1. Introduction

Graham Greene is a craftsman of seriousness, high comedy and great vision. He is a Catholic who makes liberal references to the mass, the sacraments, and Christian virtues in his works. Greene addresses general questions of morality and ethics which confront believers, agnostics and atheists. Besides dealing with the aspects of spiritual values, he also touches upon the spirit of humanity which is of paramount importance in man’s day-to-day life. For research scholars and laymen, Greene is gratifying to read and enjoy.

Greene’s achievement is versatile. His themes range from pure thriller and those that are wholly secular to those that are deeply religious and spiritual. They attempt to depict life in its fullness. They are concerned with basic human situations that have a perennial significance, yet their treatment is remarkably new and original. The nature of Greene’s versatility has stimulated this study of his development based on an exploration of some inter-relationships between various themes.

Lamba in his book *Graham Greene: His mind and Art* says, “Greene was struck by Newman’s portraiture of a bleak and sombre world – a world bereft of God’s grace. It was a world full of chicanery, injustice, corruption and sin. Even the thought of living in such a world would seem a veritable nightmare. In such a world, truth is always crucified and good defeated”(1). The thing which Newman observed in the nineteenth century provides Greene with a basic framework of moral perception. But the treatment which Greene gives to his own world view is contemporary. He has given a portrait of contemporary situations in his novels and used them in his characteristic manner to expound his basic themes. As an eminent artist, he presents his protagonists in flesh and blood, facing real life situations.
Graham Greene is one of the most prolific writers of modern times. He was born in Berkhamstead, Hertfordshire, England on October 2, 1904. His father, Charles Henry Greene, was the headmaster of Berkhamstead School. It was here that he received his early education. He was educated at this school until he went up to Balliol College, Oxford. To Greene, school life was difficult and laborious. This period brought about a sort of depression in him so much that at a later stage, he had to be sent to a psychoanalyst. His early days at the school infused into his mind thoughts of boredom and trouble. Even his arrival at Oxford did not bring him any relief from his trouble. Here, he seemed to have been aware of the uselessness and the futility of human life.

Oxford brought a little change in his thinking. He was not a scholar by temperament. However, he often yearned for scholastic success in life. He took degree in modern history. Since he suffered from a sense of boredom and disenchantment, he found the world uninteresting and life charmless. This led him to make a series of attempts to commit even suicide. Once he had drunk a little quantity of hypo under the impression that it was poisonous. On another occasion, he had drunk a bottle of hay fever lotion. On a different occasion he swallowed twenty tablets of aspirin. He wanted to kill himself with a bullet also. Yet, he resolved to live and discovered that it was possible to enjoy the visible world once more after risking its total loss.

During this time he made a close acquaintance with a Roman Catholic priest, Father Trollope. Under the inspiration of this priest, Greene got converted to Roman Catholicism in February, 1926. The conversion brought about a profound influence upon his thoughts and his writings. It was during this period that Greene married Vivien Dayrell Browning.
After leaving Oxford in 1925, Graham Greene worked as a journalist for four years, first in Nottingham and later as a sub-editor in “The Times” in London. He gave up this job and became an independent writer with the publication of his novel, *The Man Within* in 1929. In 1935 he made a journey across Liberia. In 1938 he was commissioned by the Church to visit Mexico and report on the religious persecution there. As a result, he wrote *The Lawless Roads*(1939) and later, *The Power and The Glory*(1946). When the World War II broke out, he worked with a foreign office on special duty in West Africa, the scene of *The Heart of The Matter*(1948). In 1954, he covered the Indo-Chinese war for “The New Republic”, and his experience in the East supplied the background for his novel, *The Quiet American*(1955). In 1959, he visited a leperosiere in Belgian Congo. It enabled him to write *A Burnt-out Case*(1961).

It is interesting to note that Greene was a great admirer of R.K. Narayan. His friendship with Narayan began in 1934, when he came across a manuscript of *Swami and Friends* and was impressed enough to pass it on to a British publishing house. It was also the beginning of a correspondence between the two writers which lasted until the death of the extraordinary English novelist whose works grappled with complex moral issues in the context of varied political settings. Greene regarded Narayan as one of the finest writers in English of his time, an extraordinary commendation for a man who never moved far from his social origins and who concentrated largely on people in a small South Indian town in a prose that was simple, lucid and unadorned.

Besides writing novels, Greene has written many short stories, essays, travel journals, plays, children’s stories and entertainments. His most important works show that he is preoccupied with things pertaining to spiritual experience. The readers can understand the fact
that Greene is very much concerned with moral issues. Generally speaking, Greene’s novels can be divided into three categories, which can be best defined by chronological periods.

First Phase(1929 – 1935): During the early period, Greene wrote *The Man Within* (1929), *It’s A Battlefield* (1934), and *England Made Me* (1935). These are rather hard to classify with any degree of precision. They deal with crime studied from a social and political standpoint, and it was in these works that Greene made his initial experiments in dealing with the psychology of his characters.

