INTRODUCTION
The study of religion is predicated with a contestation which emanates from the fact that religion is multidimensional (Smart 1998) and Ziolkowski (1987:345) shares the same view by pointing out that there are varieties of experiencing religion. This contestation is further complicated when we examine religion against the backdrop of emerging technologies. Both scientists and analysts of religions have varied views on the relationship between science (technology). One camp comprises those who view the two as generally adversarial towards each other and consequently contesting for space in which the two are forever locked in battle. Some have even gone further and predicted the fall of religion. The other camp sees the problem of boundaries because of the different goals that each has, but at the same time does not mean that they are or should be adversarial towards each other;

They concern different matters. Scope of science is advance explanations about natural world, explanations that are accepted or rejected by observation or experiment. Outside the world of nature science has no authority, no statements to make and nothing to say about values…the matters are none of its business (Ayala 2010)

It should be made clear that we do not claim to know what religion would be like in future but, in spite of that, this research argues for the compatibility of religion and emerging technologies through examining Pentecostals’ engagement with media technologies. The study examines the Pentecostal use of the television, internet facilities, print media and cellphones beyond the pulpit. Hence the study argues that religion and emerging technologies are compatible and not competitors since religion have largely appropriated media technologies to its advantage. The choice of Pentecostals, above other forms of Christianity in Zimbabwe, is deliberate. Pentecostalism with its flexibility of “freedom” in the spirit has continued to expand in many forms (Anderson 2004:28) more than any other form of Christianity. Pentecostalism was the fastest growing form of Christianity in the 20th Century and one of the most remarkable occurrences (Anderson 2004:281). This growth is not attributed to success in competing with technology, but appropriation of media technology and has demonstrated a unique capacity for change and expansion. It commands numerical strength and has outstandingly engaged the media technologies in their spirituality, both print and electronic, more than any other form of Christianity and seem to have pioneered the reformulation of expressions and means of communication within the framework of transnationalisation of religion and in the context of a market logic thereby creating a competitive environment (Anderson 2004:281). Hence it provides us with the fertile ground to explore the dynamics and extent of how religion negotiates for space through its interaction with the emerging technologies.

The three basic questions that have to be considered in this study are:
-Is the truth and relevance of religion at stake and have Christians lost their stamina and surrendered to the pressure for adaptation of the secular standard (Pannenberg 1976:357)?
-Is religion a truly global enterprise (Frank Whaling 2000:6)?
-Is religion losing space and giving way to emerging technologies?

METHODOLOGY
We will make use of Pentecostal sermons and scriptural interpretations with regards to emerging technologies (media technologies) derivable from the Bible and also exploring the literature that has preyed upon a great deal of religious material, through a
The study of religion is predicated with a contestation which emanates from the fact that religion is multidimensional. According to Ninian Smart (1998:5) these dimensions include the experiential, the narrative, doctrinal, ethical, ritual, the social and material. The contestation is further complicated when we examine religion against the backdrop of emerging technologies. The two are generally viewed as “adversarial” towards each other and consequently contesting for space in which religion will be either “defeated” or eliminated. One of the Enlightenment critiques of traditional Christianity was the belief in the omnipotence of reason and both the rationalist and the empiricist evidenced an overwhelming confidence in reason’s capacities and a conviction that it was human reason that led to the liberation from superstition and human beings being rational, were regarded as capable of knowing the world themselves and of directing history’s course of events (McGrath 1994:34). The general thinking was, how can the learned and culturally sensitive enter in to the backward world of the New Testament and appropriate its outdated religious message to the contemporary world? Most analysts of religion, beginning with the evolutionary theorists like J.G Frazer, E.B. Taylor, S. Freud and others predicted the fall of religion. Sigmund Freud, the psychoanalyst, viewed religion as an objectification of human feeling. The purpose of his work was to show that the supernatural mystery of religion is based upon quite simple natural truth. Marx viewed religion as the product of socio-economic alienation, derived from social human needs and hopes. Some believe that with the rapid progress and development of technology, religion would be relegated to the periphery of society and faith as an ancient heritage would become marginal to life (Epps 1998:8).

