says the text expects all Christians including the Anlo Christians to submit to human authority such as the king in order to silence the ignorant talk of people. She adds that the Bible teaches them to obey and respect leaders or rulers therefore observing the ban that comes from their traditional rulers will not adversely affect Anlo Christians. She also notes the ban on drumming does not prevent Anlo Christians from praying and singing praises to God. She makes a point that the ban does not oblige Anlo Christian to participate in the traditional or spiritual activities during the period. Likewise, Atsu Helegbe of the Cornerstone Power Churches International categorically says the Bible



entreats those who convert to the Christian faith to subject themselves to human higher powers or authorities. He supports his stand by quoting Romans 13:1-7

Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.

Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.

For rulers hold not terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? then do what is right and you will be commended.

For the one in authority is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God's servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.

Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also as a matter of conscience.

This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing.

Give to everyone what you owe them: if you owe taxes, pay taxes, if revenue, then revenue, if respect, then respect, if honour, then honor, (NIV).

Atsu Helegbe explains that since Romans 13:1-7 talks about honouring and respecting those in authorities, observing the ban on drumming and general noise making by Anlo Christians will not negatively affect their worship. He explains that obeying the ban will not mean that the Christians uphold traditional beliefs and practices which have religious undertones during the period. Observing the ban will rather show a sign of love, respect and honour from the Christian front as indicated in Roman 13:1-7 to the Anlo Traditional Authorities. He agrees with Monica Adjetey that the ban does not stop the Anlo Christians from going to their worship centers. He makes a point that one good aspect about the ban is that it allows Christians to meet and worship by putting their Christian beliefs into practice except the drumming and general noise making therefore, observing the ban will in no way go against the Christian worship.

Trinity Doe Dartey of A. M. E. Zion Church swiftly upholds the position that observing the ban will not have negative effects on Christian worship for the Christians in the Anlo Traditional Area. He strongly argues that worshiping God by singing songs of praise without drumming in other words musical instruments does not and will not negatively affect Christian worship. He substantiates his argument as follows:

- i. Individual Christians worship by praying and reading the Bible at home.
- ii. Christian families also worship in their various houses usually without drumming.

iii. God does not object to the individual and family Christian worship that take place in various houses but listens and acts on their request they make through prayer by guiding them daily.

iv. It is these same individual Christians and families that form the basic units of the church.

He explains that since God accepts individual Christian and family worship God will do same anytime the basic units of the church come together.

He maintains that if the basic units of the church come together to worship with prayer and singing songs of praise to God without drumming God will definitely listen to their request and act. He concludes that drumming is not the only component of worship such that if it does not take place worship cannot be complete therefore, observing the ban on drumming will not negatively affect Christian worship in the Anlo Traditional Area.

### **Section C**

The questions in this section are set to prompt critical consciousness and alert the study group to go back to the text throughout the reading.

#### **1. What do verses 1 to 6 say about legalism and freedom?**

Samuel Azasu says verses 1 to 6 point to the fact that those who believe in Jesus Christ have freedom. He maintains his point that before one can have freedom he or she must first receive grace that comes from Christ Jesus. He concludes that obedience to the law does not give freedom because it is only through Jesus Christ that one can receive freedom. According to Sabla, what

Paul is teaching in verses 1 to 6 is that one can have freedom just by having a belief with or without the law. He asserts that legalism and freedom in verses 1 to 6 are the same. He supports his claim with verse 6 which says that in Jesus circumcision nor uncircumcision is of no value but faith that works through love. He explains that one can be circumcised, and have faith that works through love and still gain freedom from Christ. This person is on the same pedestal with the one who is not circumcised but have faith that works through love as Paul indicated. Edith Agbeko of the study group says what Paul is saying in verse 6 is Christ is love therefore there is the need for spiritual circumcision of the human heart. She again says once the spiritual circumcision of the heart is done one's heart finds its place in Christ Jesus. Philip Dogbatse states that the underlining factor for legalism and freedom in verses 1 to 6 is specified in verse 6. He point that the specification is love and it should be shown to one another. Beauty Amlavia supports Philip Dogbatse that the legalism and freedom in verses 1 to 6 show that "we should show Christ-like love to everybody". She explains that the love in verse 6 is not any other love but the one that emanates from Christ to even non-christians. She also says in verse 1 it is Christ's love that gives the right form of freedom.

Atsu Helegbe and John Akpatsu are of the view that in verses 1 to 6 legalism does not give freedom but it is faith that works through love in Jesus Christ that gives it. Sena Kumedzro falls in line with Atsu Helegbe and John Akpatsu by saying what Paul is teaching in verses 1 to 6 is that "we have been called for a purpose, so we must be firm". He explains that according to the

verses, when one is circumcised he is no longer a believer in Jesus Christ. He goes on that it is very important that one should choose a path either, a path of circumcision which relates to legalism or a path of belief in Christ Jesus which gives freedom and it is free from the slavery of legalism. He emphatically says that for one to believe in Jesus Christ is through nothing but faith. He ends that “what is important is to be united”.

**2. What do verses 7 to 12 say about those who are lawless and those who are not?**

In verses 7 to 12, Beauty Amlavia notes that those who wish to obey the law will be heading toward slavery. She adds that those who are lawless are the ones who are not under the law because they have freedom in Christ Jesus. Atsu Helegbe explains it that those who are lawful are those who observe circumcision and are in the bondage. Samuel Azasu states that verses 7 to 12 mean anyone who diverts to the law in order to gain freedom has gone astray. He adds that nobody should divert from the freedom because believing and staying in Christ means one is not under the law and shows lawlessness that sets one free from the slavery of the law. He quickly points out that diverting to the obedience of the law indicates lawfulness that is associated with suffering. He adds that those who are lawful are suffering under the hardship of the law but those who are not under the law (lawless) are enjoying their freedom in Christ.

**3. In verses 13 to 15 what aspect of it talks about love for humanity and freedom.**

Edith Agbeko points out that verses 13 to 15 are talking about the same thing which is Christ is love. She says the text teaches Christians to love others as themselves and indicates that it is love that fulfils the law as stated in verse 14. She quickly adds that when love is expressed to one another, it means the law is obeyed which shows that the law as it stands is not wrong in terms of what it sets out to do. All the participants agree with Edith's Agbeko view about verses 13 to 15. Philip Dogbatse adds that verse 13 means that freedom must be exhibited in a form of brotherly love to both Christians and non-christians as he quotes John 13: 34 to support it "A new commandment I give you, that you love one another; even as I love you, that you also love one another" (NIV). Atsu Helegbe notes, "we have freedom to do anything but whatever we do should not hurt anyone". He also says what verses 13 to 15 are teaching about love for humanity and freedom is everybody or any human institution is limited to exhibition of freedom. He explains that any time a person or group of people enjoy freedom they must be mindful about others. He says it is when people are mindful about others that they express the freedom in love. He substantiates his view by quoting Matthew 22: 37-40 that says that the first commandment is to love God with the heart, the soul and the mind. The second command is to love a neighbour as self. All these two commandments depend on the law and the prophets. He turns to the text under study that what Paul is saying is Christians who claim to love God should exhibit it by being calm anytime both Christians

and non-christians offend them. Here, John Akpatsu makes a point that there is seemingly confusion between verse 14 and verse 15. He says verse 14 calls for love but verse 15 gives a warning that one should not consume another in the midst of biting and exploitation. He quickly relates verse 15 to what goes on between the traditional rulers and Christians during the ban on drumming in the period of the 'Hogbetsotso' festival. He asks "How can we fight without hurting or killing during the period of the ban on drumming?" He continues that usually there is a clash between churches that drum and the traditional faithfuls during the ban on drumming and general noise making. He says the clash takes the form of a serious fight in which the traditionalists and the Christians sustain various degrees of injuries such that musical instruments like drums are taken away by the traditional faithfuls. He goes on to say that although verse 15 allows biting and exploitation it warns against casualties that he notes as confusion in verses 14 and 15 as indicated earlier. He concludes by saying "but through patient love as stated in verse 14 we will attain freedom by showing love to the traditionalists and non-christians".