Second Phase(1938 -1951): During this period, he wrote the novels namely *Brighton Rock* (1938), *The Power and The Glory* (1940) and *The Heart of The Matter* (1948). These three novels constitute the main body of what one can call Greene’s religious writings, and they have in common the central themes that fascinate Greene – Sin and Salvation. By examining man’s relationship to himself, society and God, Greene explores the nature of evil, and the possibility of man’s redemption. The spiritual dimensions of these novels place them with the best of modern fiction. In *Brighton Rock*, the main character, Pinkie, is a young gangster on the run from the police, a gang, a woman – and ultimately from God. Pinkie seems incapable of loving God. Yet, Greene projects him as a recipient of redemption. In *The Power and The Glory* ‘Whisky Priest’ is tormented by a sense of guilty conscience because of his mortal sin. In *The Heart of The Matter* Greene examines the process involved in the total collapse of Scobie, a police officer whose extra-marital affair drives him to self-destruction. In *The End of The Affair* (1951) he depicts the transformation of a woman called Sarah Miles from her immorality.

Third Phase(1955 -1980): During this period Greene wrote *A Burnt-out Case* (1961) and *The Comedians* (1966). It is interesting to observe that the first novel of this period, *The Quiet
American (1955) though not specifically religious in theme, deals with the destruction of human being devoid of faith in God. In his last novel Doctor Fischer of Geneva (1980) he depicts how the love for money drives a man crazy.

Since Greene has written so many works of varied natures one can outline them in eight categories, each one in chronological order, outside the period in which each was written.


3. Essays and Journals: The Last Childhood (1951) and In Search of a Character (1961).

4. Travel: Journey without Maps (1936) and The Lawless Roads (1939).


7. Children’s Stories: The Little Train (1947), The Little Fire Engine (1950), The Little Horse Bus (1952), and The Little Steam Roller (1953).

While Graham Greene is a major contemporary novelist dealing with such universally appealing and complex themes as man’s relationship to himself, society and God, he cannot be considered outside the main stream of English letters. It is quite apparent that there has been a decline in the standard of English novel, particularly in the last few decades. One can find that it has lost the vitality scope, and the thematic power associated with Joyce or Lawrence. Francis Wyndham in his book *Graham Greene* says, “with the death of James the religious sense was lost to the English novel”(5). Comparisons are unpleasant, however, especially when literary genres are involved, since novelists write within a historical framework of which they are a product and which they either defy or help to mould by their works. Greene, for example, does not have the verbal magic of Joyce or the devouring passion of Lawrence. But he does not adhere to this world, does not share their problems, does not have their vision; nor do they have his. C. P. Snow, for example, deals with social class themes unique to contemporary literature; Evelyn Waugh treats similar themes with deft humour of an English class often under attack. While this is not comparable to the production of someone of Joyce’s stature, it does show that English novel is by no means moribund. Lawrence Durrell, William Golding and Angus Wilson, to name but three contemporary novelists, have tackled themes and problems of vital importance to man and his role in the complexities of twentieth-century civilization. And, while Graham Greene’s position as a man of letters has yet to be fully appraised, of course, it can be said now that has had a major impact on our whole thinking about the Christian ethic upon which much of western civilization is based. His characterization, symbolism, and language have placed him in the forefront of the literary, intellectual, and religious scene of the modern age.

In terms of narrative form, style and technique, Greene is not a revolutionary writer, but is rather the product of the contemporary school which drives many of its techniques from an
earlier heritage while moulding its own responses. During the time of Greene, there was an exciting scope to the novel, a width of canvas which resulted from a blending of realism, impressionism and intellectualism. This brand of fiction resulted from a world of view which was possibly an emanation from, or a climax to, the imperial grandeur of the Victorian age. It was thoroughly traditional in tune. In the hands of novelists like Kafka and James, one can see what might almost be called a brief excursion into the realms of experimentation which have since had their effect more on poetry than on prose. The modern novelist of Greene’s generation seems to have fallen back on traditional modes of fictional expression, while inheriting some of the more dynamic aspects of Joycean period. There is a strong similarity between Greene’s novels and some of the earlier works of Joseph Conrod, Greene is a traditionalist, in as much as he belongs to the rich heritage of the English novel. He is nevertheless an experimentalist, since he uses the best elements of the tradition to probe into the depths of the unique problems which beset man in his modern historical setting. In the novel the expression of the inexpressible seems to reach an apex with Kafka and Joyce, and Greene somehow deals with inexpressible or unfathomable topics - such as the possibility of a man’s salvation in the midst of sin - in a traditional literary expression which is in itself fathomable. The best tribute one can pay to Greene is that his works stand on their own merits as stories - he must be accorded with the status of being one of the most captivating story tellers in modern literature. In this sense, Greene is remarkably unique and defies literary- ideological categorization.

