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M. Div

**FULFILLING THE GREAT COMMISSION:
WHITHER THE CHURCH OF NIGERIA (Anglican Communion)**

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by

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RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

Based on the findings from this study, and in addition the solutions preferred to some of the identified hindrances, the researcher will like to recommend the following.’

1. The first thing is to encourage the clergy and lay proclaimers of the gospel to be real Christians. No mission and no evangelism can be effective if the church dose not have people who know Jesus personally, obey Him faithfully and can Christ with others from their own personal experience. John R.W. Stott once spoke of the oddity of an un evangelized evangelist as follows:

“How odd it is to be an unconverted preacher, or an unevangelised evangelist? It is like the blind leading the blind man claiming to be a professor of optics, when he himself is absolutely in the dark. It is like a deaf man claiming to be a professor of Music, demonstrating symphonies and harmonies’ - a mole professing over eaglets a fool rushing where angels tremble to treck. “¹

In this task of evangelization by the church, the members of the clergy have a vital role to play. A lot depends on them. It has been said that the person who is to teach others must himself have basic knowledge and intelligence, and must be mentally alert. He must be of high moral integrity and impeccable character. The one who is going to instill discipline in others must be first possess it, because one can only share what the has. What we do not have, we cannot give to others.

2. The Church’s process of election and interview of candidates for ministry would need a review for effective ministry. Consequently, candidates for ordained or lay ministries, whether Christian experience, but must also be

1. John Stott, “Sharing the Good New”, *Ijebu Diocesan News*, viii, 3,1987,p.4.

seen to possess the conviction of their call to the ministry of the Church. There should be no place for jobless liabilities in the Church.

3. When Christian conviction and calling have been ascertained for candidates of holy orders, the next thing is to review the quality of their training in theological colleges. The present training is obviously inadequate. Our Theological Colleges should be upgraded to degree awarding institutions. This will help the clergy have higher training in theology.

4. At the heat of effective optimum performance is the need for training and retraining of the clergy. Priests must cultivate the habit of reading as part of their vocation, or else, they will become obsolete. More retraining and on-the-job training has to be organized. This is apart from allowing them to go for further studies to become fully qualified for their job. The clergy can, through such training and retraining be brought to standard of excellence for good and up-to-date performance.

5. The clergy should avoid what Bishop Adebisi calls 'monarchical model of ministry'² in which they do all the work-ineffective nurture with little or no evangelism, while members are spectators. The Church may not move if the clergy operate 'collaborated model'³ of ministry in which the priests work and is only assisted by the congregation. But the Church will be a goal-getter if the clergy operate the 'enabling model' whereby worker and the congregation do it together. The priest will just be the mobilizer while the people in their different ministries do most of the work. Evangelism is their joint responsibility. This was the pattern in early church's. Most people who have been won into the church fold were disciplined by lay members and very few by the clergy. Mark Gibbs and T. Ralph Morton confirmed that the laity had much greater potentials for evangelism because they interact with all fields of human endeavor, unlike clergy whose ministry is often within the Church environment.⁴ Too much emphasis on the sharp division between the clergy

2. P.A Adebisi, "Keynote Address", Occupy Till I Come, (Lagos: Conference on the Church in 21st Century, 1995), p.9.

3. P.A. Adebisi,

4. T.R. Morton, and Mark Gibbs, God's Frozen People, (London: Fontana Books, 1965), p.10.

and the laity belittles the potentials of the laity. Every parish should defreeze the laity in the Church by encouraging them to serve.

6. The Church will need to centrally organize different lay training programmes. Our Lord Jesus Christ used this same method of delegation of authority. He trained His disciples by teaching, delegating authority to them and sending them out to preach, teach and heal.⁵ They came back with positive results and become extremely excited for greater mission.⁶ Let us be assured of his support because he had promised that he who believes in Him, clergy or laity, greater work would he do.⁷ The church needs a training Department that will organize training for kin's of lay ministries. May be the opportunity of the Lagos Anglican Bible College should be fully utilized,

7. Guided encouragement should be given to the use of all spiritual gifts for the edification the body of church to prevent members from seeking spiritual help elsewhere.

8. 'Christian worship without seeking people and caring for them cannot be productive, missionary. Says canon V.K.Aiyejoto.⁸ This is because true worship must lead to compassionate action and the sharing of the joys and struggles of our neighbours. It must be appreciated that the gospel which created the church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) is the same Gospel which the apostle in Romans 1:16 describes as one not shame or bondage but one full of power to liberate. The Gospel the Anglican Communion affirms is not that of bondage but that of the free. It is meant to quench thirst and not of empty words. The faith and order of the Anglican Church as fully expressed in the Book of Common Prayer ordinals of the 16th and 17th century, and most succinctly, in the Chicago-Lambert Quadrilateral which was first approved by the Lambert Conference of 1888 clergy affirms as the essential element of the Christian faith in the quest for unity, the following:

5. Matthew 10:5-8

6. Luke 10:17

7. John 14:12

8. V.K.Aiyejoto, "A Fulfilling Church: Whither Church of Nigeria," *Occupy Till I Come*, (Lagos: Conference on the Church in the 21st Century, 1995), p.14.

- a) The Holy scripture of the old and New Testaments as the revealed word of God ;
- b) The Nicene Creed as the valid statement of the Christian Faith;
- c) The Two Sacrament, Baptism and the Eucharist, duly ministered with the unfailing word and elements used by Christ;
- d) The historic episcopate. ⁹

This means, Pentecostalism and evangelicalism cannot be unanglican. This is because everything that is scriptural is Anglican and everything unscriptural is unanglican. It will therefore be wrong and dangerously misleading to identify Anglican solely with the mode and culture of worship inherited from our forefather. After all, time and season change. Therefore the mode of worship and practice must be allowed some flexibility to accommodate all yet without compromising orderliness.

9. Promote Discipleship Training Programme in Diocese. The Lord Jesus who is our example spent much of his time with the Twelve. He knew that the success of his ministry depended greatly on the willingness of others to learn his teaching and share it with others. The Anglican Church, therefore must realize that equipping the saints is of great importance. The church is in the best position to reach others for Christ, and Church that fails to train disciple has neglected one of its vital functions.

10. To achieve the above, a formal Discipleship Training Programme should be put together in the Diocese. This has its basis in the Bible. In the passage of the Great Commission, the Church, having the authority of the risen lord also receives the mandate to make disciples of all nations

“ And Jesus unto them saying ‘all power is given to me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations, . Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; Teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, even to the end of age...’ (Matthew 28:18-20). “

9. *Church of Nigeria Book of Common Prayer*, 1996 ed., p.876.

