

EFFECTIVE PASTORAL LEADERSHIP AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR CHURCH
GROWTH IN REDEEMER BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, OGBOMOSO

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ABSTRACT

This research work sees to the need for effective pastoral leadership in the process of growing the church. This work with is titled Effective Pastoral Leadership and Its Implication for Church Growth in Redeemer Baptist Association, Ogbomoso. This study used empirical method of primary source of data collection, because it is concerned with evidence. Questionnaire was the only instrument used in this study to collect information. The questionnaire was distributed among some selected churches in the Redeemer Baptist Association, Ogbomoso. In spite of the level of the educational background of the church pastors, the findings showed that there is a leadership problem in discharging pastoral roles in the church. The study showed that despite the efforts by the theological institutions to give pastors the best training, some pastors are still messing up in the field. Therefore, the work recommended ways by which Baptist churches can work towards overcoming these challenges in pastoral leadership. Pastors should understand the areas of their callings and the purpose of God for them in the ministry. His cordial relationship with God will enable him in this regards. Pastors should focus their attention on imparting lives with preaching and teaching of the Word of God. Also, pastors should endeavor to live like Jesus Christ who exemplified servant-leader lifestyle; and should endeavor to balance the spiritual, physical and other aspects of the church life towards achieving the mission goal.

5.2 Conclusion

The results to this findings show that a number of churches are affected with this leadership problem. The analysis even shows that pastoral leadership has much influence on the growth of each local church. Even though, the purpose of God is for His church to grow. This is evident in the Great Commission of the Lord to the church. The growth should be both in quality and quantity. The quality of Christian life is achieved as a person becomes spiritually matured. The focus on the issue of numerical growth which some pastors prioritize without qualitative growth, which often leads to shallow spiritual growth, should be discouraged. Growth in the spiritual maturity develops to the blessing of the Lord in adding those who are being saved to the church.

Besides, there is a need for Christian leaders to become effective agents of transformation in this end time. It was discovered in the research that people are ready to follow the faithful spiritual leaders who understand the mind of God. The pastor is responsible for the overall actions and consequence of the work in the church. The pastors have the opportunity even to lead others to belong to leadership class towards growing the church. The pastors are also expected to exhibit a higher standard of

behavior and lifestyle, so that people can emulate them and glorify God; and through which some unbelievers can see their good works and perhaps, be encouraged to return to God.

Moreover, from the research work, it was discovered that some pastors are not really called of God; so, this may be a reason why they are less concerned about the church growth. Irrespective of the church internal projects like purchase of church bus, building structures, and so on; the Great Commission should not be neglected. Also, growth in the spiritual maturity of the church is essential, because the aftermath will be in the increase of the number of the saving souls. The church cannot grow in an unpleasant atmosphere where effective pastoral leadership is not displayed; every pastor should see effectiveness of a pastorate as an indispensable role to play to grow the church.

5.3 Recommendations

In view of the facts that some churches are not growing the ways they are supposed, the writer hereby recommends the followings:

1. Pastors should understand the areas of their callings and the purpose of God for them in the ministry. His cordial relationship with God will enable him in this regards. The church of today is not growing because the men saddled with the responsibilities of growth are not acting. While the world is looking for different procedures, machineries, and money to perform some functions, God also is looking for men to effect changes and cause His church to grow. So, a pastor is the first strategy for God towards church growth, and in expectation to be used in harnessing other resources and strategies in order

to achieve the sole aim of church growth. Therefore, a pastor should not be a copy-cat, but understand and fulfill his areas of responsibility, and there will be such growth envisioned as a body of Christ.

2. Pastors should focus their attention on imparting lives with preaching and teaching of the Word of God. The gospel should be preached undiluted. In addition to this, they have to put every strategy in place which may include administrative, spiritual, numerical, physical, social, financial and extension or mission growth strategies. In the book of acts of apostles, it was the action of the apostles that introduced strategies of church growth which are still applicable till today. So, pastors need to use or apply all the necessary and available strategies in dividing the Word of Truth, to impart and win souls for Christ, and populate God's kingdom.

3. Pastors should endeavor to live like Jesus Christ who exemplified servant-leader lifestyle. This is because, for pastoral leadership to positively affect the growth of the church, church pastor must live out the qualities expected of him, and bears the responsibilities of good leadership. The implication of possessing these qualities and responsibilities will enhance a balanced church growth.

4. Pastors should endeavor to be involved in the church activities or programmes organized in their local churches. Pastors should share their vision and match it with the Great Commission with the church, who is expected to support the vision in carrying it out. Pastors should be the frontier in every matter relating to the church affairs; not to be afraid, nor belittle him but be confident enough to take up challenges. This will enable

other church members to have a confidence in him, and strongly cooperate with him in achieving the set church objectives.

5. Pastors of each local church should involve the members to actively participate in the programmes organized in the local church. The implication of this is unity. Pastor who involves the members in the church programmes is encouraging them to follow and work closely with him. He is also building them up towards maturity. So, such pastor will not be afraid when he is not around about whom to delegate responsibility to.

6. Church pastors should endeavor to balance the spiritual, physical and other aspects of the church life towards achieving the mission goal. This will help the pastors as well as the entire church members to live a balanced Christian life. Also, if a church is good spiritually, but socially she is not, it would be difficult to reach out to people outside the church. The members would not even enjoy their fellowship as expected.

7. Pastors together with their deacons should endeavor to visit the church members, and extend other caring attitudes to the members. This will aid the ministerial aspect of the church and enable the church to know about the welfare of the members. The members will have a sense of belongings in relation to the church.

8. Pastors should involve the laymen among adult members who are qualified in such programmes like visitation, counseling, home cell fellowship, and so on. This is because some of them are readily prepared to dedicate their time and resources to serving God in the church. So, church pastors should encourage them by involving them in the church programmes.

