

AN EXEGETICAL STUDY OF MARK 3:13-15 AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR
EFFECTIVE DISCIPLESHIP IN BETHEL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, IN OSUN
CONFERENCE

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to investigate and analyze Mark 3:13-15 and its implication for effective discipleship in Bethel Association, Osun Conference. It is designed to reveal the concept of discipleship from the pericope. The researcher adopted an exegetical approach to unravel the original intent of the author concerning the aforementioned passage. This work investigates the biblical background of discipleship, concepts of discipleship, relevance of discipleship training, problem confronting discipleship, misconceptions on discipleship. It also investigates the historical background of Mark, the lexical, grammatical and syntactical analysis of the text. The researcher considered the implications of Jesus' discipleship concept on pastoral ministry, the church, evangelical, and Bethel Associations. The researcher also gave some recommendations that will enhance discipleship training in Bethel Associations. The researcher's exegetical tools include New Testament Greek lexicons, Journal articles, dictionaries, concordances, encyclopedia, commentaries, and books in the library along with internet materials. The findings revealed that Jesus had time with his disciples, instructing them concerning the issues of the kingdom, thereby helping them to develop their spiritual maturity as they were with him learning through teachings and practical experiences they had in the ministry. Discipleship is capable of transforming life and makes it conform to the image of Christ.

of the kingdom work, Bethel association cannot do less if indeed the association will live by the purpose of its existence.

Conclusion

Discipleship is an indispensable programme of the church; if not so Jesus would not have shown it as a model of effective ministry. It is believed that Jesus had successful ministry because he left eleven disciples who eventually turn the world upside down through whom the present generation have access to the gospel. They were grossed and faithful with the continuation of the preaching of the gospel as one of the purpose of their calling in the book of Mark 3:13-15. It is therefore a challenge to the present day Christians that the gospel is being preached across the nation, and those who are saved must be discipled. This will afford them growth in order to continue in the teaching of Christ and later become an instrument of salvation to their generation.

Therefore, Bethel association is expected to handle discipleship seriously and make it a life-impacting programme rather than a mere exercise of the church. The people in charge of the programme starting from the pastors of the local churches, leaders and even church members should be committed to ensuring that younger generation is well discipled so as to bridge the gap for the future generation. But, if this generation fails to take discipleship serious, our children may grow up not knowing Jesus and they may end up becoming accursed generation.

Recommendations

In view of this work and its implication to the contemporary Christians and organizing effective discipleship programme in Bethel Association, the researcher makes following recommendations.

- i. Selection is necessary in discipleship training because a discipler can only work intensively with a few at a time for effectiveness. Just as Jesus selected twelve ordinary men out of the crowd for intensive discipleship training; ministers of God in Bethel Association should study their parishioners and wake up to the task of calling out the would-be disciples, and give them intensive training that will result into their spiritual maturity.
- ii. The criteria for discipleship enrolment should be based on the genuine conversion of members of the local churches in Bethel Association. Discipleship programme is not meant for the unsaved. It should be organized for those who desire and indicate readiness for spiritual maturity.
- iii. Church members should not be forced but be motivated to do discipleship training as this is against Jesus' model of discipleship training. Members should be given the privilege to make the choice of learning from and getting to know the master better.
- iv. Every Pastor under Bethel Association should be invited quarterly to give a stewardship account of their discipleship programme and be sanctioned for default by higher authority in the convention. Also appreciation of Pastors should be tied to their performance in mission work and discipleship training order than mere numbers of years spent a church.
- v. People that will be delegated to handle discipleship training must be people who had encountered Jesus and are willing like Jesus to impart others. They should be people who are ready to produced Christians who are of the same kind with Jesus.