The major problem emerges from the fact that religion has given primacy to the spiritual and hence interprets or explains events from a spiritual point of view that cannot be scientifically proven. Yet science is concerned about facts and anything that cannot be scientifically proven is dismissed. Thus religion has been accused by scientists as a form of escapism. The question, therefore is, are science and religion contradictory, adversarial, co-existing or are they contesting for the space, seeing that religion has continued in society? There are basically two classes of contestation. The first school is conservative and this school consists of pseudo-theologians who argue that science and religion cannot co-exist. The other school is progressive and sees religion and science not as adversarial, but complementing each other and Pentecostals, in this study, belong to this category.

This perceived battle and contestation between science and religion means they contest for space and dignity, hence brings in the need for us to examine the relationship between science (technology) and religion in the local context. However, it is logical to give a brief background of areas of contradiction between them which have been interpreted to provide the basis for contradiction and contestation before we examine the local scenario.

CONFLICT BETWEEN SCIENCE AND RELIGION
According to Peter Alexander (1953), there are three main respects in which science and religion appear to conflict. These are:

- Certain theological statements appear to conflict with certain scientific statements about the date and nature of particular events, including the age of earth, order of creation, etc
- Certain theological statements purport to record and account for the occurrence of events which appear to violate established scientific laws, such as the account...
of the virgin birth of Jesus, changing of water into wine and feeding of the five thousand which violate the human conception, chemical composition and the nutritional requirements of men. Statements about God’s existence—the scientists tend to explain everything in mechanical terms and the question about the true value of God and religion has been posed. (83)

In order to substantiate the above areas of contestation and in the light of the two camps of contestation, we briefly examine views from different analysts and scientists on the relationship between religion and scientific discoveries. Sloman (1978: 23-24) outlines the aims of Science as: to extend man’s knowledge and understanding of the form and contents of the universe, extend man’s control of the universe and to improve the world, to discover how things ought to be, what sort of things are good or bad. However, he quickly points out that the aims are subject of dispute by philosophers and scientists. In spite of that, one has to note that the aims that Sloman points out and finds affinity with the purpose that God intended and commanded humanity to accomplish in Genesis 2:22 especially on the issues of right and wrong and ‘taking dominion’ (controlling the universe) that he brings out.

The United States Academy of Sciences emphatically asserts that:

...the technology derived from scientific discoveries pervades our lives, the high-rise buildings of our cities, thorough ways and long span bridges, rockets that take men and women into the outer space, telephones that provide instant communication across continents, computers that perform complex calculations in millionths of a second, vaccines and drugs that keep pathogens at bay...there is a categorical mistake to seek the causes of, for example, volcanic eruptions in religious beliefs and texts (1998).

Yet, one finds that religion also offers explanations for the occurrences of these natural disasters in the world because it is not bound by space and time. Ayala (2010), a geneticist quotes biologist Richard Dawkins who insists that religion has nothing to do with science and vice versa. But Ayala expresses a different view that:

Some scientists assert that valid knowledge comes from science and they hold that religious beliefs are the remains of pre-scientific explanations of the world and amount to nothing more than superstition. On the other hand, some people believe that science conveys a materialistic view of the world that denies the existence of any reality. Both are wrong because they are not to be in contradiction because they concern different matters. The scope of science is the advanced explanation about the natural world, explanations that are accepted or rejected by observation or experimentation. Outside the world of nature science has no authority...it transcends cultural, political and religious convictions because these matters are none of its business (2010:168).

Ayala’s contention that religion and science should not be contradictory was reiterated on BBC news. According to the BBC News (2010), science and religion rub along, they may seem incompatible bedfellows to some, but thinkers have long reconciled one with the other. In line with this comment, the study argues that in spite of these areas of supposed contradiction and conflict, religion in Zimbabwe shows that it is couching scientific discoveries to its service. The study, therefore, aligns itself with the progressive school of thought to argue that religion and emerging technologies are not contesting for space. We, therefore, need to establish areas that religion has proved its strength in Zimbabwe before we examine its engagement with emerging technologies.

RELIGIOUS POPULARITY/RESURGENCE IN ZIMBABWE

No society is possible without some religious foundation lest its order and controlling values disappear (Pannenberg 1976:363). The prevalence of religious ideas is not a recent phenomenon related to globalisation and an alleged global resurgence, but rather contemporary adaptations of older ideas (Ellis & ter Haar 2003:25). Religion is gaining universal significance in Zimbabwe. This resurgence is fuelled by several socio-economic and political factors that are beyond the scope of the study. It is important to note that religious resurgence in Zimbabwe takes place at a time when there is also remarkable technological advancement.

