Title: Nurturing new Seventh-day Adventist converts from among the Moslems of Mindanao

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Abstract:

One of the major concerns in the gospel ministry today is the problem of apostasy. Over the years various strategies have been proposed to lessen backsliding. Large sums of money have been and are being spent to win people to Christ. Large sums of money have been and are being spent to win people to Christ. Energy, effort, and time must be expended for each person won to Christ and the church. This study deals with nurturing new Seventh-day Adventist converts from among the Moslems of Mindanao. The dissertation consists of four parts: presentation, analysis, interpretation, and pastoral action.

PART I: PRESENTATION

Nur Mapantao was a Moslem who attended a gospel and health seminar conducted by Seventh-day Adventist pastors and laymen. Nur’s interest led him and his family to join the Adventist Church through baptism. But later due to apathy and lack of concern on the part of older church members and the district pastor’s failure to nurture them, the Mapantao family left the church.

Chapter 2 provides the introduction to the study. Chapter 3 reviews related literature on the history, culture, and people of autonomous Moslem Mindanao, as well as Christians reaching out to Moslems.
PART II: ANALYSIS

The Moslem Filipinos have distinct socio-cultural, psychological, and religious values. The traditional ways of life and kinship ties are very strong.

Maranao maratabat and Tausung addat often cause troubles and bloodshed among Moslem groups and also between Moslems and Christians, including strangers.

The Moslem faith is anchored in beliefs and practices. Moslems believe in Allah (God), the Qur’an, and Islam. Daily prayer at the mosque is an important part of religious practice. Present religious practices of the Moslems of Mindanao are to a certain extent pagan in origin; they are part of what is termed folk Islam.

PART III: INTERPRETATION

The interpretation part examines the core pastoral-theological problem of nurture of Moslem converts. Four sub-issues are studied.

Enemies are to be loved even when they are unloving. Theologians and Christian writers agree that “to love enemies” means to respect them as persons created by God despite their being disrespectful, to love them as Christ loved his enemies. This leads for forgiveness, respectful treatment, and concern for an enemy’s welfare, both present and eternal.

A theology of nurture and discipling care based on the teaching of Jesus in the New Testament is formulated. This theology is based on the great commission to evangelize and to make disciples, which reflects God’s eternal purpose that all people everywhere have the opportunity to become disciples of Jesus Christ. The commission, “to make disciples,” is to make people followers of Jesus Christ. These people are taught and nurtured in the faith. In turn they go out to make disciples. In other words, after the disciple receives training from the master
teacher he is able to produce other disciples. This refers to a wide range of activities that enable the disciple to grow.

The pastor is God’s representative on earth; his task is to provide nurture and discipling care for new believers in Christ. Pastors can make use of their time in training lay people, organizing and conducting small group meetings.

Lay participation and involvement in nurture and discipling care is indispensable.

PART IV: PASTORAL ACTION

The outcome of the pastoral and theological interpretation reveals that spiritual babies have basic needs. Their needs should be met for them to grow. The united effort of pastors and laymen can provide new converts nourishment, protection, and training. One-on-one contacts and small group meetings are two ways of nurturing new believers individually and in groups.