

PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELING IN FAMILY CRISIS MANAGEMENT: A
CASE STUDY OF OGBOMOSO CHOSEN GENERATION BAPTIST
ASSOCIATION, OGBOMOSO.

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ABSTRACT

This research study focused on "Pastoral care and counseling in family crisis management" taking Ogbomoso Chosen Generation Baptist Association as the case study. Family crisis is real in the societies, and it is evident especially among Christians which may occur as a result of sin, oppression by the devil, spiritual attacks, natural phenomenon, economic breakdown, bereavement, joblessness, childlessness, lack of transparency, sexual infidelity, insubordination, financial instability, unmet expectations, and so on. Interview and observations were conducted for the people in Ogbomoso Chosen Generation Baptist Association and information gathered was used to conclude on the possible way out of the family crisis. Based on interview conducted, the respondents revealed that family crisis is evident in the local churches which is very fundamental to the spiritual growth of the church. In the light of this, family counseling is highly significance to improve the functioning of the dysfunctional families to teach them how to cope with their stresses, and to build healthy family relationships. The interface of family therapy in such family crisis situation offers rich possibilities for use by the pastoral counselor, in the sense that it helps on a relatively short-term basis for the family to acquire skills to improve their life together. It is often more efficient and effective than individual counseling since it deals directly with the family source of individual problems. Also family counseling functions on a role-relationship level, thus avoiding complications of counseling focused on intrapsychic conflicts. In a specific note, family crisis calls for family counseling through pastoral care and counseling to instill hope on the family and restore them with newness of life and assurance of better tomorrow. Pastoral care and counseling has a great impact on family crisis management when practiced professionally and appropriately in the local churches. Finally, in making dysfunctional family to become functional one, the pastor should establish a trustful relationship with the family and church members; allow the church families to articulate perceptions regarding family problems; allow each family member to contribute to the step of solutions to the problem; and ask each member of the family to express what individual appreciate in the family.

5.1. CONCLUSION

Without any gainsaying, it could be easily inferred from the findings that family crisis is real and it is not limited to the case study alone but very evident in our local churches. The respondents' responses show clearly that causes of family crisis are numerous such as sexual infidelity, childlessness, disappointment, interference of third party, traditions and customs, joblessness, bereavement, satanic oppression, financial breakdown, unforgiveness, immaturity, ignorance, insubordination, lack of transparency, natural disaster, dishonesty, clash of interest, disrespect, faulty marital foundation and so on. However, care must be taken in handling the family crisis by the victim; they should seek pastoral care and counseling as in order to help them in their crisis situation.

The victim of family crisis should note that crisis is not permanent when effective counseling is involved. This is because pastoral care and counseling is a practical and effective tool to manage family crisis. In counseling, the minister is actually dealing with deadlock relationship of persons, whether or not he is aware of this fact. In individual counseling, the pastoral care has access to only one facet of the total interpersonal network, but in family counseling the methods give direct access to larger portions of the total network, permitting more comprehensive understanding and help to be given to the persons involved. This shows that the personality health or disturbance of an individual is to a considerable extent an expression of the emotional climate of the family and the quality of its need-satisfying network of interaction

In a nutshell, family crisis is very wide and needs an urgent attention of pastoral care-giver and counselor to manage, instill hope and restore life to such family crisis situation. Thus, the goal of family therapy is to reduce negative

complementarity (mutual frustration) and to enhance positive complementarity in family interaction.

Finally, without the interface of pastoral care and counseling in family crisis situation, the state of being of the victim would have been lost of hope and life will become meaningless to them. However, the significance of the pastoral care and counseling in family crisis management is evident and inevitable, because family counseling is geared towards improving the functioning of dysfunctional families, to teach families how to cope with their stresses, and to build healthy family relationship.

5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the aforementioned facts, the following recommendations are proposed to aid better family relationship, and solidify the impacts of pastoral care and counseling in the local churches.

Pastors in the local Baptist churches should not take the family counseling with levity, rather they should develop a genuine concern for the families in the church, and organize family enrichment programme from time-to-time for their church members. Likewise, pastoral family should be a practical example to the members of the church in all ramifications of life.

In the area of counseling, pastors in the local churches should enlist themselves for proper training on pastoral care and counseling in order to have effective counseling ministry to their parishioners. The task of family counseling as a therapist is enormous; therefore, sound and proper orientation aids the effective counseling result. Also, the pastors should have the basic understanding that

counseling is a ministry in the church, and should be given full attention for the spiritual and physical growth of the church.

The families who are experiencing crisis in one form or the other should seek God's face and be humbled enough to receive counseling from the appropriate pastors who are gifted in the ministry of family counseling. Since crisis is inevitable and Christian families are not exempted from having crisis, it is therefore recommended that it should be handled with maturity and seeks pastoral counsel. Dialogue with spouse is another way to handle crisis in the family; and meditation in the word of God should be their priority in such situation.

Lastly, in making dysfunctional family to become functional one, the pastor should establish a trustful relationship with the family and church members; allow the church families to articulate perceptions regarding family problems; allow each family member to contribute to the step of solutions to the problem; and ask each member of the family to express what individual appreciate in the family. All these aid effective family counseling and make a counselor involved become a therapist.