

THE EFFECTS OF MINISTERS' ATTITUDE TO REST ON THEIR HEALTH AND  
FAMILY: A STUDY OF REDEEMER'S BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, LAGOS

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## ABSTRACT

This essay "*The Effects of Ministers' Attitude to Rest on Their Health and Family: A Study of Redeemer's Baptist Association*" investigated the long time postulation that Ministers do not rest adequately. The Methodology used in the research is Structured Oral Interviews of Ministers, Deacons, Church officials and some key Church members. The main idea for the essay is taken from the fact that though man was created to work and worship God, this same God divinely instituted rest as a break off from work for recharge purposes. The findings showed that the divinely instituted rest has not been adhered to by majority of His Ministers. This was traced to the volume of work load they carry and the natural inclination of Ministers to want to assist their members at all times sometimes to their own detriment. The Ministers' job, the findings revealed, is that it is one of the most complexly busy vocations ever. The scale of balance between the Ministers' work and rest is dangerously tilted towards work. The research went further to show that though the knowledge of the Divine instruction to rest is not hidden from Ministers, yet a large percentage of them failed to heed it because they are ignorant of the seriousness of the heart-related health hazards that are often the outcome of inadequate rest. They also expect their spouses and children to understand the complex demands of their vocation to the detriment of the needs - especially emotional - of the nuclear family. This on the other hand also portends avoidable friction on the home front. It was further discovered that the local Churches are often unaware of the complexities and arduousness of their minister's work. Hence, it was recommended that Ministers should remember to be good stewards of their body by engaging in good planning of their assignments and also compelling themselves to take adequate rest despite the work load. It was further recommended that the Christian Community be counseled to embrace Multistaff ministry in their local Churches for effective worship experience. Pastors, especially those in the urban areas were advised make resting a way of life. This, it was discovered could be achieved through taking effective resting periods away from work by going on annual vacations with their spouse and children out of their official zone. The final recommendation is in the form of a request to the NBC through her theological Seminaries and Colleges, and through associations, conferences and convention to enlighten her ministers, and educate the local churches on the importance of rest for ministers.

## 5.2 CONCLUSION

This research work reveals that rest is not a luxury but a vital necessity for every Pastor. It has the capacity to enrich their ministry, enhance good health and as noted by Trull (124), it is a “crucial constituent of minister’s life”. Pastors are supposed to be good stewards of their body which is the horse that carries their spirit in order to avoid untimely termination of their life. J. Adeniji observed that the African culture that most ministers imbibe is a wrong one since the western world does not joke with their rest time despite their busy schedule (interview).

The Bible commands rest for the Jews and invariably for the adherents of Christian faith. Since they uphold *sola scriptura*, then rest is not an elective programme, it is core to their total wellbeing. A Pastor who does not find time to refresh will soon lose relevance at both home and Church fronts due to burn out and

critical health conditions. Organizing and prioritizing their task, effective delegation of responsibilities, utilizing the provision of multi-pastoral ministry system, giving the first place to their household are some of the required values that Pastors must imbibe in order to be able to rest appropriately.

### 5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Consequent upon the foregoing, this researcher hereby make the following recommendations are hereby made in order to ensure adequate rest for Pastors with all its accrued benefits:

1. The NBC should enlighten her Pastors on Multistaff ministry. The fear of problems associated with Multi-pastoral system of ministry in local Churches must be shunned because friction and conflict are part of life for all relating beings, both in the ministry and secular jobs.
2. There should be emphatic enlightenment campaigns, in seminaries and Bible colleges, in form of special seminars on the medical implications of lack of rest. Also, courses such as Pastors' health, stress and conflict management should be included into their curriculum to inculcate rest attitude into them.
3. Pastors should educate and train Church workers so that they can acquire necessary skill to handle the ministries of the Church effectively. Hence, the Pastor will have enough hands to delegate responsibilities adequately.
4. Graduating and Pastors being ordained must have it added to their oath that they will have the (NBC prescribed) time for their wife and children while in active ministerial life.

5. Pastors' wives must be effectively encouraged to attend ministers' wives training to be the support and help-meet a wife is to her husband in real effective ways.
6. The local Churches and Pastors should be adequately enlightened on how to effectively plan and implement weekly off-duty/annual leave, observe ideal rest time hours, operate counseling day/time and organize to-do list for their Pastors