Graham Greene is one of the chief exponents of Catholic literature which happens to be predominantly French. Older French Catholic writers like Peguy, Bernanos, Bloy and Mauriac helped to mould a uniquely Catholic genre in which they tackled the universal spiritual problems running through many of Greene’s major works. It is also interesting to note that Greene, like
Durrell, often chooses non-English locales for his novels - South America and West Africa, for example. It is also apparent that he also derived certain ideas and narrative devices from sources outside England. In this respect, Greene is not only a product of contemporary literary scene, but also helps shape its literary standard and ideals. For, just as the English novelist at the turn of the century spoke to an audience which had sprung from Victorianism, Greene is addressing a post-war audience which has seen the collapse of imperialism and the decay of Christian values. He must speak to this audience, therefore, in terms they comprehend. Even when he picks a provincial locale, as he does in *Brighton Rock*, he talks internationally and draws on intellectual, theological and literary traditions that transcend a uniquely national appeal. It is worthwhile to compare the works of Evelyn Waugh with those of Greene. Waugh is uniquely English in tradition, while Greene belongs to the same English tradition, but internationalized and even universalized. Greene’s language and style, forthright, clear and simple, is uniquely English; his symbolism, ironies and density and derivative of the rich European literature tradition to which Greene also allowed himself to fall a heir. His blending of the personal and universal, the inward-looking and outward-gazing vision, belongs mostly to non-English influences.

In many ways Greene and his contemporary English novelists are paradoxical, while Greene for example, deals with the ambiguities, perplexities and complexities of modern man’s spiritual struggle, his novels are carefully and clearly structured. They are also very short, which certainly cannot be said of most of those of James Joyce. Greene is also typical of the modern school in that he does not draw on a great extraneous fund of knowledge, psychological or otherwise to demonstrate the vastness of his themes. He reduces one of the most puzzling and complicated subjects, namely man’s relationship with God, to the simple terms of a straightforward narrative. Interwoven thoughts, of course, are the symbolism and implications which
elaborate on the tale, leading the readers to an awareness of underlying profundities and ambiguities. There is in Greene as in his contemporaries, a strong tendency to retreat from the vast panorama of the historical scene into a diminished world which mirrors man’s spiritual plight.

It is almost as if the titanic conflicts which have arisen forced the novelist to retire to a place more amenable to examination. One of the best examples of this is found in *The Heart of The Matter*, where an intense human drama, encompassing immense topics, unfolds against the backcloth of the World War II. Yet Greene makes the readers only vaguely aware that a war is going on. The colony is, for Greene, a reflection of the historical and spiritual malaise which helped to create the war. But Greene can study a man – Scobie - in his colony and give the readers’ insights into the universal dimensions of spiritual infertility. Greene’s unique accomplishment among modern writers is his capacity to combine a portrait of the inner self with that of the outer world, to depict spiritual vulnerability and isolation by placing his heroes in direct conflict with the social forces around them. The readers are always aware of the Whisky priest’s anguish in *The Power and The Glory*, but they are never allowed to forget his surroundings.

Greene deals with the concept of rebel in his novels. To comprehend it, one has to look at Scobie in *The Heart of The Matter* or the Whisky Priest in *The Power and The Glory*. They live in a perpetual state of spiritual and emotional tension caused by an inner rebellion against an ethnic to which they adhere, and against themselves and their weakness in being unable to fulfill their religious obligations. Greene has in many ways captured the essence of what is meant by the true rebel. Just like Lucifer rebelled against God, the heroes in the novels of Greene are presented in such a way that they rebel against Christian values. For instance, Scobie
transgresses a moral law by committing adultery by doing so he violates the seventh commandment in *The Bible* - “you shall not commit adultery” (Exod. 20:14).

He seeks God’s love by an act of pity for his wife which takes the form of receiving a sacrilegious communion - another act of rebellion. St. Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians said, “Whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord” (I Cor. 11:27). As Scobie takes part in the Holy Communion without reconciling with God by way of confessing his sins, he commits a sin of violating the commandment of God. His final act of revolt against God and himself is suicide. Yet Greene places him in a unique position of innocence, in as much as his rebellion can be seen as an act of love.

Greene takes the concept of sin and salvation and exposes them to a re-evaluation. By placing the sinners in a position of having given up hope and of virtually having grown to be obsessed with failure itself, he shows very subtly that this can be analogous to God’s own love for the sinners. Greene makes it very clear to the readers that a man cannot obtain salvation by his good deeds alone. What Greene tries to say in his novels is that a man is saved by the grace of God alone. In order to substantiate it, he presents his protagonists in such a way that they are so immoral that they are not worthy to obtain God’s mercy. There is not even an iota of virtue in them. Yet, they become the recipients of God’s grace. It is only the sinner upon whom the divine grace is bestowed. Walter Allen in his book *Tradition and Dream* says, “The sinner seems nearer to God, more likely to receive the visitations of grace, than the innocent humanitarian” (226).

Greene projects God as a shepherd who goes after the lost sheep. All the sinners in his novels are chased by God’s love. The philosophy of Greene is that no sinner under the sun is
beyond the reach of God’s grace. He is of the view that God is always with open arms to accept any sinner who comes to Him by way of confession.