#### **4. How does verse 18 exhibit characteristics of lawlessness?**

In verse 18, Samuel Azasu notes that the revelation or the leading of the Spirit of God reveals that the law cannot guide anyone. He explains that anyone who is not guided by the law becomes lawless in terms of that particular law. Philip Dogbatse puts it that "if you are not led by the Spirit, you are lawless in terms of the Jewish law which relates to circumcision. When the Spirit is leading you, you are following the law of love which is in Jesus Christ". According to

Beauty Amlavia, “in verse 4 Christ is the Spirit. In verse 18, if we are led by the Spirit we are under Christ. So when the Spirit is not leading you, you are lawless”. Eric Agbessitornu says what Paul is teaching in verse 18 is when one is led by the Spirit he or she does exceedingly more than what the law demands.

**5. Do Christians in your traditional area exhibit any of the fleshy desires as stated in verses 19 to 21? How?**

The participants affirm that Christians in their communities exhibit some of the fleshy desires as indicated in verses 19 to 21. These desires include anger, fornication, adultery, envy, divisions, fighting and quarrelling. Beauty Amlavia says anger is common among Christians in her locality. She notes that in the locality anger is expressed through what she terms as ‘body language’ like frowning one’s face as a sign of disapproval to an issue. Monica Adjetey says that mostly frowning leads to quarrelling which finally generates into fighting among Christians and between Christians and non-Christians especially at work places such as markets. On the issue of fornication and adultery, Atsu Helegbe points out that Christians who are not married fornicate. He adds that adultery also takes place among Christians who are married.

**6. Do Christians in your locality always comply with what is stated in verses 22 to 25? How?**

All the members of the group responded positively to the question. Georgina Futagbi affirms that “we bear the fruits of the spirit by uniting Christians in times of separation”. She explains that when division or separation”



occurs among Christians and between Christians and non-Christians, other Christians unite the affected parties through counseling. She continues to state that those who were offended exercise self-control in a way that they never retaliate. Edith Agbeko categorically says in her church (Church of Conquerors) they bear the fruit of the Spirit by showing love and kindness to those who are in need to both Christians and non-Christians as stated in verses 22 and 23. Sabla also notes that they (Christians) demonstrate goodness by acts of prayer, fasting, healing and deliverance for the sick both at home and hospital. He adds that when it becomes necessary they send the sick to the hospital for medical attention.

#### **7. Do you agree with verse 26? Why?**

According to Sena Kumedzro, verse 26 is an answer to verses 22 to 25. He says that he is in full agreement with verse 26 because if one fulfills the things that are stated in verses 22 to 25, there is no need for him or her to be boastful, envying and provoking others. Benjamin Sagodo states that nature is wonderful because it always makes some people brag. He adds that they brag by exhibiting whatever they have and can do. Therefore, he agrees with verse 26 which he coins as “a powerful statement of Paul”. He explains that Christians who gain freedom in Christ and are bearing the fruit of the Spirit need not be boastful about their deeds in regard to how they help others. He also says Christians who boast and tell others what they did to bring smiles on the faces of the needy are still exhibiting the desires of the flesh as indicated in verses 19 to 21. Samuel Azasu supports Benjamin Sagodo’s view by adding that some

Christians, especially those in leadership are boastful and envious about others. He suggests that every leader should be satisfied with his or her position and other roles he or she plays in the church. Philip Dogbatse puts it that verse 26 is the concluding verse for the passage under study because it shows how a Christian should daily conduct himself or herself in order to live in peace with others. He makes a point that living in peace and love with others is the practical demonstration of freedom that one gains in Christ Jesus.

### **Section D**

This section is the final stage of the C.B.S therefore the questions direct the ordinary readers by taking them to their own context. This helps in the appropriation and application of the text to reality (West, 1993).

#### **1. In what ways do this reading relates to the relationship between your church and the traditional authorities?**

Atsu Helegbe in his response, makes a point that just as the Abrahamic covenant that calls for circumcision and relates to the Jewish law, so is the Aṅlᵇ traditional authorities who enact laws for those who are living on the Aṅlᵇland. He explains that the text shows that Paul disapproves circumcision and the whole law for Christians in Galatia on the grounds that those who are led by the Spirit are not under the law. Therefore, he argues that those who are led by the Spirit should be firm in their freedom gained in Christ and it must be exhibited through love for others to see. He indicates that those who are led by the Spirit are not under the law which signify lawlessness. In the like manner, some churches in

the Anlo Traditional Area annually disobey the traditional law that bans drumming and general noise making in the period of the 'Hogbetsotso' festival. He guesses that the usual reaction from the church towards the traditional ban on drumming signifies an act of lawlessness. John Akpatsu adds that the text teaches that Paul is not in good relationship with those who wanted the Christians in Galatia to undergo the religious act of circumcision with regard to the law as stated in verses 7 to 10. Likewise, Akpasu notes that the traditional authorities and the churches in Anlo land are not in good relationship. However, Samuel Azasu of the Global Evangelical Church quickly puts it that there is a good relationship between the traditional authorities and the church except during the period of 'Hogbetsotso' festival when a ban is placed on drumming and general noise making.

**2. In what ways can this reading of the text help you transform the situation?**

Beauty Amlavia indicates that since the text teaches that the freedom gained in Christ should be exhibited through love for others in order to fulfill the whole law, the church should love the traditional authorities by observing the ban until the traditional rulers exempt the church from observing it. Sena Kumedzro emphatically says the scripture specifically goes to the church. In this respect Christians should generally show themselves in loving the community on the one hand. The community should also do well not to burden Christians with ban on drumming and general noise making on the other hand. Many participants of the

study group were of the view that since the text talks about love for others in verse 14 and it also prohibits boasting, envying and provoking in verse 26, the church should invite the traditional rulers by letter, so that the misunderstandings can be ironed out. Samuel Azasu points out that the invitation must be in a form of love and respect and it must be accompanied with gifts such as rice and soft drinks to the traditional authorities.

### **3. What can you do as an individual to bring the transformation into fruition?**

Sena Kumedzro says there is the need for the individual Christians to embark on an extensive house to house evangelism in order to win if not all many people to the Christian faith. Other members of the group agreed with him. Their view is, if all or many come to Christ including the traditional rulers who are not Christians they will be led by the Holy Spirit and it can possibly translate into total exemption of churches from observing the ban on drumming. Philip Dogbatse says every member of the group should continue to walk in love with non-christians. Samuel Azasu also says, if they show love individually to non-christians and the traditionalists there will be no fighting anytime the ban is placed. Sena Kumedzro adds that the scripture says we should love our enemies but not to accept their acts. Therefore, individual Christians especially all the participants should act in love in whatever may be the situation during the period of the ban on drumming in order to bring to an end the annual clash between the churches and the traditional authorities. At this point the group consensually saw reason that in view of the text they read it does not auger well for Christians who

are supposed to show love to fight with the traditional faithfuls. They think it will be good if they observe the ban on drumming.

### **Reflection**

Generally, the C.B.S with the study group at Anlaga served as an eye opener for the participants. They realized that the text and other biblical texts can be contextualized to address challenges and problems that engulf Christians. Specifically, the study group saw that the problem that Paul dealt with in the text they read in one way or the other related to what they annually experience during the period of the 'Hogbetsotso' festival. The study group successfully dealt with all the C.B.S. questions seriously with openness. As indicated earlier, the C.B.S. questions were put into four categories which reflected the principles that emerged at the distantiation stage and the four commitments of West's (1993) C.B.S.

