

**POWER EVANGELISM AS A TOOL OF
EFFECTIVE MINISTRY AMONG THE BAPTIST
PASTORS: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS**

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BEING AN ORIGINAL ESSAY SUBMITTED TO
THE NIGERIAN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
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IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT
FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF
M.DIV. THEOLOGY

JUNE, 2003

ABSTRACT

Life is full of challenges and to be Christian is more challenging. The Church is faced with myriads of solution proffering institutions. This is a greater challenge in that Christians cannot do just anything to assuage their problem. Therefore, the challenge to African Christians is that of making Christ relevant in this perverted world.

However, effectiveness of the Church depends on resolving the conflicts between Biblical world view of supernatural and scientific cum technological world view in one hand, and African Spiritist world view on the other whereas Biblical world view holds that God is the creator of the universe and so hold ace over it, the scientechnological worldview believes man is supreme and so supernatural view is fallacious. The African worldview though recognises the supernatural places strong emphasis on the strength of the divinities thereby holding that man is subservient. The Church is to bring about the balance. And the Christian leaders and Baptist pastors are to be in the vanguard.

Nevertheless, it must be asserted that work of Christ paved the way to make this task possible. Christ came to give human kind freedom. The Christian worldview holds that all power belongs to God. The coming of Christ brought a new dimension to world history. His death and resurrection instituted the rule of God. The Church was brought up for the purpose of the expansion of this rule.

The process of expansion is called evangelism. The most desired evangelism is that which is Holy Spirit initiated, executed and sustained. This

is what we meant by power evangelism. Power evangelism holds that Christ is needed by men in all ages and that His power is supreme.

Enforcing that all authority belongs to Christ and He is so present in the world today as ever is the task of pasturing. This is to ensure that men come to Christ and giving them confidence to remain in Him throughout their lives is very important. If the Church is to be relevant, this must be carried out with all diligence and Baptist pastors are in the vanguard.

The research presents some problems and prospects as found among some of the respondents reached (Baptist Pastors). There appears to be some sort of confusion as to explaining their relationship with Holy Spirit and of openness to same among others. There are high prospect for power evangelism if the factor of relationship with Holy Spirit is taken care of.

To this end, the researcher obliged that what God requires of his people whether in personal life and/or ministry is brokenness. By this I mean, life free of self, humble and open to God, dependent on the Spirit of God. This is a call for personal discipleship on daily basis. God is powerful as ever. Christ is sufficient as ever and ready to help His people in all times. Baptist pastor should resolved that Holy Spirit is not a second blessing but when we are born again, we need to grow to the level of maturity where God could truly manifest through us. This time may be different for individuals. Those who are called should believe that God that called them has empowered them for whatever their assignment. Their effectiveness will be measured by their brokenness and submissiveness to the Spirit of God. Power evangelism must centred on power of God through His Spirit and that Human agent is needed in all ages.

B. CONCLUSION

We must herewith acknowledge that constant supply of information makes knowledge dynamic. Therefore, I want to note here that this research work only gives the condition and characteristic of the respondents which were available for processing. As such I do not claim a whole encompassing and sizeable opinion and practices of the total number of the Baptist pastors' views and practices as regard power evangelism. It means that generalisation could only

be drawn with caution. The researcher has earlier mentioned about his limitation of time and money. In any case, the researcher implores others to research into specific Associations, conferences and to identify the state of power Evangelism in these specific areas. By the time we have these reports, it will be easier to make a better conclusion and generalisation.

However, we must admit the cogent report of this finding and each pastor could use it for self-appraisal. It must be said also that this work could help us better appreciate the need for relevant theology in African context vis-à-vis the status quo. The Baptist denomination holds it future to the competence and effectiveness of its pastors and leaders. As the popular saying goes; No nation can be better than its teachers. No denomination can be better than its Pastor. This is also true of the Baptist denomination.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

This work would be incomplete without recommendation. Thus, I proffer the following suggestion and recommendations to the student and resident pastors, respectively the training institutions and the convention. Similarly, it could be useful to other denominations in Africa since we operate in a similar environment.

That all Christians and particularly Baptist denomination should note the rule of God has started (see chapter three). And the reason for the Church is to be a mouth for God i.e. His agent, to check the devil and expand this rule. The priesthood of believer holds that we have specific role to play. Thus, the task of growing people lies on the pastor/leaders at all levels. However, what we teach matters. There is the need to overhaul our curriculum in our training institutions

to meet the current trends in African Christian Theology. African worldview should inform our theology. This will make Baptist work prosperous and Baptist Ministers relevant.

That power demonstration is part of the trademark of the kingdom of God. Jesus started it and the early apostles continued. Experiences have shown that the only language the devil hears is the demonstration of God's power through his Spirit in the Church. Baptist denomination must enter into this ministry.

There is no superman in Church. The power is owned together. No one should assume a super power. This means that all believers have equal opportunity before God. Hence all should be seen as an instrument God can use. This calls for growing ourselves in the correct knowledge of God. The commission "go ye" is for all and Christ has promised to be with those who go in his name. And power Evangelism is the most appropriate method the Baptist pastor should adopt.

Furthermore, Baptist pastor should note that they have great influence on the Church they pastor. Jesus contended severally with the devil over his "flock." This is the call of Jesus upon our own lives as well. We must understand our work and our place. The only way we could be relevant is to represent the living Christ among His people. We must fast and pray regularly and lead our people to learn to contend with the devil over their own sphere of influence, e.g. Parents over their home, unit leaders over their unit, etc. This will enhance care for and concern for one another, which will boost our koinonia. When this is highly esteemed, people will no longer leave our denomination as their needs must have been met, through the Church and its activities.

