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IMPACT OF STEWARDSHIP ON CHURCH GROWTH

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ABSTRACT

This research work is titled "Impact of Stewardship on Church Growth." It is undertaken to create awareness on the need for churches to experience growth as laid down by the Master Jesus. Many of today's churches are slow, stagnant, or retarding with respect to growth. Different ideas, methods, and principles of church growth have been employed but it is time to make use of stewardship as effective instrument to church growth.

This work highlighted the impact of stewardship on church growth and basic principles of church growth that can be used with stewardship to grow a church. The approach to this work was literary. The researcher looked at this topic from both the Old and New Testaments, what the biblical writers have said about it, and theological discourse on the topic by the scholars. It was discovered that stewardship plays a major role in the growth and development of a church. Therefore, the effective use of stewardship of giving, time, talent, and influence spurs the church into a higher level of growth.

From the work done, the researcher concluded that it is clear that church growth would be made easy if effective stewardship is put in place. When every member of the church sees themselves as instrument of growth and change, and are ready to offer themselves i.e. make themselves available for the work of the Lord, then our churches will experience total growth. The researcher spelt out some implications of stewardship to the pastoral ministry, church, and individual Christians.

5.1 CONCLUSION

Churches are all over the cities today, but the issue at hand is that there is little or no growth experienced. The church by its nature and essence solely exists for one reason, the one and only basis is to go into all the world and make disciples of every nation. This responsibility is usually referred to as the Great Commission – the task of discipling the nations, reconciling mankind back to God, and leading all nations to the saviour. The effective use of our stewardship in the church will make this happen easily.

From the work done so far, it is clear that church growth would be made easy if effective stewardship is put in place. When every member of the church sees themselves as instrument of growth and change, and are ready to offer themselves i.e. make themselves available for the work of the Lord, then our churches will experience total growth.

This will not happen if members of the church are yet to be regenerated. Because stewardship begins at the point of surrendering one's life to God. God initiates it, and all who desires to be a good steward must flow into the direction of God. Regeneration will not happen without man acknowledging the ownership and sovereignty of God in his life and on what he possesses. Church pastor also has a lot to do here by instilling in members of the church what God expects from every one of them. The pastor should be dynamic in his leadership style and the church members

into a faithful life of stewardship with himself laying a good example for them to follow.

Marginalizing one aspect of stewardship will not be of help to the church. So, the church should try to balance every teaching on stewardship and inspire the members to fully make use of their stewardship for the growth and development of the church. Effective use of our stewardship of giving, time, talent, and influence will transform the church and cause a sincere growth and development of the church. Growth springs forth when every member of the church is ready to play their own role as to the fulfillment of their stewardship. Knowing fully that God has called every Christian to the life of fellowship with Him and this must be the desire of every Christian; to fellowship with God with our stewardship in all areas.

One salient point about stewardship is that, every steward will definitely give an account to the One who had entrusted him or her with the trust. So, it is expected of every steward to be faithful to the trust committed to him/her for the day of reckoning will surely come. Then the Body of Christ must be serious about the growth issue, with particular attention being given to the concept of stewardship as a tool for church growth.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are my recommendations for Pastors, Churches, and individuals who are concerned about the growth and development of the church.

1. There is need for stewardship pastor who will lead the church into effective stewardship because the stewardship life of the pastor will influence the stewardship of the church.

2. There should be stewardship committee in the church who will see to the stewardship aspect or programmes of the church.
3. The emphasis stewardship programme should be embraced, organize, and carryout more than the stewardship revival because emphasis refreshes the members' memory about stewardship and ownership of God and their accountability.
4. There should be an all – round stewardship programmes throughout the year.
5. Teachings in stewardship should exemplify the principles of stewardship and inspire (or sensitize) members on its importance.
6. Church leaders should allow their members to fully utilize their stewardship (time, money, talent, and influence) for the growth of the church.
7. There should be effective training for members on how to use their stewardship properly.