Evidence of popularity/resurgence of religion in Zimbabwe

In Zimbabwe we witness a resurging religious sensibility. How does this resurgence manifest itself in Zimbabwe? We need to explore the various dimensions that have characterised religious resurgence in Zimbabwe. These, among others, include the following: popularity of gospel music, street corner preachers, proliferation of bible colleges and institutes, occupation and multiplication of religious geographical space, religious advertising and specialisation, holy men/women whose powers are eagerly sought, economic mobilisation and increased interest in the study of religions.

The popularity of gospel music, street corner preachers
Gospel music in Zimbabwe is very popular and the Harare Gardens, Show Grounds and Harare International Conference Centre have been venues of performances by various Christian artists. There are also many street corner preachers (Chitando 2000:299-309) and also preachers in public transport like buses.

Proliferation of Bible Colleges and Institutes

Pentecostals have established Bible colleges within and without Zimbabwe. The philosophy behind is to train as many people “who are fully equipped with the word of God” as possible. Notable in this area are churches like Zimbabwe Assemblies Of God Africa which has established seven Bible colleges in and out of Zimbabwe and evening Bible classes through out provinces (ZAOGA National Report August 2010). Celebration Ministries International has Celebration Bible College while Christ Ministries International has Christ Ministries Bible College for instance.

Occupation and multiplication of religious geographical space

Zimbabweans have paraded their religious commitment through the occupation of religious geographical space. Places of worship have multiplied in Harare and the white gown (African Initiated/ independent movement denominations) have been on the forefront in occupying open spaces for worship. Pentecostals are well known for retreating to the mountaneous areas. Occupation of worship spaces has been accompanied by the establishment of schools, for instance, ZAOGA has Ezekiel Guti Primary School in Mashonaland East Province. Christ Ministries International has Christ Ministries High School in Belvedere in Harare which won the award for the highest pass rate in 2009. Pentecostals have established and offer nursery and pre-schools services. In the case of ZAOGA they have built a big hospital in Waterfalls and are currently raising money to build a university in Bindura. Celebration Church has a nursery school, primary school and already have land to build a hospital in Borrowdale, one of the leafy surbubs of Harare. The establishment of modern institutions like schools and hospitals characterises Pentecostal quest for advancement and it is indeed a sign of prosperity and ‘taking dominion’. While the quest is not new since Western missionaries built schools and hospitals, the study attributes this initiative by African Pentecostals as a sign of religious resurgence to identifying with modernity and its technologies.

Religious advertising

There is widespread religious advertising to compete for public attention through the use of posters, outdoor billboards, handbooks, stickers, pin ups, printed vests, t-shirts and caps, magazines, daily newspapers, complementary cards left in hotels, restaurants, conference halls (Uka 2001:4) and also those selling bibles in buses, on road sides, at church and secular gatherings, cheap Christian books, videos and audio tapes. Such popular literature represents a modern form of an important tradition of mysticism (Ellis and ter Haar 2003:85). Guti strongly rebukes ZAOGA leaders who are not publicizing programmes in the media and ZAOGA established a television channel-Ezekiel TV (named after Ezekiel Guti) in 2007. The church programmes and events including the religious functionaries are publicized. These Pentecostal advertisements are splashed on television with icons of modernity and symbols of good life (Uka 2001:7 ) and these capture the imagination of many Zimbabwean people. The different forms of marketing God and charismata have increasingly come to reflect the beliefs and practices of Pentecostals and glitz and glamour and grandeur that have accompanied the popularity and the expansion of Pentecostalism.

Religious advertising is common in universities and colleges where one notices advertising posters. Pentecostals invite people for ‘moments of bliss’ with religious ‘functionaries’ who specialise in specific areas like healing and prosperity. Pentecostalism has been well known for targeting the youth and these youths constitute a sizeable number alongside women in their denominations. Universities and colleges are targeted and have seen the formation of associations of students that represent their specific denominations in these universities and colleges in Zimbabwe. For example, ZAOGA has ZAOGA on Campus (ZOC), Family of God has FOG on Campus, Celebration has Cross Culture and the newly founded United Families International of Emmanuel Makandiwa has a student movement on the University of Zimbabwe campus. The quest for upward social mobility by Pentecostals is one of the reasons they target universities and colleges, institutions of higher learning. This involvement of university students, perceived as the educated, is significant as it signals religious commitment by people of different social groups in the midst of technological advancement in Zimbabwe.