Greene’s novels are marked by an element of tension, notably spiritual in nature. The tension usually springs from an anomalous human situation in which mundane, and non-spiritual values appear experimentally more attractive to a character than the spiritual values which pull him in the opposite direction. Greene gives a vivid picture about man being fascinated by sinful pleasure rather than things pertaining to spiritual experience. He believes that every man is born with sinful instinct. The ultimate, salvaging relief for this state of tension is the fall and - in the unique Greene sense - the martyrdom of his heroes sometimes under the most bitterly ironic circumstances. When the Whisky priest offers conditional absolution to the dying American criminal, he is in a strange way offering it to himself. The priest is by any standard more of a criminal than the American, for he is hounded not only by his civil authorities, but also by the guilt of having desecrated his vows to God and by the fathomless fear of impending eternal damnation. Yet, in the midst of the sordidness, the ennobling quality of the priest comes through in his offering salvation to someone who cannot help himself. The priest’s state of unbearable tension is relieved only by the possibility that God will offer him conditional absolution.

Greene is very strong in his conviction that the Church is the body of Christ and so it cannot be destroyed once for all from the face of the earth. The Lieutenant in *The Power and the Glory* does his level best to destroy all the Christian missionaries. But his plan becomes a failure. Despite the fact that he kills the Whisky priest, he is not able to completely uproot the Christian faith from the state. Greene wants the readers to understand the fact that when a man practices faith, he is sure to undergo persecution. Without God the life of man will be utterly meaningless. In *The Quiet American*, Phyle says, “Nobody can go on living
without some belief” (86). Moreover, in a conversation with Thomas Fowler, he says, “Things to me wouldn’t make sense without God” (QA 97).

Greene has a strong belief that whoever accepts the love of God and comes to him are sure to lead a hopeful and secure life. This can be substantiated by citing an example from an episode in *The Quiet American*. During the war time, innumerable people of different ethnic groups come and take refuge in a Cathedral built in Phat Diem. On the one hand, the dead bodies are floating in canals because of war. On the other hand, the Cathedral serves as the shelter for the people. When the Bishop of Phat Diem notices the people who have gathered inside the Cathedral, he says, “This is God’s territory” (QA 41).

Greene satirizes the contemporary society wherein people are spiritually barren because they are under the clutches of sin. One sect of people is highly materialistic like Doctor Fischer in *Doctor Fischer of Geneva*. On the other hand there is another sect of people who are immoral to the core. To give an authentic proof regarding this, Greene projects Ida in *The Brighton Rock* as a woman, mocking people who consider immorality as a deadly sin. In her opinion sex outside marriage is a fun. Even today one can come across a large number of people living in this world who do not consider sex outside marriage as a sin. As a result there is a complete chaos in the moral world. Besides satirizing the immoral behaviour and materialistic attitude of the people, Greene attacks communism as well. The absurdity of the life of man is portrayed through the characters of Thomas Fowler in *The Quiet American*, Querry in *A Burnt-out Case* and Ida in *The Brighton Rock*. These characters try to form a moral standard devoid of faith in God. While making an attempt to establish ethical values without God their life ends on a note of hopelessness.
In order to appreciate the spiritual themes embedded in his novels and their relevance to the people of his age, one has to have a glance on the social and spiritual background of people living during his life time. The early twentieth century was an age of disillusionment, despair, fear and anxiety. The hopes aroused by the First World War had been frustrated, and the economic depression, social unrest and political rivalries and tension that followed, added to the misery of the people. This war could not settle anything, and remained unable to establish a lasting peace. It only sowed the seeds of another world war. The reaction of people after the world war was not favourable, and their mood consisted of a deep-rooted cynical despair, utter disillusionment and great restlessness. The threat of another world war bred anxiety among them.

The established codes of sexual morality underwent a great change after the First World War, and there was general laxity in sexual behaviour. Rising cost of living, free mixing of men and women, and invention of contraceptive devices were the factors responsible for encouraging sexual relationship outside the marriage. The emphasis laid by Freud on the importance of natural sexual instinct and urge as against the inhibitions of sexual impulse caused by the checks imposed by society, provided a further impetus to free enjoyment of sex.

The rise of a new rich class of society was another feature of the social scene of the interwar period. These people were seekers after the sexual pleasures, and tried to evade the ugly realities of the contemporary world. It was a diseased and decadent society marked by a decline in moral and spiritual values, indulgence in frivolous enjoyment of luxuries; Greene had a clinical attitude to the society of his time. He tried to diagnose its various ills, and to find a cure for them.
Since people did not attach much importance to spiritual values, they were lovers of pleasures. As a result there was a complete disorder in terms of morality. Then came a great revival of interest in religion, which had been lost because of the rapidly growing interest in science and its discoveries. People sought in religion a spiritual remedy in order to cure the sickness of their soul. There was a growing tendency to religious principle and tried to find therein an answer to the baffling questions related to life, God, soul, Church, etc. The revival of religion exerted a lot of influence on the contemporary thought and literature. Writers such as T.S. Eliot, W. H. Auden, Aldous Huxley, Evelyn Waugh and Graham Greene found in religion an adequate remedy for the spiritual sterility. The problems of Good and Evil, faith and unfaith, and of moral degradation and redemption through faith, have found expressions in the works of these writers. The religious revival has saved people, to a great extent, from the great shock they experienced because of the ill-effects of war, the failure of the so much talked about socio-political-economical doctrines of socialism, and the gloom produced by the rise of dictatorships in various countries.