The contextual study of the text in view of the first part of the four divisions of the C.B.S. questions helped the study group to understand: what freedom in Christ meant in the text, how the law and love related to each other and how freedom relates to the law. They realised that the law in the text talked about the Mosaic law which was to make the Jews and anyone who obeyed it holy. However, they concluded that the law lacks what it takes to make one holy; rather it is only the Holy Spirit that can make one holy. They agreed that the text was about freedom that is found in Christ Jesus. This freedom comes to any individual or a group of people only when the Holy Spirit makes such a person or a group of people holy. What it means is that one's holiness sets him or her free

from the law. Even though the focus of the text was not the Holy Spirit the group devoted a fair amount of time in talking about the Holy Spirit. They refer to the “Holy Spirit” as a transfer of knowledge by applying it to reading the text to determine what freedom is in relation to the whole law. According to the study group, the text shows that in Christ circumcision does not lead to righteousness but faith. This is because, they believed circumcision is a type of slavery and it does not allow freedom. Some members of the study group indicated that Paul’s teaching in the text that shows obeying the law is not different from showing love to others which they see as the true demonstration of freedom in Christ Jesus.

The second category of the questions guided the study group to see the text as coming from a context different from that of their context. The group noted that the law in the text related to the Abrahamic covenant which called for circumcision. The group went on and compared the physical act of circumcision (under the law) which involved blood to the blood Christ Jesus shed on the cross. The group understood that Christ’s blood serves as a substitute for that of the physical circumcision in the law. In this respect, the group noted that Christ shed his blood to buy freedom from the law, therefore the law is no longer necessary. The group puts it that Christ sets them free and gives them freedom so there is no way the law should have effect on them. At this point, the group quickly states that there are many laws in the Anlo Traditional Area that have adverse effect on Christians. Although the group indicated negative effect of some of their traditional laws, they agreed that exhibition of Christ Jesus’ freedom should not

lead them to sin. On the other hand, Christ's freedom should not be an obstacle to those who do not ascribe to the Christian faith. Specifically, the group identified the ban on drumming and general noise making as a religious law that negatively affects Christians in the traditional area.

The group moved on to the third set of the questions and read the text with critical consciousness. They studied verses 1 to 6 in terms of legalism and freedom. The group made it clear that Paul's view in the verses shows that anyone who avails himself for circumcision is no longer a believer in Christ Jesus. Therefore, one needs to ascribe to only one belief: belief in circumcision that relates to legalism or belief in Christ Jesus for freedom in order to be free from slavery of legalism. Again, in a critical look at verse 6, they realised that legalism and freedom in the same verse are the same because of the phrase "neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of no value but faith that works through love". The group painted a picture that one could be circumcised (under the law) and still have faith in Christ Jesus that works through love and gain freedom from Christ. Likewise, the uncircumcised with the same faith that works through love can gain freedom from Christ.

On the issue of those who are lawless and those who are not in view of verses 7 to 12, the group noted obedience to the law meant lawfulness that points to suffering. According to the study group, those who are lawful are under the hardship of the law. This means that those who are lawless are not under the law and are enjoying freedom they gained from Christ.

Verses 13 to 15 throw light on love for humanity and freedom. The meaning the group gave to these verses was that when love is expressed to each other it signifies obedience to the law. This shows that the law is good in terms of what it sets out to do. The group also indicated that freedom in the verses should be exhibited to both Christians and non-Christians and they supported this view with John 13:34 as quoted earlier. The group also agreed that individual and social demonstration of freedom should have a limit. This reflected the ethicist's stand that a condition is attached to any free act that leads to freedom (Fagothey, 1976). This condition points to good morality of an act that involves an individual, group or a state that seeks freedom to exhibit morally good acts as noted earlier in the literature review of this study. The group also identified a kind of confusion between verse 14 and verse 15. While verse 14 calls for love, verse 15 talks about biting and exploitation but warns that the parties involved should not consume each other. The group related verse 15 to the annual clashes between the traditional rulers and Christians during the ban on drumming and general noise making in the period of the 'Hogbetsotso' festival. The group overcomes the confusion in verse 15 that points to biting and exploitation but warns against casualties. By noting that employing patient love as in verse 14 they could exhibit freedom through showing love to the traditionalists and non-Christians by doing away with the clashes that resulted in serious fighting with the traditional faithful.

In reading verse 18 which related to lawlessness, the group made a point that anyone who is led by the Spirit becomes lawless with regard to the Jewish



law, which is tied to circumcision. The understanding is that when the Spirit leads someone, he or she is following the law of love in Christ Jesus. The leading of the Spirit also means that one is under Christ Jesus. The group went back to verse 4 and says Christ is the Spirit. Therefore, they concluded that anyone who is led by the Spirit does exceedingly more than what the law demanded.

When it comes to the fleshly desires (as indicated in verses 19 to 21) that Christians in the traditional area do exhibit, anger, quarrelling which ends in fighting, fornication and adultery are mentioned. Members of the study group agreed that these fleshly desires were among some Christians in the traditional area.

In view of the fruit of the Spirit in verses 22 to 25, the participants noted that counseling and assisting the needy are predominant among the Christians in the area. When it comes to whether the members of the group agreed with what was stated in verse 26, all the participants answered in affirmative. The verse eschews boasting, provoking and envying each other. A member of the group described this verse as “a powerful statement of Paul” as earlier on indicated. Another member of the group saw the verse as the concluding verse for the chosen text, as it showed how a Christian should daily conduct himself or herself as a way of living in peace with others is the actual practical demonstration of freedom that one gains in Christ Jesus. The study group then focused on the last set of the questions.

The last division of the questions guided the participants to focus on their context and it helped in the appropriation and application of the text to reality (West, 1993). The group noted that the reading of the text related to the kind of relationship that existed between the Christian church and the traditional rulers. The group agreed that in the text, Paul was not in good relationship with those who wanted the Christians in Galatia to take part in the religious act of circumcision with regard to the law as seen in verses 7 to 10. Likewise, the traditional rulers and the church in the Aŋlo Traditional Area were not in good relationship during the 'Hogbetsotso' festival when the ban was placed on drumming and general noise making.

In view of how the text could help in transforming the situation, the group stated that the text teaches on freedom gained in Christ. Therefore, the church should love the traditional rulers by observing the ban until the traditionalists see reason and exempt the church from observing it. The group also noted that since verse 14 talks about love for others and verse 26 also prohibits boasting, envying and provoking each other, the church in all respect should invite the traditional rulers by a letter in order to iron out the misunderstanding.

The group, also saw the need for the individual Christians, especially members of the study group to do the following:

- i) Embark on an intensive house to house evangelism to win, if not all, many people, including some traditional rulers to the Christian faith
- ii) Show love individually to non-christians in order to end the fight anytime the ban is enforced.

Finally, they also understood that from the reading that Christians in the traditional area needed to be decorous in their exhibition of their freedom by showing love to non-christians and the traditional authorities. This love to the traditional authorities should be the observance of the ban on drumming and general noise making in the period of the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival. They strongly believed that when they obey the ban, the traditional rulers may exempt them from the ban in future. The contextualization also helped them realise that fighting the traditional faithfuls must stop in the period of the ban in order to live in peace and unity. The contextualization of the text also leads to its appropriation for the targeted area of study.