Religious Specialisation

Pentecostals claim to be experts in divine healing, prophecy and many other areas of specialisation. This differentiation is basically used for effective competition when they solicit for people to join their churches, especially through advertisements on television, and through posters and pamphlets.

The holy men/priests whose powers are eagerly sought

Many people in Zimbabwe consult ‘holy men’ in search of solutions in times of crisis. Politicians are also among those who consult religious leaders. The overlapping of religion and politics has given religion in Zimbabwe political significance and has, in turn, given religion stamina. Consultation of religious functionaries by politicians has culminated in the political popularity of secret rituals, among other
things aimed at the protection against social ills. Another important observation is how the politicians take pleasure in such play on religious idioms and power in their bid to solicit and gain political mileage. The need to affiliate to popular religious functionaries and their denominations is a sign that religion is powerful in Zimbabwe and leads us to cast doubt on the claim that religion is on the decline because of pressure from the forces of modernity. One of the reasons for religious resurgence or revival is probably the pluralistic religious landscape in the country. Religious pluralism might be the primary context of vitality since it provides reasons for competition for adherence, social and political spaces as well as economic reasons for competition and contest as the strategy for survival.

Economic mobilisation

Pentecostals in Zimbabwe believe that successful secular activities and spiritual strivings are not antithetical and they have successfully blurred the boundary between the spiritual and the material, the religious and the economic (Uka 2001:4). Pentecostal ideologies on self and economic empowerment through the gospel of prosperity resonates well with Mugabe’s theology of black empowerment. This has raised the national profile of Zimbabwean Pentecostals in the political arena since they are found having a significant place to play in the economic challenges that Zimbabwe is facing, in terms of offering practical solutions. This has brought religious ‘functionaries’ and political leaders closer as they share the common vision for the nation of Zimbabwe. Thus Pentecostalism has proved to be relevant in contemporary political and economic sphere.

Apart from all the above, the study of religion holds a global promise by ‘universalising its standards, its vision and its practice’. This interest in the study of religions has been provoked by the resurgence of religion that has attracted scholarly attention. We, therefore, need to establish Pentecostal engagement with media technologies that will inform us on the relationship between emerging technologies and religion.

PENTECOSTALS ENGAGEMENT WITH TECHNOLOGY

Gerrie ter Haar (1998:176) points out that, the electronic media is a characteristic of modern Pentecostal movement in Africa under its strong tradition of orality. She further points out that videos and cassettes have become an important means of communication and has proved to be an effective means of evangelism for Pentecostals. Cassettes are also a means of providing entertainment at low prices since Pentecostals take praise and worship seriously (Achunike 2004:66-73). The largest subsidiary of Pentecostal industry is music business. They invest heavily in instruments, speakers, music laboratories, amplifiers and generators (where electricity can be disrupted at any time). This gives testimony to the fact that Pentecostals use and heavily rely on media technologies. Pentecostal churches have replaced night clubs and entertainment venues as the major clients of importers of musical equipments, selling tapes and DVDs of services and crusades that are sold soon after services (Gifford 2009:153). In fact, there is liturgical innovation and renewal that characterises Pentecostal music, dance and worship and this has attracted much public attention. The Harare Gardens, Sports Centre and the National Sports Stadium have been places of religious gatherings and activities and several artistes from different Pentecostal churches hold their gallas there. The most popular are Charles and Olivia Charamba and Mahendere brothers of the Apostolic Faith Mission in Zimbabwe, Bonnie Deutschle and Celebration Choir of Celebration Ministries, Fungisai Zvakavapano-Mashavave and Carol Chivengwa-Mujokoro of ZAOGA among others.

The significance of the communication revolution is that it has impacted positively on religious material. Religious functionaries through the media are fast becoming publicists who appeal to a wider audience (Frank Whaling 2000:6). Pentecostals have established Christian television channels, feature on national radio stations and publicise and appear in various forms of print media. On television motivational preachers are publicised. The television is the most high profile media activity, but radio is perhaps even more significant because many, especially in rural areas where there is no electricity, can have access to it. The media and networking across the globe through the use of hypermodern media techniques has seen Pentecostals establishing websites that have enhanced significant relations with the outside world or established links with the diasporic community (Bastian 2001:175). In the 1980s the Americans dominated the local media but through engagement with the media, Zimbabwean Pentecostals are promoting their own specific denominations and activities and that has had the effect of raising Pentecostalism’s national and international profile as a global phenomenon. Burgeoning of New technologies especially of new communications and analytical instruments such as computers, internet, has established and at the same time strengthened the link within the family of churches both without and within Zimbabwe. This is apparent in Family of God’s Andrew Wutavunashe World Witness, ZAOGA Forward in Faith Ministries International, Christ Ministries International. The names of these Pentecostal churches show the evangelistic zeal that characterises them as they strive to be global movements through evangelistic efforts through employing the media (television, radio press, and telephone).