Among the leading twentieth century English novelists, Greene is the most artistically successful Catholic novelist, England has ever produced. His greatness lies in the fact that he is the most captivating storyteller in modern literature. His novels give a clarion call to the readers to put their trust in God and thereby they would be able to find the meaning of their life.

Some essential beliefs of Christianity relevant to Greene’s work are the following:

1. There is a God whose ways are unknowable and whose judgments are inscrutable.
2. There is also a devil, or at least a negative force, which is responsible for evil in the world.
3. Man is tainted by original sin and is thus by nature weak.
4. There is an afterlife, consisting of either heaven or hell.
5. Man’s religious duty is to have faith in God.
6. The final judgment determining one’s position in heaven or hell will be made on the basis of accumulation of sin.
7. The most deadly sin is religious despair, the total loss of faith due to a mistake and conviction that God has abandoned one completely.
8. Suicide is the ultimate expression of despair and consequently the most damning action one can take.

In his novels, Greene touches upon all these Christian virtues and thereby he offers moral instructions to the readers. If a piece of advice on morality is offered to people in a conventional method, people would not pay attention to it. Therefore, Greene proclaims the intended message in an entertaining manner for which he chooses crime, love, sex and greed to be the subject matter in his novels. What makes him unique is that he is one of the most captivating storytellers in modern literature. His novels beckon the readers to have faith in God. The primary reason why the novels of Greene have been chosen for the thesis is that his novels impart the much needed spiritual values to the readers of the modern age.

As never before there has been a rapid growth in the field of science and technology. People of this age attach importance to things pertaining to knowledge alone. The scientific development of the modern age has bestowed all sorts of comforts on man. Massive tasks are being accomplished in a twinkling of an eye with the advent of electronic gadgets. Man is able to earn more than what he needs but all this material comforts have not offered absolute satisfaction to man. The reason is that man is not inclined towards spiritual life, which he considers a narrow
way to tread on. In the gospel according to St. Matthew Jesus says, “Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life and only a few find it” (Matt. 7:13-14).

The people of this age prefer to journey on the broad way that leads to destruction. Not many people come forward to choose the narrow way which leads to life as Jesus said. There was a time when writers like Henry James were keeping focus on bringing about religious revival by way of writing about spiritual values in their writings. But after the death of Henry James, writers hardly committed themselves to writing about sin, salvation and God. During that period there was a decline in the standard of English novel. In a situation like this Greene came forward to revive the glory of religion in literature. If things pertaining to spiritual values are discussed in plain language, people may lack interest in it. Therefore, Greene blends the message with human values. Francis Wyndham in his book *Graham Greene* says, “Greene attempted to restore two qualities - religious sense and the sense of the importance of the human act to the English novel” (5).

To find eternal peace is a basic psychological need that surges in the heart of every man. In order to achieve this, man must surrender himself to God. But, instead of making efforts to find peace in God, man sets his focus on money and power. When his search for peace ends on a note of hopelessness, he tends to lead his life in a state of despair which eventually drives him to commit suicide. Countless evidences prove the fact that the number of people committing suicide in the modern age is on the increase because man has everything except peace. As far as the modern literature is concerned, not many writers have come forward to write about the spiritual
ailment of the society. Only a few writers like Graham Greene have shown interest to deal with spiritual problems of man in their works.

Greene wishes to draw the attention of the readers to the fact that there is a spiritual vacuum in everyone’s heart. God alone can fill it. In spiritual terms ‘vacuum’ means a longing to find eternal joy. In the Gospel according to St. Matthew, Jesus says, “Come to me, all you who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light” (Matt. 11:28-30). The novels of Graham Greene beckon the readers to find everlasting peace in God through Jesus. In order to obtain the God given peace man must have child-like faith. Otherwise, he will be bound to live in the desert of despair forever devoid of any spiritual experience in his life. The epicenter of the novels of Greene is that man is bound to swim in the shoreless sea of despair until he puts his trust in God and experiences the joy of salvation. Apart from God man cannot have any hope in his life. The modern man is so skeptical that he cannot accept religious truths pertaining to faith, salvation and God’s mercy without reasoning. But Greene is of the opinion that man needs to have eyes of faith to understand spiritual matters. Khandelwal in his book *The Power and the Glory* says, “Greene’s life has been radically transformed by events which have no logical reason” (28). He makes it pretty clear to the readers that the manner in which he experienced the divine transformation cannot be explained in human language. Spiritual truths can only be explained in spiritual terms. Father Trollope was instrumental in guiding him to the path of God.

