

AN EVALUATION OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE IN SOME SELECTED CHURCHES OF
MOUNTAIN OF FIRE AND MIRACLE MINISTRIES IN OGBOMOSO.

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ABSTRACT

This research work is an evaluation of spiritual warfare in some selected Churches of Mountain of Fire and Miracle Ministries in Ogbomoso. Spiritual warfare which is a subject of contemporary discuss happen to provoke a lot of criticism for its advocates. The dragging discuss in spiritual warfare is on the nature of the battle Christians are involved. The Mountain of Fire and Miracle Ministries offer a valuable context for this research because of their high sensitivity to and emphasis on spiritual warfare through their imprecatory prayer. For this reason this research has succeeded in presenting several related literary review on the subject of spiritual warfare. This research was specifically a denominational study, hence the researcher engaged in participant observation on several occasion. The researcher used empirical method to confirm findings as well as obtain additional information. The approaches include a highly structured questionnaire, consultation of books, magazines, and reports on spiritual warfare and the Church being researched. In this research the writer investigated and was acquainted with the dynamics of spiritual warfare in the Mountain of Fire and Miracle Ministries avoiding the tendency to be judgmental towards them. The research finding shows that MFM Church stresses on overcoming evil spirits during their prayer. The search reveals that there is a significant difference in the understanding of spiritual warfare among the different educational groups in MFM. Though, Spiritual warfare according to the respondents has to do with war in the realm of the spirit. The activities of the world from the Mountain of Fire and Miracles ministries point of view are based on African spirituality. Thus the research recommends that the MFM Church must seek to reevaluate the "Africanness" of their imprecatory practices in full view of the New Testament teachings and practices.

5.2 CONCLUSION

Spiritual warfare is a reality that cannot be deemphasized. Humans live in a world that is under the serious influence of unseen forces. According to Warren “Every theology has a context.” He explained that “you won’t understand Luther’s theology without understanding Luther’s life and how God was sovereignly working in the world at that time” (Warren 27). The activity of the world from the Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries point of view is based on African spirituality that sees everything to be controlled from the spirit, hence their emphasis on spiritual warfare. For them spiritual warfare is a major part of the Christian living because every believer is Satan’s enemy and the only way to defeat him or appropriate the victory of Christ is violent prayer. Violence is not necessarily in the movement of body but “violence in spirit” through aggressive prayers. They are more concerned with the association with invisible world as well as their response to a “sacerdotal universe of powers” (Imasogie 83).

As it is, the emphasis on prayer in MFM follows the Latin theological maxim, “Lex orandi, Lex Credendi”, the law of prayer (the way we worship), and the law of belief (what we believe)... how we worship reflects what we believe and determines how we live” (www.catholic.org. Accessed 21/11/2012). The way the MFM worship is dependent on a hermeneutic based on biblical revelation and the experience of the African people who believes that everything in this world is interwoven with the spiritual either evil or good. They search Scriptures in search of related instances which respond to the spiritual forces of darkness.

5.2 RECOMMENDATION

Having perused a plethora of literature and the thoughts of the Mountain of Fire and Miracle Ministries on the subject of spiritual warfare, the writer hope, therefore, that the findings reported in this research work will serve as a useful framework for further theological inquiry into the concept of spiritual warfare. In view of this, the following points should be considered:

1. The researcher recommends that the same study of dynamics of spiritual warfare need to be carried out at the MFM International Headquarters in Lagos, Nigeria to observe if there are levels of significant differences in the understanding of spiritual warfare among worshippers in the Headquarters in Lagos and those of the worshippers in Ogbomoso.
2. Because the bulk of the respondents in this research are singles (about 73%), the researcher recommends that a future related work should target couples to see if their understanding and practices of spiritual warfare is the same with the singles in the MFM.

3. A further research that would verify why there is a level of significant difference among the different educational qualification is deemed necessary in future research work.
4. Other believers should seek to understand the in-depth of spiritual warfare instead of criticizing the MFM ways of carrying out spiritual warfare. A proper understanding of the teachings and practices of prayer activities of the MFM Church would greatly decrease the level of criticism from other believers. A look at spiritual warfare from a non-African perspective would greatly lead to an ardent criticism of the dynamics of spiritual warfare in the African cosmological milieu.
5. The MFM Church must seek to reevaluate the "Africanness" of their imprecatory practices in full view of the New Testament teachings and practices. Our experience should not determine the meaning of the Bible; rather scriptural truth should determine our experience in spiritual warfare.