The television and its internet and website facilities help in publicizing church events and programmes.
Sometimes Pentecostals use a combination of the various forms of media to ensure effectiveness. For instance, on ZAOGA’s Ezekiel TV, after preaching, there is invitation to ‘receive Jesus in order to be born again’. After that, there is a call for those who are sick by commanding viewers to stretch their hands towards the television. This might be followed by ‘opening’ telephone lines for those who want counselling, special prayers and advice. All these events will be video filmed and camera men/women will be shooting videos and photos. Videos, photos, DVDs and audio tapes that are sold generate much income for the Pentecostal Ministries. This equally applies to Christ Embassy’s Loveworld television channel, Celebration Ministries that has a slot on Christ Embassy’s Loveworld and other Pentecostals who feature their programmes on different Christian television channels. ‘Marketing’ God, (denominations and the events and activities especially healing miracles and prosperity messages) has attracted many people who in turn fund these transnational movements and enable the founders to live lavish lifestyles. It also enables the Pentecostals to continue engaging the expensive media technologies in their evangelism.

The print media is used to complement television advertisements. Celebration Ministries print pamphlets to publicise their Daniel Fasting every month of January, monthly prayer cards and books for their weekly delivery programme known as ‘Walking Free’. ZAOGA through its publishing house Ezekiel Guti Evangelistic Association (EGEA), named after Guti, print pamphlets for Ten Days prayer in January, national reports and events and publish literature written By Ezekiel and Eunor his wife. Some of these pamphlets and books contain testimonies of healing miracles, prosperity, and invitation to join them (evangelism and competition for adherence). The strides that Zimbabwean Pentecostalism has made in engaging with media technologies can also be attributed to their link with the diasporic community that have contributed enormously in terms of resources for funding these transnational movements.

The cell phone has been useful to Pentecostals in relation to counselling and making prayers for the sick. Jeff Gadzika, a prominent ZAOGA evangelist claims that he is always busy on the cellphone because people phone from different places seeking advice and prayers. Gadzika claims that he has witnessed healing miracles when he prayed for people over the phone and even on television (interview 4-03-2011). The cellphone is used to advertise programmes apart from the use of pamphlets and the press. Eshshaddai Ministries International of Patience Hove use cellphones to reach out to ladies and invite them for their monthly women’s fellowships. This shows the dynamic nature of religion (Pentecostalism) in its response to emerging technologies.

Primarily urban based and with a focus on the influential middle class of bourgeoisie societies, Pentecostals have exerted an unparalleled socio-political and moral influence on society (van Dijk 2000:14) and they are creating professional experts. The government officials and graduates join the church and Non-Governmental Organisation structures that offer better and more secure terms of service. If we examine the Zimbabwean Government discourse, we see local religious bodies spoken of as voluntary partners in the process of urban renewal, community building and reconciliation and the revival of family values. The views of the religious bodies are sought in the development of policies on cultural diversity, ethics inter-faith participation, religious education and worship in schools (Sutcliffe 2000:6). However, according to Hans Kung (1989:79), some circles have done a great disservice in often not taking seriously the religious dimensions of life. This may be an arrogance of the secularist and a false superiority in industrial nations that may be misguided. Science and technology that once promised so much appear, while still dominant, nonetheless as increasingly powerless against the realities of popular explosion, disease, famine as complicit in the impersonalization of contemporary life (Daramey 2000:21). The world is grappling with these forces and has admitted that some diseases are not curable, but certain branches of religion claim that they can cure these. This paper will not delve into the debate of whether the claims are authentic or not (one notable area of conflict between science and religion). What is significant is that the social and economic woes have led to religious pursuits in search of solutions that science and technology have failed to give (the dimension of religion that technology cannot offer). The Christian tradition places priority and emphasis on the spiritual aspect of human situation. Technology lacks the ability to give people the deeper meaning, a quest that has appeared to be a universal need for all human beings. It is religion that answers a deep human need for ritual, connection and inspiration, while ‘technologies are marked by efficiency, they lack the ability to give people the deeper meaning, a quest that has appeared to be a universal need for all human beings’. Science and technology have got a limitation, beyond which it cannot take human kind, there is no technology of overcoming death and this is where technology reaches its limit towards the “eschatological goal of the gospel” (Mbiti 1977:39). It is religion that has to fill that gap that emerging technologies have failed to satisfy. Even the technologically advanced world consults the Bible (religion). Religion has become a beacon of hope to many distressed and bewildered by the forces and pressures of modernity. We also need to consider Pentecostal theological standpoint, how they understand and interpret emerging technologies in light of their spirituality.
the scientists who ‘discover’ are not Christians or are...'