The greatness of Greene lies in the fact that he adopts a different strategy to make the readers understand the glory of God. What makes him unique is that he makes it pretty clear that man is absolutely helpless to save himself because he is under the yoke of sin. Unless man has a
clear understanding of sin, he cannot feel the need for salvation. To depict the fact that sin has a strong bearing on man, Greene has purposely presented all the protagonists as sinners regardless of their positions. Greene is of the view that no man under the sun is perfect. Everyone born in this world is susceptible to sin. In this regard, it is true in what the apostle Paul says, “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

In order to give a vivid picture about man being chained by sin, John Bunyan in his Pilgrims Progress shares his dreams with the readers as follows: “I dreamed, and behold I saw a man clothed with rags, standing in a certain place, with his face from his own house, a book in his hand, and a great burden upon his back” (9). Here man with a burden on his back stands for every man under the sun. The burden is nothing but the burden of sin. Similarly, all the protagonists of the novels of Greene have a burden of sin at their back. The priest in The Power and The Glory is an addict to alcohol. Moreover, his illegal relationship with a girl called Maria has caused her to give birth to a child. His sin is like the burden of Christian upon his back in The Pilgrim’s Progress. In the same way all the protagonists of Greene are presented in such a way that they carry the burden of sin on their back. Somehow or other they are romantically inclined towards the sinful pleasures. As a result, they have got entangled in the web of sin and have been chained by it.

Everyone who is under the bondage of sin needs a Saviour to deliver him or her from the clutches of sin. For instance, Sarah Miles in The End of the Affair develops an adulterous affair with a novelist called Maurice Bendrix. The sin of adultery has enslaved her. But God miraculously enables her to get a deliverance from the bondage of sin. At this juncture, Greene wants to project the truth that unless man comes to the fold of God and obtains Salvation by means of confession, the sinful instinct in him will play havoc with his life. It is quite evident in
The Heart of the Matter wherein Scobie, after being defiled himself with an illegal relationship with Helen, chooses to commit suicide to end his miserable life. Even today one can come across a great multitude of people who choose the suicidal act as a last resort to end their spiritual conflicts. But the novels of Graham Greene give a clarion call to the readers by saying that God can render hope to the hopeless. However hopeless the situation of a man is, he can still find hope in God by developing an intimate relationship with Him.

Since the novels of Graham Greene primarily deal with the spiritual problems of man, an attempt has been made to have a profound study on the spiritual experience of man. Accordingly, this thesis will touch upon various aspects of the spiritual experience in the novels of Greene. The first reason for choosing this topic is that modern man living in the twenty first century should have an awareness of the importance of spiritual values. However rich one may be, unless one believes in God and makes an effort to lead a pious life, there cannot be any hope for one’s life at all. It is obvious that people living in the modern era attach too much of importance to money. Everybody wants to become rich and thereby longs to have all sorts of pleasures in the world. This has paved the way for them to worship money as a demigod. People of this sort do not attach importance to human relationships. Neither do they reckon the importance of spiritual life. In order to substantiate it one can quote the example of Doctor Fischer in Doctor Fischer of Geneva. He finds a great deal of pleasure in making money. This has blinded his eyes from comprehending the values of spiritual life. Being a lover of money he is not even able to love his own daughter. The enormity of his folly is evident in the fact that he is not moved to tears when his daughter dies.

Money is essential to man. Yet, money alone cannot give happiness to him. In the present age one can come across so many people whose lives conform to that of Doctor Fischer. On the
other hand people crave for power. Like Doctor Faustus in Doctor Faustus people have a strong desire to rise above the level beyond their reach. While one group of people yearns for more and more money, another sect of people is romantically inclined towards carnal desires. Premarital sex and extra-marital affair is now rampant almost in all parts of the world. As T.S. Elliot stated, the present world has become a ‘wasteland’ with a decline in morality. People have become spiritually barren. The modern man considers spiritual life as something old-fashioned.

In a situation like this, the voice of Greene echoes like that of a prophet who rebukes people to turn away from evil. The main theme embedded in the novels of Greene is that what is primarily needed to man is neither money nor power but a personal relationship with God. When a man believes in self-righteousness devoid of faith in God, his life is prone to despair. For example, Ida in Brighton Rock, Querry in A Burnt-out Case and Fowler in The Quiet American try to set their own moral standard without having any faith in God. Here, Greene draws one’s attention to the fact that apart from God, man cannot form any moral standard.

Another reason for choosing this topic is that Greene’s novels talk about suicidal act which is prevalent in the modern age. A man intends to commit suicide, believing that this will relieve him from his mental anguish. Greene himself made a series of attempts to commit suicide to put an end to his miserable life. But his encounter with Father Trollope changed his attitude towards life. Father Trollope served as a spiritual mentor and thereby guided him to experience God’s love. His spiritual experience changed the course of his life and he went on to write novels which consist of eternal values, capable of making lasting impact on the readers.

The novels of Greene can bestow hope on people who are living in utterly hopeless situations and those who have intended to commit suicide to put an end to their miserable life.
Since the message effected in his novels appeal to the soul of man, it is really worth reading his novels and doing a research on his works. It is no exaggeration to state that his novels serve as a perfect antidote to heal the maladies of men.

The novels which have been chosen for study are:

1. *Brighton Rock* (1938)
2. *The Power and The Glory* (1940)
4. *The End of the Affair* (1951)
5. *The Quiet American* (1955)

The novels of Graham Greene deal with man’s relationship with God which has a universal appeal. That is why many of his novels have been screened in the form of films in many parts of the world. In literature there are innumerable novels written by prominent writers of the world. Some deal with romance, family life, politics, history and the like. But the novels of Greene deal with spiritual values which are of paramount importance. Other than Greene only a few writers touch upon the issues related to spiritual matters in their writing. Therefore, it is worth writing a thesis on the spiritual experience of Graham Greene.