### **Appropriation**

Appropriation is the final stage of the Tri – PEM employed for this study. It is the climax of the interpretive process of any text selected for study by using the Tri-PEM (Draper, 2001). As indicated earlier, the Tri – PEM has three strong poles of which “appropriation” is the last. The first two poles: Distantiation and Contextualization create a fertile ground for the last pole “Appropriation”. Appropriation of a text takes place for a community of faith (Patte and

Grenholm, 2000). Therefore, appropriation is the time when both the message of a selected text and that of the readers in other words the community of faith come together to bring out new understanding and consciousness which Drapper (2008) has coined as “the othered self” (Draper, 2008, p. 53). This enhances individual and social transformation for taking informed decision as an individual or community of faith. In this study, the first two poles of the Tri-PEM pave the way for appropriating (the third pole) the text. Therefore, the focus here is the message of the chosen text in view of the contextual reading of the text leading to individual and social transformation.

The reading of the text on its own and that of the reading by the community of faith (Christians from some selected churches of the local council of churches in Anloga) reveal an issue of a religious beliefs and practices. The text talks about the observance of religious act of circumcision which relates to the Jewish law by Christians in Galatia and how Paul negates it and went ahead to address the issue. On the one hand, the position of the agitators in the text shows the essence of the act of circumcision which is tied to the whole law as religious belief for the Jews which makes one acceptable to God. Therefore, the Jewish Christians (agitators) took a stand that Galatians who converted to the Christian faith needed circumcision to become true Christians. On the other hand, Paul categorically states that in Christ, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is not the case, rather it is faith that works through love. Here, Paul’s position shows that the import of both Jewish and Christian beliefs revolves on faith that works through love. The reading of the text by the

Christians in Anloḡa threw light on the need to address what they described as Anlo traditional religious law in form of ban on drumming and general noise making on Christians in the area. The Christians regard the period of the ban as crucial for the traditionalists performing special religious rites that do not agree with their beliefs hence their refusal to observe the ban that results in clashes. However, as Christians they realised that it is not observance or disobedience of the ban that matters. It is exhibiting their belief in Christ Jesus by showing love to each other and non-Christians in order to win them to the Christian faith that matters most.

The main ideas that flow in verses 1 to 6 of the selected text indicate legalism and freedom which show: a summon to freedom from a yoke of slavery (circumcision and obedience to the whole law), warning about shortfalls of circumcision and the whole law, with its consequences, the prospect of future righteousness and faith that functions in the form of love.

On the part of the reading group (Christians in Anloḡa) the underlining factor for legalism and freedom in verses 1 to 6 is enshrined in verse 6. Here, one can gain freedom without a struggle if he or she believes with or without the law in respect of circumcision because in Jesus circumcision nor uncircumcision does not count but faith that works through love. The group noted that the “love” in verse 6 originates from Christ therefore each Christian should show Christ-like love to each other including non-Christians. In the same way this type of love should extend to the traditionalists who impose the ban on them. The reading

group understands that it takes Christ's love in order to give the right form of freedom as indicated in verse 1.

Although the text points to consequences such as separation from Christ and falling away from grace, if one observes circumcision which is used to the whole law, it also comes out strongly that in Jesus Christ the premium is not on uncircumcision nor circumcision. Now the observance of circumcision as an act or practice is of no value but faith which should produce love. This should serve as a point of reference to the Christians in the Anlo Traditional Area in general and Anloga in particular. They think observance of the ban on drumming and general noise making is a religious act which will negatively affect their being in Christ Jesus. What matters most with regard to being in Jesus Christ is one having faith that works through love whether he is circumcised or uncircumcised. It means there is no condemnation for both the circumcised and uncircumcised who really have faith in Christ Jesus which is exhibited in a form of love.

The idea and use of "freedom" is peculiar in verse 13 in terms of "the whole law" as composed of "love" in both verses 13 and 14 which supports the concept of "freedom" in verse 1. While the use of "freedom" in verse 1 negates circumcision which is tied to the whole law as indicated in verses 2 to 3, in verse 13 a call to "freedom" is a call to service on the grounds of demonstration of "love" to humanity. The picture here is about how "freedom" that abhors circumcision which relates to the whole law in verse 1, turns round in favour of fulfillment of "the whole law" through "love". It is important to note that a call

to “freedom” in verse 13 has moral responsibility (George, 1994) because it should not be used as an opportunity for the “flesh”. Therefore, exhibition of “freedom” through showing love to each other on the altar of moral responsibility is not different from fulfilling the whole law.

Therefore, the Christians in the traditional area need to note that the call to “freedom” in verse 13 shows that there should be an element of love in whatever one does in order not to hurt others. The understanding here is that any time an individual or any human institution enjoy freedom, they must be mindful of others by not depriving others of theirs or impede their efforts to obtain it (Mill, 1859) as indicated earlier in the literature review. In this vein, being mindful of others is a practical sign that “freedom” is expressed in love hence fulfilling the whole law as indicated in verse 14. They need to view demonstration of “freedom” in the context of “love” as a tool for handling the annual clashes that generates into injuries between them and the traditionalists. The participants who read the text were divided on the issue of the observance of the ban as they regarded it as Anlo belief which translates into traditional religious law as noted earlier. While some indicate that the observance of the ban on drumming and general noise making will adversely affect their Christian worship others do not.

Although they were divided on the issue of observance of the ban they concluded after reading verses 13 – 15 that they could enjoy “freedom” in their Christian worship in a form of showing “love” to the traditional rulers. This show of “love” will be a sign of respect to the traditional personalities in terms of

observance of the ban but not to obey the Anlo traditional religious beliefs and practices that conflict with their Christian beliefs and practices.

The text also threw light on the need for those who are in Christ to walk in the “spirit” as an aid against desires of the flesh (verses 16 – 18). It shows a kind of partnership between the “Christian” and the “spirit” which means the “spirit” does not automatically take away the desires of the “flesh”. The understanding is that walking or living in the spirit does not automatically prevent individual Christians from having fleshly desires but helps them by giving them the strength to avoid acting on the “fleshly” desires (Witherington, 1998). This underscores a kind of opposition between the “spirit” and the “flesh” as indicated in verse 17.

The “fleshly” desires are classified into five as noted earlier: illicit sexual desires, undesirable spiritual activities, ill feeling towards a neighbour, distortion of community consciousness and greediness (verse 19 to 21). There is a warning to those who involved themselves in the “fleshly” desires that they will not inherit the kingdom of God. A look at the third and fourth segments of “the fruit of the “flesh””: “ill feeling towards a neighbor” which comprise hatred, quarreling, jealousy and anger on the one hand and “distortion of community consciousness” which include selfish ambition, division and party spirit on the other hand. These elements can strain relationship among individuals and are also destructive to community peace and cohesion.



Aṅlɔ Christians are not free from these fleshly desires as they affirm the manifestation of the fleshly desires among themselves and between them and non-Christians who include the traditionalists. The situation is that “anger” as a work of the flesh is what is common among them (Aṅlɔ Christians). It manifests in a form of frowning of faces which mostly lead to quarreling which results in fighting between Christian and traditional faithful in their chapels during the period of the ban on drumming and general noise making. Since they (Aṅlɔ Christians) claim to belong to the kingdom of God now and are eager to inherit it in future when it fully come, they need to do away with fighting the traditional faithful.

The text shows contrast in other words incompatibility between “the work of the flesh” and “the fruit of the spirit” because of the use of the word *de* which means “but” in verse 22. The phrase *ho de karpos tou pnematos* “but the fruit of the spirit” indicates a specific element different from “works of the flesh” in verse 19. The word “fruit” in verse 22 is used as a metaphor because “spirit” is not a tree that can bear “fruit”. It refers to a life style which the “spirit” enables one to exhibit. The “fruit” (which is put in singular) talks about nine life styles which shows unity in diversity consisting three sets of concepts: (Betz, 1988)

- i. Love, joy and peace- can be attributed to God.
- ii. Kindness, goodness and patience -are required of man and
- iii. Faithfulness, gentleness and self-control- are three famous virtues.