2000:363). It does not matter to the Pentecostals that...in the human experience of nature (Platt & Ferkiss...religious dimensions of human concerns even when...‘taking dominion’.

power greater than themselves (Ted 1976:405) that...their own powers and they place faith in the ultimate...future for which they are hoping lies beyond...his spirit (Sermon 2-02-2011). Pentecostals recognize...done (better cars) because God promised to pour out...that the future for which they are hoping lies beyond...is discovered confirms the work of God that is...manifested in some becoming mentally ill, some becoming unconscious and others who heard voices commanding them to do ‘weird’ things when they logged on facebook. In addition accessing pornography has been condemned as immoral and against Christian ethics. Consequently new technology is double edged, for evil and for good (Dickinson 1998:9), hence it has to be utilised with caution. However, those rumours and stories have not distracted Pentecostals from fully engaging the media technologies.

The story of Zaccheus in Luke 19 has also been interpreted in light of emerging technologies. Zaccheus was wealthy and was also physically well, but he was morally deficient, had all the trappings of external wholeness, but was in fact empty inside (Kalu 2008:65). Pentecostals claim that although...of external wholeness, but was in fact empty inside...interpretation of emerging technologies...

Pentecostals argue that science is dragging far behind the Word of God (Bible). These claims lie in the scientific discoveries that have been made in connection with the creation of the earth. They claim that the world is a complete creation hence whatever is discovered confirms the work of God that is hidden. Pentecostals give examples such as incurable diseases and suffering that are mentioned in the Bible (Revelations 18) and the great mysteries of creation (Job 31 and 37). Pentecostals claim that the discoveries were written in the Bible by ‘men of God moved by the Holy Spirit and revealed these things’. Hence science is not a threat since it is dragging far behind the Word of God. The invisible power is behind scientific discoveries and technological advancement. Deuteronomy 29:29 is often quoted: ‘The things that are revealed belong to you but those that are hidden belong to God’. Every technological discovery is thus attributed to prosperity and the power of God, who at the appropriate time chooses to reveal hidden things to humanity through scientists. Technological power is thus religious power and as pointed by Ellis and ter Haar, religious power depicts invisible power (2003:85).

Pentecostals teach that a child of God has to take dominion over all creation (dominion theology) and dominion theology characterises Pentecostal sermons and is derived from the Book of Genesis 2:22. In Genesis 2, God commanded Adam to have dominion and to replenish the earth. According to the Pentecostals, emerging technologies are a sign of ‘dominion’ that humanity is exercising over God’s creation. That is the reason why the emerging technologies have to be brought under the service of human kind and to further the gospel in order to glorify God. This explains Pentecostal zeal to be associated with and their reliance on the use of the television, websites, internet facilities, radios, print media and cell-phones. Pentecostals hope (a religious phenomenon) that more discoveries will take place sooner or later when God reveals the hidden things (Deuteronomy 29:29). One ZAOGA elder taught the congregation that parents should not keep cars for their children because there are many discoveries to be done (better cars) because God promised to pour out his spirit (Sermon 2-02-2011). Pentecostals recognize that the future for which they are hoping lies beyond their own powers and they place faith in the ultimate power greater than themselves (Ted 1976:405) that will enlighten humanity to continue discovering and ‘taking dominion’.

