

PASTORS' WIVES' CONTRIBUTIONS TO THEIR HUSBANDS' MINISTRIES: AN
APPRAISAL AND EFFECTS ON CHURCH GROWTH IN IBADAN- CENTRAL
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

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ABSTRACT

The task of being a pastor's wife is as equally great as that of the pastor himself. But the irony of it is that a greater number of ladies who eventually become wives of pastors never prepared ahead; they are caught unaware. Their initial thought was to become wives to Lawyers, Doctors, Business Tycoons, Teachers or Civil Servants, or any other aside pastors. But after few or some years of their wedding, they now discover the Call of God on their husbands which implies that they are now automatically pastors' wives, "Mama Missions," that they never envisaged! Nonetheless, few of them had already known that their husbands to be were called men of God right from the time of their courtship; but they were ignorant of the roles and responsibilities therein. The fact still remains that no pastor can do the work of the ministry successfully all alone without the full support of the wife. Identifying the biblical pillars and parameters for establishing the role of a pastor's wife in a local church is the objective of this work. The thesis is that the Scriptures do not in any way define or prescribe the role of the pastor's wife, so we must infer the framework for her ministry as the pastor's wife from what the Scriptures teach about her identity, role, and purpose as a woman, a wife, a mother and a believer. Then, how do all these affect the growth of the local church where they serve positively or otherwise? This is the focus of this research work. The first chapter of this essay contains the introduction, background of the study, purpose of the study, significance of the study, the scope of the study, research methodology, and definition of terms. The second chapter is based on the literature review in view of pastor's wife a mother; essential virtues in a pastor's wife; the why of the Women Training Centre/ Programmes, laity's expectations of their pastor's wife, the children's expectations of their mother (pastor's wife) contributions to the ministry, the pastor's expectations of his wife's contributions to the ministry, and the implications of her contributions to the ministry of the husband on the church growth. The focus of the third chapter is on the research methodology, design, procedure, and data collection. Data analysis and discussion is considered in chapter four; while the embodiments of the summary, conclusion, and recommendations to pastors' wives, pastors, and the laity as well. It is believed that there will be cordial unity, progress, and remarkable growth in the life and home of the clergy as well as the laity; the community will live in peace and God will be glorified, provided those recommendations are diligently considered by the parties involved!

5.2 CONCLUSION

As an integral part and an inevitable success determinant of pastoral ministry, the contributions of the pastor's wife to such ministry, can neither be undermined, nor over-emphasized. Hence, based on the findings thus far, according to this research work, following conclusions are drawn: It is expedient to conclude that all pastors, from onset know that the call of God upon their lives is not just on them as a single entity but the one that is upon their immediate family; and so their wives as well as their children should be fully carried along, since the work of the ministry cannot be successfully done singlehandedly.

Also, like we value the pastoral work as a great task, the contributions of the pastors' wives are of equal importance and delicate to the extent that members of local church find it easier to overlook the mistakes of their pastor than to overlook the one(s) made by his wife or any of children. A local church can even eject from the pastorium all because of the attitude of the Pastor's Wife. In the light of that, Pastors would help themselves by helping their Wives to function positively actively in their given ministries.

One of the vital ways Pastors' Wives could be helped is what God in His infinite mercy has helped our fathers and mothers in the Baptist Nigerian Convention (NBC) to establish; that is, the Women Training Center (WTC) which is the women training arm of the Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, Ogbomoso, where wives of student pastors or of those already on the field but had not such opportunity when their husbands were receiving their own training, are trained, empowered, and equipped for the purpose of fully supporting their husbands in their respective pastoral ministries.

In all this, Jesus, The Head of the church seeks that His chosen ministers (Pastors) will bring Him profits in their given pastoral assignments. And it is confirmed that, if the church will grow in the hand of a minister, the lifestyle and contributions of the Wife of such minister is a vital tool which can either enhance or mar the growth of a local church. The library and field works of this thesis testify.

5.3 RECOMMENDATION

With all facts revealed in this research work, the researcher has come up with the following recommendations:

1. Every Pastor should see their spouse as part of themselves and that they cannot successfully do the work of the ministry singlehandedly; and so they should give their Wives enough room to contribute to their pastoral work.
2. In time management and other aspects of the ministry, Pastors should see their Wives as their eyes and instrument for checks and balances.
3. Having known that the task to being a Pastor's Wife is enormous, Pastors should always create quality time to appreciate their Wives, giving them open recognition often if not all times. A nonentity or mediocre will find it difficult to meet up with the task of being a Pastor's Wife, therefore Pastors should encourage their wives to be trained and be equipped.
4. The Bible says, "...we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places (Ephesians 6:12, NKJV); then Pastors' Wives should be women of prayer who should always support and back their husbands up in order for them to be successful.

5. "...when a wise man is instructed, he gets knowledge (Proverbs 21:11, NIV).
Pastors' Wives should give themselves to training, in order for them to receive instructions and get knowledge on how to go about their duties in a better way. "If the ax is dull and its edge unsharpened, more strength is needed but skill will bring success" says the Scripture, (Eccl 10:10, NIV).
6. Sexuality in marriage must not be trivialized by either the Pastor or the Wife. If the needs be, Pastors should cultivate the habit of taking along their wives on outings, especially for revivals. On occasions when the husband (pastor) is away, the wife should stand-in and bridges the gap. Yet, such pastor's wife should beware of pride and pomposity.
7. If possible, Pastor's Wife should not engage or embark in any occupation that will always take her far away from home. Being a house-wife will be preferable. This is to avoid "week-end wife" syndrome, or to guide against loneliness which could open door for Satan antics of luring people into sexual immorality and other messes.
8. "..., but a child left to himself disgraces his mother (Prov. 29:15, NIV). Care for the children is core amongst the contributions of a Pastor's Wife to her husband's (Pastor) ministry. Pastor's Wife should therefore endeavour to invest in training up their children in the way of the Lord; knowing well that the husband (Pastor) will not always be available at home with them as she'll.
9. Each Pastor's Wife should discover her potentials and area of gifting and use them wisely in supporting their husband's ministries. Their husbands likewise should help them in discovering their potentials and gifting and give them maximum opportunities to utilize them.

10. Conjugal responsibilities have no other alternative(s). With all seriousness and care a Pastor's Wife should do everything within her capacity to satisfy her husband (Pastor), most especially, sexually, without interruption or complaint.