The study group showed awareness that the Christians in Aṅlɔ bear the fruit of the spirit when they patiently and gently unite Christians in times of separation and also unite Christians and non-Christians. This is done through counseling to bring joy and peace to affected parties who do not retaliate. However, they (Aṅlɔ Christians) do not show the kindness to traditional faithful when it attempt seizing their drums during the period of the ban on drumming and general noise making which ends in the clashes between them (Aṅlɔ Christians) and the traditionalists. This attitude, in the context of the reading group does not conform to the patience, gentleness and self-control as fruits of the spirit that the Aṅlɔ Christians do exhibit to uniting themselves and non-Christians when the need arises. There is the need for the Aṅlɔ Christians to look at the concepts of the fruit of the spirit to enhance their relationship with the traditionalists.

The reading group emphatically agreed with verse 26 which is against boastfulness, provoking and envying each other and describes it as “powerful statement of Paul” of the concluding verse of the text under study. They indicate that Christians who gain freedom in Christ and are bearing the fruit of the spirit need to avoid what the verse condemns. The verse is seen as a daily guide for Christian living in terms of how an individual Christian should conduct himself or herself.

## **Implications**

The way forward for the Christians in the study area concerns measurable and achievable strategies that can be utilized individually and collectively in dealing with the ban on drumming and general noise making that confronts them. The new strategies that are rolled out in this section are not formulated in isolation but in respect of what transpired between the message of the text and the reading of the study group as indicated earlier.

Participants of the reading group indicated that they and individual Christians in the area should be conscious of “the works of the flesh” and “the fruits of the spirit” daily. They believe this will enable them put up acceptable conduct to enable them embark on an intensive individual house to house evangelism before, during and after the “Hogbetsotso festival”. The reason is that they (the Aṅlɔ Christians) lived individually in houses and localities with the non – Christians and the traditional rulers who were not Christians.

As individuals, freedom in Christ should be shown in loving non-Christians and the traditional faithful at all times in order to avert the fighting during the period of the ban on drumming and general noise making. The show of love should be demonstrated in speech, addressing or handling issues, helping the needy, involvement in developmental projects and expressing opinions on issues both privately (in their various houses) and publicly (in their communities).

Collectively as a church, they realised that the scripture selected was meant for them since their churches did not observe the ban hence the clashes. In this wise, they agreed to observe the ban until the traditional rulers exempt the church from observing it. The observance shall be a gesture of respect to the king of Aṅlɔ and his traditional rulers. The respect does not include Aṅlɔ traditional religious beliefs and practices. They agreed that the leadership of the church should make congregants aware that in Jesus Christ, it is not observance or disobedience to the ban that is important but their expression of freedom and faith through love for humanity. The understanding here is that no Christian church will ever disobey the ban on drumming and general noise making in the period of the 'Hogbetsotso' festival in the Aṅlɔ Traditional Area.

Finally, the study group agreed on the following achievable action plans towards individual and collective transformations.

#### **Action plan for individual transformation:**

##### **Individual Evangelism**

The study group resolved to engage in monthly house to house evangelism with immediate effect. In order to achieve this aim they decided that every individual member of the group should evangelise his or her relatives who were non-Christians and traditionalists who lived in his or her community. They also planned to embark on follow up with regard to the evangelism and give monthly report to their various pastors for necessary intervention.

### **Exhibition of “freedom” in a form of “love”**

The study group decided that as individuals they will exercise “freedom” gained in Christ by showing “love” to the traditional faithful in order not to get involved in fights with them in the period of the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival in 2016.

### **Use of “freedom” to avoid the “works of the flesh” (5: 19 to 21)**

The participants of the study group agreed to sensitise the members of their various churches to understand that “freedom” gained in Christ calls for good morality. They decided to do this by engaging the leadership of the various church groups to organize Bible study on the text under study and any other biblical texts that talked about morality every three months under supervision of the pastors of the various churches.

### **Collective transformative action plan:**

#### **Observance of the ban in view of the text they read**

The group came to a conclusion that although the ban on drumming and general noise making contravenes their Christian belief and practices there is the need to observe it since it will not negatively affect their worship due to their understanding gained from Galatians 5:6. They boldly agreed to discuss the observance of the ban with the leadership of their various churches in terms of the text they read especially Galatians 5: 22 to 26 which talk about the “fruit of the spirit” and living by the spirit. They decided to start the observation of the ban in the period of the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival in 2016.

### **Inviting the traditional authorities**

The study group planned to ask the leadership of the Aɲlɔga local council of churches to invite the traditional authorities before the period of 2016 ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival on two vital issues:

- (i) Amicable solution of the misunderstanding that lead to the annual clashes between Christians and the traditional rulers
- (ii) The need for the traditional rulers to exempt the Christians from the ban in a form of limiting the drumming to the chapels only.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter focused on contextualization and appropriation of the selected text for the study. The six ideas that came from the distantiation of the text were used for the contextualization with the ordinary readers from the seven denominations that belong to the local council of churches at Aɲlɔga.

The contextualization of the text was aided with four divisions of C.B.S. questions. The first division of the questions enabled the study group understood what freedom in Christ meant in the text and how the law and love were related to each other. The study group realized that showing love to others signifies obeying the law which is a true demonstration of freedom in Christ.

The second set of questions was a guide to the reading group to see the text as coming from a context which is different from their own context. The group noted that the law in the text related to the Abrahamic covenant which called for

religious act of circumcision, which portrays a yoke of slavery. In the context of the study group, the yoke of slavery is the traditional religious law of the ban on drumming and general noise making.

The third division of the questions led the study group to read the text with critical consciousness. In verses 1 to 6 the group realized that legalism and freedom are the same. Their reason is verse 6 places premium on faith that works through love in Christ and points to “circumcision or uncircumcision” as valueless.

In verses 7 to 12, the group understood lawfulness as those who obey the law which points to suffering on the one hand. On the other hand, those who are lawless are not under the law which signifies freedom gained in Christ.

However, the study group noted in verses 13 to 15 that exhibiting freedom through showing love to each other fulfills the whole law. This puts the law on a positive level. In exhibiting freedom care must be taken not to hurt others. In verse 18 anyone who is led by the spirit is under Christ and (becomes lawless with regard to the Jewish law) not under the law.

The study group clearly identified the fleshy desires in verses 19 – 21 as a problem which they are handling in their community. However, they bear the fruit of the spirit in verses 22 to 25. The group regarded verses 26 as “a powerful statement of Paul” which shows how Christians should daily conduct themselves.

The fourth division of the questions directed the study group to focus on their own context. The group saw the need to show love to non-Christians and the

traditionalists. They decided to show love to the traditionalists by observing the ban on drumming and general noise making in the period of the 'Hogbetsotso' festival.

Appropriation is the climax of the interpretive process of the text under study. The reading of the text on its own and that of the study group at Anjoga threw light on serious religious beliefs and practices. This led to a new understanding and consciousness on the part of the study group. The new understanding and consciousness guided the study group to formulate achievable action plans for individual and social transformation with regards to the ban. The cream of the action plans was geared toward ending the fight they annually have with the traditional faithfuls in the period of the ban. This has paved the way for summary, findings, conclusions and recommendations on the entire study.



## CHAPTER SIX

### SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The last chapter contextualized the selected text for this study and appropriates the text for the Christians in the Anlo Traditional Area. The appropriation of the text signifies the final state of the Tri-PEM method employed for the study. Therefore, this current chapter six brings the entire thesis to an end by looking at among others summary, research findings, conclusions and recommendations.