In the first core chapter titled “The Dynamics of Sins” an attempt has been made to have a profound study on the aspects of sin in a detailed manner. First, this chapter gives a vivid picture on the origin of sin. The next important discussion in this chapter is how the life of man gets affected as a result of being fascinated by the sinful pleasures. All these things are
profoundly analyzed in the light of The Bible with appropriate illustrations from the seven novels chosen for the study. Moreover, this chapter deals with Greene’s views on sin and how he depicts them in his novels through various episodes. To put it in a nutshell, Greene is of the opinion that nobody under the sun can afford to lead a perfect life to such an extent as to keep himself from being defiled by sin. However pious a man is, he is sure to be tempted by its pleasures. The reason is that man is a sinner not because he commits sin but because he is born with a sinful instinct. Therefore, even if a child is born to a pious parent, he is sure to have the sinful instinct deep within himself. This concept can clearly be explained by quoting the words spoken by David in The Bible. He says, “Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me” (Ps. 51:5). It is appropriate to state that Greene’s concept of sin conforms to what the Bible says concerning sin.

Greene depicts all of his protagonists as sinners. They hold different positions in the society. Whether they are religious men or heathen, they are invariably susceptible to sin. By way of depicting the destructive force of sin, Greene aims at presenting the satanic strategy that causes wreck with man who is the crown of God’s creation. Greene presents the seven deadly sins which are embedded in the life of different characters in his novels. This chapter provides an ample proof to show how the characters in his novels are hit by them. Moreover it brings out the consequences of sin. According to Newton’s third law, “Every action has an equal and opposite reaction”. So when a man violates the religious laws, he is sure to face its consequences. St. Paul in his epistle to Galatians, says “whatever a man sows, that he will also reap” (Gal. 6:7).

Greene’s novels give us an insight into the fact that when a man commits a sin he is bound to reap its consequences. It is evident in the life of all the characters of his novels. For instance, Scobie in The Heart of the Matter gets entangled in the sin of adultery. When his wife
leaves for South Africa, he develops an extra-marital affair with the girl called Helen. It is an act of treachery. Developing any sort of relationship outside marriage is the most repulsive and abominable act. The sin of adultery committed by Scobie gives rise to an irreparable loss. As a result of violating God’s commandment, he faces a great deal of problems in his family life. It is a typical example which implies the fact that sin has a destructive reaction. On the whole this chapter provides various illustrations on sin and its consequences. It is quite appropriate to state that Greene expects from his readers that they should not take sin in a light-hearted manner, for it has a destructive role. He also states that sin creates a wall of division between God and man. The reason why the novelist presents many sinners in his novel is that man should consider God as an integral part of his life. Francis L. Kunkel in his book *The theme of Sin and Grace: Graham Greene* says, “The agonies of sin - usually sins of the flesh – may shatter the sinner’s complacency and reveal to him for the first time his lack of self-sufficiency and his need for God”(50).

In the second chapter titled “Polemics of Forgiveness and salvation” an attempt has been made to analyse how Greene projects God as one who forgives the sins of people. The philosophy of Greene is that a sinner need not despair and go to the extent of committing suicide to put an end to his anguish or mental agony. God is gracious enough to forgive him and enable him to enjoy the peace that comes from the forgiveness of sins. David says in the book of Psalms, “The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in mercy”(Ps. 103:8). Similarly Greene is of the view that God always stands with open arms to receive people who come to Him, seeking forgiveness. This can further be explained by citing an example from the parable of the prodigal son in *The Bible*. When the prodigal son came to his house after having
wasted his father’s possession with prodigal living, “His father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him”(Luke 15:20).

The father no longer remembered his sins and accepted him just as he was. One can find the replica of this truth in the novels of Greene as well. Sarah, the wife of a civil servant called Henry Miles in *The End of the Affair* has an adulterous affair with the novelist called Maurice Bendrix. Even though her husband remains loyal to her she betrays him and is romantically inclined to Maurice Bendrix. To make the matter worse, she sleeps with him in the absence of her husband in her house itself. She is immoral to the core. Yet, when she turns away from her sinful deeds, God accepts her and bestows forgiveness on her. Likewise, several characters in the novels of Greene symbolically stand for the prodigal son who came back to his father and received forgiveness. The philosophy of Greene is that no sinner’s condition is beyond hope. This does not give the license to the readers to commit as many sins as they please. Francis L. Kunkel in his book *The theme of Sin and Grace: Graham Greene* says, “Greene does not sprinkle holy water on sin or invite someone to sin with the hope of bringing about good results”(59).

