EFFECTS OF DIGITAL BUSINESS ON SABBATH REST IN THE SEVEVETH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH: TOWARDS A STRAWSONIAN THEOLOGY OF THE SABBATH

BY

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This Dissertation is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Master of Theology (Systematic Theology) from St. Paul's University

AUGUST, 2015

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Abstract

The Sabbath and its observance is one of the fundamental beliefs of the Seventh Day Adventist Church. It is a day of worship and rendering of charity services to those in need. No activity for personal gain is accepted hence businesses of every kind are prohibited. However, with the emergence of digital technology, businesses can now be transacted online at any time using digital gadgets like phones and computers. Seventh-day Adventist Church members are not exceptional in the usage of these equipments and since it does not involve much energy in transactions, many are involved in businesses even on Sabbath. The purpose of the study was to seek to understand how the Seventh Day Adventist can treat digital business without affecting Sabbath rest. The main objective of the research was to find out the effects of digital business on Sabbath rest. This research was informed by the Strawsonian Theory of Moral Responsibility. A research survey was conducted in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Nyamira Conference whose effects may apply to the entire SDA Church worldwide. The main approach employed in this study was descriptive survey design with both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis. 199 members were purposively sampled out to participate in the survey. The hypothesis of this research was that digital business was negatively affecting the Sabbath rest of the Seventh-day Adventist church members. Data was collected through questionnaire and interview schedule. From the findings the study established that the SDA church members felt that there is need to review the Sabbath doctrine in relation to the use of digital gadgets on the Sabbath rest. They also strongly said that there need to be regular seminars and teaching on the digital gadgets usage on the Sabbath rest. It is hoped that the findings of this study will be helpful in challenging the administration of the church to come up with relevant principles regarding its teaching on Sabbath observance amid the challenges posed by digital technology in the business arena. The study finally led to the formulation of the Strawsonian Theology of the Sabbath in which each SDA church member should be morally responsible in dealing with digital business on the Sabbath day.

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