#### **Summary**

The major concern of this thesis in view of a reading of Galatians 5 and its impact on Christians in the targeted area of this study revolves on three pillars which are

- i) distantiation of the selected text
- ii) contextualizing the text in terms of Christian views on freedom in religious beliefs and practices as against that of the traditional ban on drumming and general noise making in the selected area of study.
- iii) Appropriation of the text, which leads to individual and social transformative action plans.

In this respect, the study is divided into six sections. The first section (chapter one) unveiled what the entire study set out to do as it handled the introduction which among others includes the background of the study, statement

of the problem, significance of the study, objectives, methodology, review of scholarly works and organisation of the whole research. The review of the scholarly works covers circumcision and the whole law, secular and Christian world views on freedom and African biblical interpretation. For instance the review looks at what circumcision means and how it became the physical sign of a covenant which is made on the male genitalia as an instruction in terms of religious practice from God to Abraham and his generation (Jews).

The instruction is an everlasting one for the recipient and his associate to obey (Genesis 17:10-14). This act of circumcision is noted as one of the works of the law (Dunn, 1990). However, the belief of freedom in Christ in the selected text for the study sharply contrasts the practice of circumcision which forms the central concern of this study. The review of literature unveils strengths and weaknesses of the scholarly works consulted, for instance the supernatural nature of the initiator of the covenant with the sanction over the subordinate (Abraham) and his generation depict omnipotence of the former over the latter. This shows that the subordinate had no liberty in other words freedom in order to express his opinion concerning the covenant in view of the act of circumcision on the one hand. On the other hand, the instruction from Paul in Galatians 5 shows that circumcision, which is an everlasting religious bodily sign, from God in Judaism (Genesis 17), should not be observed by Christians in Galatia because of the idea of freedom in Christ.

Chapter one also throws light on the problem of the study in terms of the tension between the Christians and traditional rulers in respect of traditional ban

on drumming and general noise making in the Aṅlɔ Traditional Area and a reading of Galatians 5 for appropriation for the Christians in the targeted study area. The Tri-PEM that was employed for the study is early explained in the same chapter.

The review also makes us aware of the link between the Ancient Near East laws and that of the nation Israel, such that they were formulated to keep order for the good of the people. The understanding is any secular or religious law is not a misplaced element to cause destruction to the adherents but to draw them closer for meaningful co-existence. The review also indicates the similarity and dissimilarity between secular and Christian views of freedom. The similarity and dissimilarity gave an indication that the concept of freedom could mean different things to different people and it cannot be ruled out in the present vibrant and modern world. The exercise of freedom may serve as a relief to an individual or a group of people who are under any kind of bondage. This freedom can also serve as a threat to any individual, a group of people, a community or a state who have a kind of autonomy over a particular people.

The second chapter of the study focused on the “Hogbetsotso” festival of the people of Aṅlɔ and their religious beliefs and practices. The chapter makes us aware that the exodus of the people of Aṅlɔ to their present location signifies political and religious freedom from the unbearable situations at Ɗɔtsie under king Agɔrkoli. The present geographical location of the people comprises one municipal and four political districts: Keta municipality, Ketu South, Ketu North,

Akatsi South and Akatsi North districts of the republic of Ghana. Chapter two also lays bare the religious beliefs and practices of Aᅇᅇ people. The source of religious beliefs and practices of the study area is grounded in “Mawu” the creator or God who heads earthy gods and some deities. How the three deities were carried in a haversack: Kli, Gbᅇtanya and Hafu during the exodus to the present location signify their commitment and freedom to religious beliefs and practice which cannot be compromised.

The chapter also indicates how “Hogbetsotso” festival was instituted, the king or the Awoamefia who instituted it, its meaning and the religious significance of the activities that are performed in the period of the festival. Again, the chapter throws light on the traditional ban on drumming and general noise making as a vital prohibition in the period of the “Hogbetsotso” festival for the people of Aᅇᅇ. It also makes us aware of who instituted it, why it was instituted and the key traditional rulers who finally enforced it in 1907 to the present day. It again emphasizes why every individual, a group of people or any human institution living on the land of Aᅇᅇ must obey it.

Chapter three examines the advent and acceptance of the Christian faith in the Aᅇᅇ Traditional Area and how Aᅇᅇ Christians view the “Hogbetsotso” festival in terms of the activities that are associated with it. It explains the difficulties the missionaries encountered with the king at Aᅇᅇᅇga who finally allowed them to propagate the Good News. This resulted in the establishment of Evangelical Presbyterian Church as the first Christian denomination in Aᅇᅇland.

The chapter talks about the four thematic areas that guided the missionaries and made them productive. It also points to misunderstandings which can be termed as clashes between the traditional priest with his faithfuls and the Christians at Kedzi and Keta in 1860. In addition, the chapter again throws light on the interview the researcher conducted with some of the executives of local council of churches and two ministers who do not belong to the council on beliefs, practices and the traditional ban on drumming and general noise making. The interview reveals that the Anlo Christian leadership have divided front when it comes to the observance of the traditional ban.

The fourth chapter briefly surveyed the content of Paul's letter to the Galatians by looking at the main theme(s) in other words the outstanding issues in each chapter before the distantiation of the chosen text. The survey reveals an intra-religious debate between two religious concepts: Judaism and Christianity as one of the main issues in the letter. The first chapter sets the tone for the main issue as "another gospel" against "gospel of Christ" and it is seen in the second chapter of the letter as "the works of the law" which is not compatible with "faith in Jesus Christ". It emerges in the third division of the letter such that those who rely on "the works of the law" are under a curse but those who live by "faith in Jesus" are justified before God. In the fourth chapter of the letter it turns into analogy: a woman in slavery with her children while another woman in freedom with her children of promise. Chapter five of the letter which is selected for this study gives categorical statement about the internal problem which is indicative of a way forward in terms of tackling and dealing with the problem. The last

chapter of the letter rules on the internal problem. Chapter four of the entire study also explains why Galatians 5 is selected for study as well as its appropriation to the Anlo Christians. It engages in the distantiation of the chosen text and comes out with six principles that emerge from the reading of the text.

Chapter five gives us contextualization of Galatians 5 and its appropriation to the Christians in the Anlo Traditional Area. West's (1993) Contextual Bible Study approach was employed for the contextualization of the selected text. The contextualization was done in conformity of the principles that emerged from the distantiation of the text. The chapter also makes us aware of how the reading of the text by the Christians in Anloga paves the way for the appropriation of the text.

Chapter six, which is the last chapter of the entire study, draws down the curtain on the research. The chapter summarises the study. It goes on by stating the research findings, gives a reflection, draws general conclusions and finally points out recommendations based on the study. The summary of the study tries to carve out the salient points each chapter handled. In this wise, it gives a clue and prepares the ground for the findings.

## **Findings**

Findings are the distinctive issues in other words things that came out with regard to the whole study. The findings are not noted in isolation but they reflect the objectives of the study which relate to the text, contextualization and appropriation of the text.

## The Text

Concept of “freedom” as stated in verse 1 becomes the central idea in the entire text. This concept in the text abhors circumcision (religious rite) which relate to legalism (the whole law). It is seen as a form of slavery and calls for faith (a religious idea) that works through love. The use of the concept is placed at two levels:

(i) Avoiding the ‘flesh’

The flesh desires against the spirit and the opposite is true. The works of flesh include quarreling, jealousy, selfish ambitions and divisions.

(ii) Demonstration of ‘love’

Showing love to humanity which indicates fulfillment of legalism (the whole law).

The concept of freedom draws a thin line between the religious rite of circumcision and another religious idea of faith that works through love in verses 1 to 12. However, exhibition of the concept diminishes the line between religious act of circumcision and religious view of faith that works through love. This is because anything that falls short of ‘love’ suggests using ‘freedom’ for the ‘flesh’ which among others points to quarreling, self-ambition and these are tantamount to violence. Therefore, the internal evidence of the text in terms of ‘concept of freedom’ shows that ‘freedom’ that negates the act of legalism turns round to favour the same legalism on the altar of serving one another through ‘love’ which fulfills the legalism.