What Greene wants the readers to learn is that the sinners are worthy of receiving God’s forgiveness as one of the thieves crucified on the cross along with Him. The thief says to Jesus, “Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom’(Luke 23:42). For which Jesus replies, “Today you will be with me in Paradise”(Luke 23:43). Greene supports the idea that even the worst sinner can obtain forgiveness by virtue of confession. Confession is the gateway to forgiveness. When Greene deals with the concept of forgiveness in his novels, he chooses sinners to be the heroes. In his opinion sinners with at least a bit of faith are far better than atheists who never believe in God.
The Whisky priest in *The Power and the Glory*, Pinkie Brown in *Brighton Rock*, Sarah Mile in *The End of the Affair* commit mortal sins against God. Yet, they are all presented in such a way that they are the recipients of God’s forgiveness whereas characters like Ida in *Brighton Rock*, Thomas Fowler in *The Quiet American* and Querry in *A Burnt-out Case*, in spite of their self-righteousness, end up with utter hopelessness because they do not believe in God. All these issues are juxtaposed in this chapter.

Moreover this chapter evaluates how Greene considers salvation as a gift given to man by God. The Bible makes it pretty clear that no man under the sun can earn his salvation with his own efforts. In other words one cannot be saved by one’s good deeds. If a man is capable of earning his salvation there is no need for him to seek God. He can be the master of his own life. Since man is so helpless that he cannot save himself, he needs a Saviour who will deliver him from the bondage of sin. In order to substantiate that Salvation is a gift given by God out of His mercy, one can quote the saying of St. Paul recorded in his epistle to Ephesians. He says, “By Grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourself; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast” (Eph. 2:8-9).

The literal meaning of ‘grace’ is the kindness that God shows to an undeserved person. Honestly speaking, none of the heroes of Greene is worthy to receive salvation from God. Scobie in *The Heart of the Matter* betrays his wife to satisfy his carnal desires. Eventually, being stricken by his guilty feelings, he commits suicide. At this point of time the orthodox believers may not agree to the fact that Scobie is worthy to obtain salvation from God. But Greene appears to project him as a recipient of salvation. Greene uses Father Rank, a Catholic Priest as his mouth-piece to proclaim the truth that if salvation is a gift given to man by God, people like Scobie too might be eligible to receive the gift of salvation from God. Towards the end of *The
Heart of the Matter Father Rank says to Mrs. Scobie, “I know the Church says. The Church knows all the rules but it does not know what goes on in a single human heart” (HM 306). On the whole this chapter elaborates how Greene presents the Biblical truth on salvation in different perspectives.

In the third chapter titled “The Glory of Suffering and Sacrifice”, an attempt has been made to examine the aspect of suffering and sacrifice which play a vital role in the life of everyone who makes it his or her priority to lead a godly life. Greene enables the readers to understand that suffering is a part of God’s plan. He also further leads the readers to get an insight into the fact that one cannot attain the process of refinement unless one goes through the furnace of affliction. As a result of one’s suffering one can emerge a better man who receives a revelation of God. What one can understand from this chapter is that just as gold is purified by fire, so man’s faith in God gets stronger when he is tested by suffering. The readers are also made to understand that sacrificial life is an integral part of godliness. Everyone who believes in God ought to lead a sacrificial life.

Greene makes it pretty clear that spirituality devoid of sacrificial living is futile. A man who leads a self-centred life can no way be a source of encouragement to others. The protagonists of Greene such as Scobie, Sarah, the Whisky priest and Querry walk in the path of suffering and emerge as better beings in the end. Besides enduring suffering for the sake of God, they make it their sole aim to make sacrifice so that their fellow men will get some benefits. Another profoundly important thing one can learn from this chapter is that suffering may come to a believer in different forms. It may come in the form of disappointment, failure, betrayal, loss, etc. When a believer in God remains steadfast in his faith in the face of suffering, God’s name will be glorified through him. It is noteworthy that those who suffer for the sake of God
will surely receive their reward from Him. Having given a vivid picture of suffering, Greene seems to suggest that life is neither a bed of roses nor a bed of thorns. Instead, it is an amalgamation of both joys and sorrows. One ought to have a balanced state of mind to treat these two aspects of life alike.

In the fourth chapter titled “The Attributes of God”, an attempt has been made to study different attributes of God which are portrayed by Greene in different dimensions in his novels. For instance, in *The Power and the Glory* Greene pictures God as immortal. In *The Heart of the Matter* he presents God as incomprehensible. In *Brighton Rock* God is presented as merciful. In *A Burnt-out Case* he depicts God as compassionate. In *The End of the Affair* God is portrayed as one who transforms the life of sinners. In *Doctor Fischer of Geneva* and *The Quiet American*, Greene projects God as righteous judge and refuge respectively.

The attributes of God discussed by Greene paves the way for the readers to understand how great God is. The more the readers contemplate the characteristics of God, the better they can understand His phenomenal power. The talk about God in the novels of Greene underlines the truth that life without God is like a boat without a sailor which is carried by wind to different directions. But when man believes in God and acknowledges His attributes in all the areas of his life, he can find a purpose for his living in this world and can look forward to a glorious life after death which God has promised.

By means of dealing with sin, salvation, suffering, sacrifice and attributes of God, what Greene tries to proclaim to the readers is that spiritual experience is like a journey with God, whose ultimate destination is eternal life. When a man takes up this journey, he is bound to undergo a great deal of hindrances. The first hindrance is indeed a big barrier that prevents man