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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE
SOUL-WINNING MINISTRY OF THE LOCAL CHURCH:
A CASE STUDY OF OGBOMOSO SOUTH WEST BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

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ABSTRACT

Scholars and ministers of the gospel have often emphasized the prominent place which should be accorded to the Holy Spirit in the work of evangelism. Their emphasis is that the Holy Spirit is the prime mover in this mandatory enterprise of the church. However, it is observed that this fact is probably not open to many members of the local churches; hence they often attempt to do the work in their own strength. Many having failed in their effort to evangelize in their own power have often shy away from the work. Consequently, the churches do not usually enjoy their cooperation in this area any more. It is in this regard that this research examines the importance of the Holy Spirit in evangelism with the aim of ascertaining the prominent place that should be accorded Him in this noble enterprise of the church.

The study adopted the bibliographic search method and oral interview. The Ogbomoso South West Baptist Association was selected as the population for the study. In the process, oral interviews were conducted with some members of the local churches within this association. The study reveals that the Holy Spirit has prominent roles to play in the work of evangelism. He is the prime mover of this noble task and is relevant to the work in various dimensions. As the source of spiritual power, it energizes the believer for evangelism; grant power for ministry and made the endowment of charismatic gifts possible. He convicts the sinners, thus making conversion possible; guides the church in the work and help develop the spiritual lives of the saints. Also he unifies the church in meaningful fellowship and is the source of spiritual revival. In the light of the afore mentioned discoveries, the study advises that it is mandatory on every minister of the gospel, soul winner and the church to depend on Him solely for effectiveness and fruitfulness in ministry. In the same vein, church leaders should endeavour to give the Holy Spirit his pride of place in the service of the church. Also it is imperative on the leaders to educate the members on this prominent subject without which they may not enjoy their cooperation in this regard.

Conclusion

There is always a growing need in each passing moment in daily experience of the church to talk more, explain more, and emphasis more on the Person and work of Holy Spirit for the purpose of thorough understanding of the subject in every generation, as there can never be an exhaustive discussion of the subject by any group or the church regardless of the unquenchable anointing such group claim to have. It is necessary to deal with the subject of the Holy Spirit in our own time due to the contemporary challenges facing the church as a partner of God in mission and evangelism. This research is a contribution to this reality.

It discusses the prominent place that should be accorded the Holy Spirit in the work of evangelism especially that of a local church. It reveals that the Church cannot afford to ignore the Holy Spirit in this regard, as he is the prime mover of the work of evangelism. Every Church needs a clear, adequate and appropriate knowledge of the Holy Spirit in order to function effectively for the Lord. The fruitfulness of the church or otherwise will depend on how much knowledge of God through the Holy Spirit is available to the members who incidentally are the carriers of the glad tiding of Christ. There is the need for the church to maximize the abundance of grace available to her and go out to win others to Christ in the might of the Holy Spirit. In this regard, the church will be doing herself a lot of good by according the Holy Spirit his rightful place in the scheme of things.

Recommendations

In the light of the above discoveries, the study made the following recommendations.

1. Church leaders should realize that the mandate given to the church is still applicable in our time to go out to the unreached and win them to God's kingdom and it is not possible for anyone to carry out the work of evangelism in his own strength, rather in the power of the Holy Spirit.
2. It is therefore mandatory on every minister of the gospel, soul winner and the church to depend on the Holy Spirit solely for effectiveness and fruitfulness in ministry.
3. Church leaders should endeavour to give the Holy Spirit his pride of place in the service of the church by praying specifically while preparing for services and during the services.
4. It is imperative for church leaders to educate their members on this prominent subject without which they may not enjoy their cooperation in this regard.