### **Interpretation of ‘concept of freedom’ in the text by Anlo Christians**

The Anlo Christians understand the ‘concept of freedom’ in the text as showing love to others and it is not different from obeying the legalism. By this, they see the act of showing love as the true demonstration of ‘freedom’ in Jesus Christ.

In this respect, the legalism (the whole law) is good in terms of what it sets out to do. Therefore, exhibition of Christ’s freedom by Christians should not lead them to sin and should not also be an obstacle in a way of preventing non-Christians from exercising their freedom. The ‘concept of freedom’ in respect of the text and its interpretation in the text by Anlo Christians shows responsible demonstration of ‘freedom’. It means exhibition of freedom with regard to the text has a kind of limitation in order to avoid giving chance to the ‘flesh’.

### **Contextualization of the text**

In this regard, the contextualization of the text helped the study group in two ways. In the first place they realized that the text they read and any other biblical text can be contextualized to address challenges and problems that Christians encounter. In the second place the study group saw that the problem that Paul deals with in the text they read in a way reflects what they annually experience in the period of the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival.

The study group relates verses 15 of the text to the annual clashes between the traditional rulers and Christians who do not observe the ban in the



period of the 'Hogbetsotso' festival. The group also took note of legalism and freedom, which they (group) regarded as the same, since verse 6 says in Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of no value but faith that works through love. Therefore, both the circumcised and uncircumcised who have faith that works through love can gain and exhibit freedom in Christ.

### **Appropriation of the text and transformation**

The study group resolved that although they have freedom in Christ it should not let them as individuals do anything to hurt others. They agreed on individual house to house evangelism to win many people especially the traditionalists to the Christian faith. As individuals they decided to show love to non-Christians in order to bring to an end the fight that takes place anytime the ban was enforced. They also resolved that the Church should observe the ban until the traditional rulers decide to exempt the Christian church from observing it. In this regard, they pledged to convince the church leaders and support them to officially invite the traditional rulers to resolve the misunderstanding that leads to the clashes in the period of the festival.

### **Reflection**

The reflection concerns the objectives of the study that propelled the entire research. The principles that emerged from the distantiation of the text were used for the questions that guided the contextualization of the text. This is the real focus of the first objective of the study. The literary examination of the main theme in the text was what led to the six principles as indicated in chapter

four of the study. The main theme of the selected text is ‘freedom in Christ’ with regards to circumcision which is tied to the whole law. The distantiation of the text throws light on intra-religious debate between two religious beliefs and practices which resulted in the six principles. The distantiation also unveiled how the debate was handled.

The second objective handled the contextualization of the selected text. As indicated earlier, the six principles that came out of the distantiation of the text informed the questions that guided the contextualization by the Anloga Christians. The study group at Anloga contextualized the text in respect of the major theme “freedom in Christ” in view of circumcision which relates to the whole law.

The background of the study group influenced the reading, understanding and interpretation of the text as their main focus was on the main theme. Their world view and that of the text helped them to understand legalism and freedom in the text. They realised that there is nothing wrong with legalism as it sets out to do good. Likewise, freedom gained in Christ needs to be exercised responsibly by having other people in mind in order not to offend them. Their understanding of the text throws light on what leads to the annual clashes between them and the traditional rulers in the period of the ban during the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival. This leads the study group to take informed decisions in respect of the ban in the period of the festival which is the main concern of the third objective.

The third objective focused on transformative steps that emerged from the reading of the text. The study group arrived at achievable transformative decisions in handling in other words resolving the annual tension that results to clashes between Christians and the traditional rulers in the period of the ban on drumming and general noise making during the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival. The study group strongly believed that it is not a good thing for Christians to fight with the traditional rulers because of the differences in religious beliefs and practices. The study group firmly designed action plan to use as individual Christians and collectively as Christian church to end the clashes as stated in the study.

### **Conclusions**

The caption for the study is ‘A reading of Galatians 5 and its impact on Christians in the Aŋlɔ Traditional Area’. The introductory aspect of the topic sets the tone for handling the topic. The study shows that Galatians 5 is a pericope within the Pauline epistle to the Galatians which talks about ‘freedom in Christ’ which frowns on circumcision which relates to the whole law. The distantiation of the text explicitly throws light on a internal problem between Judaism and Christianity. The distantiation also unravels how Paul dealt with the tension by pointing to faith that works through love in respect of Jesus Christ.

Likewise, the traditional activities during the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival in regard with their religious beleifs and practices conflict with that of the Christian faith in the Aŋlɔ Traditional Area that annually generates into tension between

the traditional faithfuls and Christians resulting into clashes with various degrees of injuries.

The contextualization of the selected text for the study by the cross section of the Anloḡa Christians who belong to the local council of Churches created awareness on the part of the study group that there is no need for the Anlo Christians to engage in a fight with the traditional faithfuls when it comes to the ban on drumming and general noise making in the period of the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival.

The traditional rulers of the area observed that there are some Christian churches who annually observe the ban on drumming and general noise making. They refer to these churches: the Evangelical Presbyterian Church and the Roman Catholic Church as ‘missionary churches’ who championed development in form of schools, colleges, clinics and hospitals in the traditional area and the nation at large. The traditionalists also term the Christian churches that disobey the ban hence the clashes as ‘new churches’ who they (traditionalists) think are interested in amassing wealth to cater for their congregations.

The observation of the traditional rulers really reflects the clear cut division between the Christian leadership in the traditional area so far as the observation of the ban on drumming and general noise making in the period of the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival is concerned. The leaders of the Christian churches that are not members of the local council of churches observe the ban since they understand that it does not negatively affect their Christian worship. However,

the leadership of Christian churches that belong to the local council of churches posit that observation of the ban will seriously have devastating effect on their Christian worship. This shows a complete divided front among Christians in the traditional area in respect of the ban.

Although the church leaders who belong to the local council of Churches in Anjloga do not agree to observe the ban, the cross section of their congregants who study the selected text boldly resolved to observe the ban in order to bring to an end the clashes between the Christians and the traditional faithfuls. The decision the study group took to observe the ban was due to how the text they study challenged their context with regard to the ban. The decision led them to formulate achievable undertakings to observe the ban in order to avoid the annual fight in the period of the 'Hogbetsotso' festival.

### **Recommendations**

A look at the findings and conclusions on the entire study point to salient issues that create room for recommendations. The recommendations are:

#### **Promoting contextualization of biblical texts**

The participants of the contextual Bible study should give a detail report on the study of Galatians 5 to their respective pastors. They should also ask their pastors to direct them in executing the individual transformational action plan with regard to house to house evangelism. Church leaders should endeavour to send qualified members to higher or tertiary institutions to become biblical scholars who will assist the church leadership in conducting Contextual Bible

Study to enhance dealing with chronic challenges and problems that confront the congregants and the church.

### **Dealing with the division among the church leadership in respect of the ban**

Since the traditional rulers acknowledge the missionary churches who observe the ban, the chairperson and his executive members of the Aṅlɔga local council of churches should extend a hand of fellowship by official invitation to the leadership of the missionary churches who do not belong to the council to join them. This will help them to have a common front in dealing with the ban.

