

CHURCH PLANTING AND GROWTH
IN BADAGRY REDEMPTION BAPTIST ASSOCIATION: AN
AREA DOMINATED BY YORUBA INDIGENOUS RELIGION ADHERENTS

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ABSTRACT

The main focus of this research work titled "Church Planting and Growth in Badagry Redemption Baptist Association: An Area Dominated by the Indigenous Religion Adherents" was to explore the possibility of winning the community that is hostile to the gospel of Jesus Christ over to Christ. It was also set out to discover some elements of a growing church in order to see the needed criteria for influencing the community where the church is located and as well examine the few out of available church planting strategy in order to see how valid and workable they are in the context like Badagry and its environment. Finally, the work also tried to unveiled some of the ways the established churches can invest in the community with the focus of reaching the unreached through social and welfare ministry to the community at large and the ways of strengthened and assist the new church when it is eventually planted so that the new church can continue in winning the rest to Christ. In-line with the set out aim of this research work, some scholars' opinion were sought as it regards to the objective of the research work and with the use of research instrument, one hundred questionnaires were administered to ten churches in the Association above out which ninety four were returned and analyzed. From the respondents greater percentage agreed (91% - 98%) that signs of growing include, the presence of the Holy Spirit, evidence of true worship, evangelism, reaching out to lives through social ministry, discipleship, good leadership, rightly dispensing the word of God, just to mention a few. On the church planting strategies, good percentage (above 80%) of respondents agreed that daughter-mother church planting, sponsor and support type of church planting, small cell unit church planting, and the least among the list, arrowhead model are good method to plant church in the area of the research case study. Over 90.0 percent of the respondents affirmed that investing through social concern ministry by meeting the community and the indigenes' needs like provision of bore-hole, school, clinic, youth empowerment programmes, and many more are sure ways of winning the community to Christ. The findings also included ways of strengthening the planted church by the established church(es), over 90.0 percent of respondents affirmed the ways suggested while other additional one's were also raised. The researcher recommends that the church should show genuine love and be concerned about the unsaved indigenes in the community where the church is situated. It is also recommended that the church must be ready to invest in the community and be actively involved in things that can bring relieve to the community dwellers such as school, Hospital or clinic, provision of drinkable water and so on. All these and many more were considered useful and helpful in fulfilling the great commission mandate of Jesus Christ.

5.2 CONCLUSION

The research has shown that the task of great commission is a must for every church of Christ especially the Baptist. There is need for the church to rise up to the task of reaching all. The result of the findings revealed that even where most Baptist churches were situated few of the indigenes were reached with the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, looking at it from the point of Badagry Redemption Baptist Association member churches. The Baptist church should be aggressive in their approach to church planting and be concerned and focus the indigenes so that the works of darkness will be put to check and subdued if not totally eliminated.

The established church has some responsibilities to carry out so that the new church planted among the new converts can grow rapidly and attract more souls for the Lord. It is not a matter of planting a church but giving it all the nourishment

needed for stable and rapid growth as revealed and affirmed by the respondents of the research instrument. The research has also confirmed the validity and workability of the models or strategies of church planting, however, as the researcher is supporting all the options given by Bustle and Crocker and attested to by greater percentage of respondents, it is hereby added that in the context of reaching out to the “un-church” community such as Badagry and its environment with the gospel Arrowhead Method of church planting can be considered too. The reason being that it has the ability of making a single indigene convert to reach out to the whole community after the convert might have been baptized and disciplined and sent back to the community, then a church comprising the new converts (indigenes) can be instituted, be supported and sponsored by an established church(es). This method allows the indigenes to have sense of belonging and at the same time allow them to be devoted, committed and be spiritually developed into maturity.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings from the research, below are some of the recommendations made in order to fulfill the mind of Christ in reaching out to all starting from the door post (Jerusalem).

1. The trend at which the church is going about the neglect of the unsaved people in their community especially the indigenes must be checked, if the church will not become victim in the hands of the “uncared-for” people tomorrow, just like the “Boko-Haram” sect. The church need to wake up from their slumber and display the signs of a true living and growing church. Without the demonstration and the evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit, good leadership filled with the Holy Spirit and power, as well as dividing the word of God rightly coupled with mission mind church can do nothing.

2. The church need to show genuine love and be concerned about the unsaved indigenes in the community where their church situated.
3. The church must be ready to invest in the community and be actively involved in things that can bring relieve to the community dwellers, such school, hospital, or clinic provision of drinking water, without have a business venture mind but a way of show the love and light of Christ to the community people.
4. The church members living among them should present themselves as light and they should be seen as such. Their life must portray life of Jesus as they relate with the indigenes of the community.
5. Good interpersonal relationship must also be demonstrated among them by both the church and her members.
6. The churches in the Association must also be ready to synergize their effort toward this task of reaching out to the yet unsaved people of the communities within their province. What individual church cannot do, churches in the association can do it successfully.
7. The mother church or support and sponsor church should be ready to provide all the needed support for the new church for her to survive and grow, good musical instrument must be procured for the new church because music has been found to be a great tool of winning the heart of youth of the 21st century.
8. The established churches, Association and Conferences need to provide the financial support for the new church to have a befitting place of worship and a place for the pastor for effective ministry.