One notes that Pentecostals ‘uncover’ the hidden religious dimensions of human concerns even when they are covered over by secular rhetoric, uncovering the religious implications in human existence and in the human experience of nature (Platt & Ferkiss 2000:363). It does not matter to the Pentecostals that the scientists who ‘discover’ are not Christians or are not born again. They argue that ‘God is sovereign and chooses anyone to reveal His secrets’ and that children of God have to benefit from those discoveries. However, Pentecostals teach and have warned that the Devil always couches the technological advancement to destroy God’s people. The internet has been pointed out as such advancement that is being used by the devil in Pentecostal theology of the end of times as predicted in the book of Revelations. According to them, it is through the use of the internet and electronic bank cards that the devil is able to compile the list of all names of people who are God’s people who will not be able to buy because they will not be having a “mark of the beast” on their foreheads as described in the book of Revelations 13. Thus Pentecostals warn each other that they should pray and be careful when they use electronic cards and the internet.

These teachings follow rumours that there are several people especially youths, that fell victims of Satanism on the internet, specifically on facebook. It is claimed that this has manifested in some becoming mentally ill, some becoming unconscious and others who heard voices commanding them to do ‘weird’ things when they logged on facebook. In addition accessing pornography has been condemned as immoral and against Christian ethics. Consequently new technology is double edged, for evil and for good (Dickinson 1998:9), hence it has to be utilised with caution. However, these repentances and stories have not distracted Pentecostals from fully engaging the media technologies.

The story of Zaccheus in Luke 19 has also been interpreted in light of emerging technologies. Zaccheus was wealthy and was also physically well, but he was morally deficient, had all the trappings of external wholeness, but was in fact empty inside (Kalu 2008:65). Pentecostals claim that although there is technological advancement that has enabled people to be wealthy, there is a void that technology has failed to fill. Religion then fills that gap through instilling values and morals.

What Zimbabwean Pentecostals have displayed is captured by Patrick Harries (2007). He argues that some people saw science as the breeding ground for the scepticism and rationalism undermining biblical revelation, but rather than undermining belief, science (emerging technologies) served to increase the patent glory of God, religious beliefs confirmed (127-128). Harries seem to confirm the testimony of a ZAOGA elder by claiming that the Holy Spirit rebuked her lack of trust in God by asking her why she believed that sending a message to someone far away through the phone would instant, yet she did not trust that God who had enabled those technologies would hear her prayers instantly?

There is evidence that the faith churches (Pentecostals) have grown quickly and heavily invested in media technology to further spread their message (Robbins 2004:137).
The effective use of modern media technologies has proved very relevant for Pentecostal churches and in Zimbabwe has exhibited strong internal strength, flexibility and resilience negotiating local relevance through the use of media technologies. Linking with the diasporic communities enhanced by the technologies has enhanced exchange of ideas and resources in a creative way. Thus in a way external influences and strategies are domesticated and made to serve local purpose of Pentecostalism.

Then the question is, given the interpretation, use and heavy reliance on media technologies by religious institutions in Zimbabwe (religion attempts to unite both materialistic and holistic values and that has given religion advantage over technology), can religion, therefore, contest space with emerging technologies (media technologies)?

CONCLUSION

We have pointed out that the relationship between science and religion has been an area of contest, without unanimity over a long period of time. We have also highlighted that the contestation has also been characterised by the negative perception over religion. The future of religion has been considered at stake, especially with new scientific discoveries (technological advancement). However, religion is essentially a modern reality, something culturally continuous with the contemporary world (Hastings: 1983:2). There is religious resurgence in Zimbabwe and this resurgence is enhanced by the appropriation of media technologies by Pentecostals. The study has also examined Pentecostal interpretation of the Bible in their attitude towards emerging technologies that they do not look down upon, but cherish. This is in spite of the fact that new technologies are double edged, for evil and for good (Dickinson 1998:9). The new technologies are not a threat to religion since there is failed expectation of modernization. Religion then finds ground by filling that gap that modernization has failed to satisfy. There is, therefore, no need to compete with science because every invention is according to God’s will for the benefit of mankind. Pentecostals have used the media to perpetuate their evangelistic agenda. Hence religion and emerging technologies in Zimbabwe co-exist because Pentecostals have successfully couched these technologies in the service of religion in order to meet the “complete needs of mankind”.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the above, the study recommends that we need to explore the relationship between religion and wealth, the role of religion to the economy of a country and how it informs business ethics from a national standpoint, especially because we witness crushing underdevelopment amidst the phenomenon of religious enthusiasm. We also need to explore the relationship between religion and politics, based on the increased interaction between politicians and religious functionaries “the politicisation of religion and the religisation of politics” (Adogame 2004).

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