### **Handling the ban on drumming and general noise making**

Each participant of the seven churches who took part in the Contextual Bible Study should schedule a meeting with the executive members of the Aṅlɔga local council of churches to:

1. Humbly discuss their social transformative action plan and their resolution to observe the ban in respect of the challenge the text throws to them during the contextual reading of the text.
2. Join the executive members of the Aṅlɔga local council of churches to meet the key traditional rulers: Awoamefia Togbi Sri III and his spokesperson Togbi Boni and Togbi Asiapim Nyegblanua Eha II (the Nyegbla priest) to resolve their differences in terms of the clashes in the period of the ban

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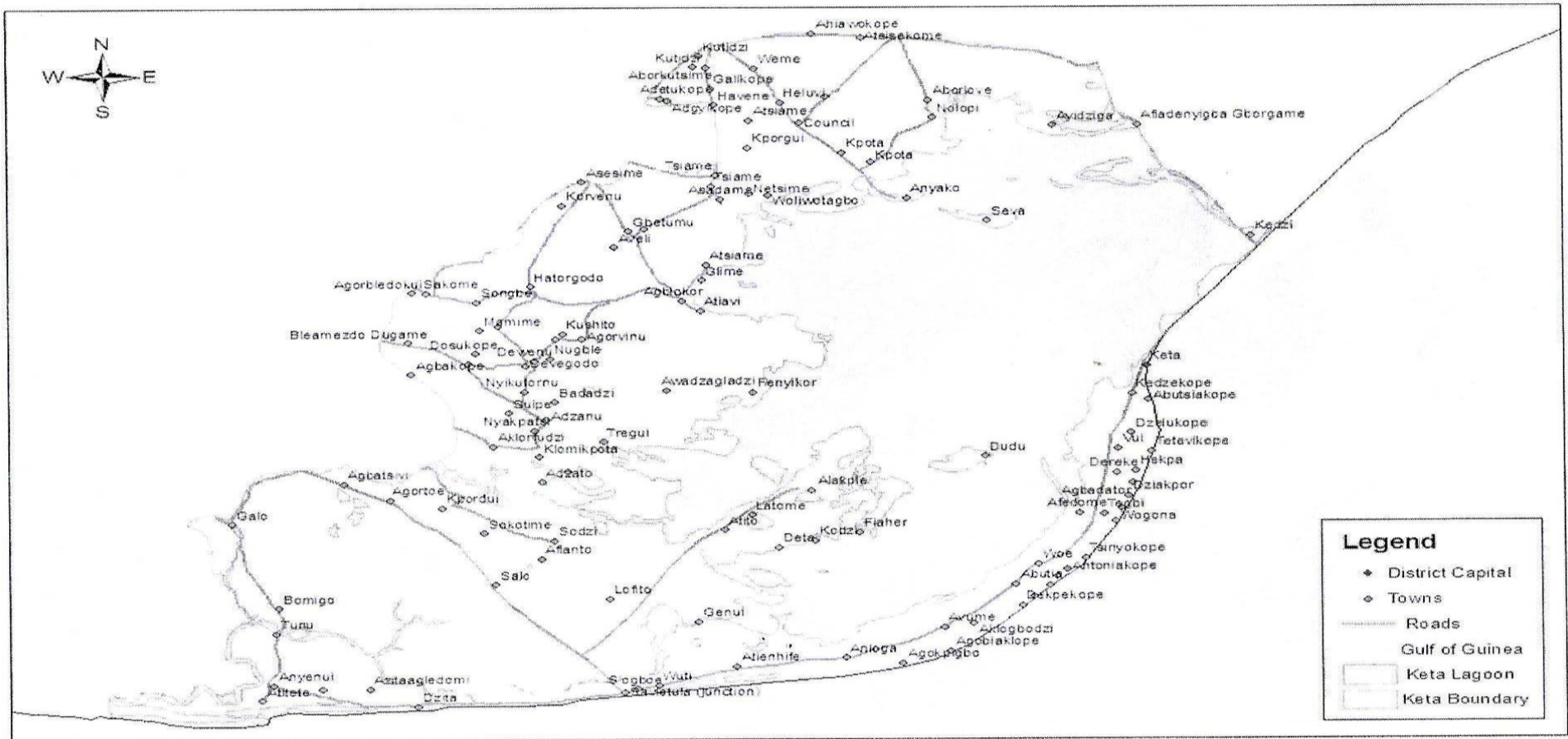
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PLATE 1: MAP OF ANLO TRADITIONAL AREA



Source: <http://www.maplandia.com/Ghana/volta/keta/anyako>

**PLATE 2: A CROSS SECTION OF THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE C.B.S. AND THE RESEARCHER AT AŊLOGA.**



## APPENDIX A

### Interview schedule for the 'Nyeɔbla' Priest at Aɔlɔga

1. Who instituted the ban on drumming and general noise making in the traditional area?
2. Why was the ban instituted?
3. Did the ban have traditional religious undertones? Why?
4. When Christianity came to Aɔlɔland, were Christians exempted from the ban? Why?
5. Is there anything you would want this interviewer to know about the core functions and their importance of 'Nyeɔbla' in view of the ban?
6. Who is responsible for placing the band during the 'Hogbetsotso' festival?
7. What are your views about how Christians respond and react to the ban during the 'Hogbetsotso' festival?
8. What is your stand on Christians' reaction to the ban which leads to annual clashes?
9. What is the way forward with regard to the annual clashes between Christians and traditional faithfuls during the 'Hogbetsotso' festival?
10. Is it possible that Christians will be exempted from the ban during the 'Hogbetsotso' festival? Why?

## APPENDIX B

### Interview guide for his royal majesty Togbi Sri III the Awoamefia (king) of the Anlo Traditional Area

1. Who places the ban on drumming and noise making in general in Anlo land during the 'Hogbetsotso' festival?
2. What are the core values of the ban?
3. What is the traditional religious significance of the ban?
4. Are Christians exempted from your ban? Why?
5. Do Christians obey the ban?
6. What is your view concerning Christians who disobey the ban?
7. In future will you stop placing the ban during the period of the 'Hogbetsotso' festival? Why?
8. Will you exempt the Christians from observing the ban in future? Why?

## APPENDIX C

### Interview guide for Togbi Boni the spokesperson of Togbi Sri III and Avadada of Anlo Traditional Area

1. Why do traditional authorities place ban on drumming and noise making in general during the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival?
2. Who is responsible for placing the ban?
3. What is the duration of the ban?
4. Are Christians comfortable with the ban during the ‘Hogbetsotso’ festival? Why?
5. What accounts for the Christians who always disobey the ban?
6. How do traditionalists react to Christians who usually disobey the ban? Why?
7. Will the traditional rulers exempt Christians from the ban in future? Why?
8. What is the way forward since some Christians denominations respond to the ban whilst others react to it?

## APPENDIX D

### **Interview schedule for Pastors whose denominations do not belong to local council of churches and executives of the council at Anlo**

1. What is the source of Christian belief for Christians in the Anlo Traditional Area?
2. Did traditionalists worship God before the advent of Christian faith in your traditional area? How did you know?
3. Is the Christian God the same as that of the traditionalists?
4. In what ways do Christians put their belief into practice?
5. What gives Christians freedom to practice their belief in the traditional area?
6. Are there some hinderances to Christian worship in your traditional area? Mention them.
7. What are your views on the traditional practices in the period of the 'Hogbetsotso' festival?
8. Who places the ban on drumming and noise making in general?
9. Who is or are the custodians of the Anloland?
10. Do all Christian denominations obey the ban during the 'Hogbetsotso' festival?
11. Do Christian denominations that obey the ban belong to the local council of churches in Anlo?

12. Why do denominations that belong to the council annually disobey the ban?
13. What lessons have you learnt from the clashes that always result from disobeying the ban?
14. What steps did you or are you taking to resolve the clashes?
15. Will observance of the ban negatively affect your Christian worship?
16. What is the way forward since your efforts to resolve the clashes with the traditional authorities did not yield any positive results?