

EVALUATION OF PASTORAL MINISTRY TO CHILDREN IN OGBOMOSO
SOUTH EAST BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

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BY
ADETOKUNBO TEMILADE AFOLABI
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ABSTRACT

This work, An Evaluation of Pastoral ministry to children in Ogbomoso Baptist Conference tend towards the activities of the children's ministry and pastoral leadership to children especially in Ogbomoso South East Baptist Association. This is carried out in order to enlighten, orientate, challenge and cheer up parents, pastors and the church on the need to be more committed to issues concerning children nurture, emotional and physical needs as well as spiritual needs in the area of pastoral leadership to children.

Childhood is one of the most important stages every individual passes through before he or she becomes an adult. Children are young individuals, boys and girls age 0-12 years, two stages of childhood are preschool and school ages. Children grow physically, intellectually, socially, emotionally, and spiritually. The spiritual life and wellbeing of children is of paramount importance, and it requires that parents, pastors and the church should rise to take care of children because of the present trend of corruption and decadence in the society, in order that the future of these children who are future leaders are secured.

A study was carried out among churches in Ogbomoso Baptist Conference, especially in Ogbomoso South East Baptist Association on Children and Pastoral ministry to them. There was administering of (questionnaire forms) which were distributed and responded to by twenty-two churches of the Ogbomoso South East Baptist Association.

The findings showed that majority of the churches have children's ministry but lacked adequate facilities and trained workers to man them, as well as a conducive environment for ministering to the children. Also pastoral leadership to these children in Ogbomoso South East Baptist Association is grossly inadequate, more than eighty percent of the churches are without children pastor. The spiritual well being of children are paramount and it is the responsibility of the church to ensure that children ministry thrives and pastoral leadership provides an avenue to breed disciplined and God fearing children. These will become adults that will benefit the church and the society at large.

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Conclusion

Based on the findings, of this work the following conclusions were reached. The attitude of churches in the Association towards having children's ministry is commendable and this should be sustained for the benefit of the home, church, and the society. Also the training of workers for effectiveness on their assigned tasks should be intensified since the Calibre of children workers have a direct impact of the lives of children.

Churches should pay proper attention to the issue of provision of facilities such as overhead projectors, record players, puppets, charts and picture that will aid learning in a conducive environment. There is the need to have churches in the Association call children pastor, because only three churches out of the twenty – two churches are having children pastor. This no has to be improved upon if children's ministry is to progress in this association and in Ogbomoso Baptist Conference as a whole.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this work, the following recommendations are made.

Provision of materials: The church should endeavour to provide materials such as overhead projectors, puppets, charts record players, tape recorders, video and pictures that are needed in the children's department will assist children in their activities. Parents can also be encouraged by the pastor to donate some of these materials to assist the church as their contributions towards the welfare of their children and the growth of children's ministry.

Workers Training: Children workers should be sponsored for training that will help expose them to technique of ministering to children. This could take the form of seminars, workshops and conferences organized by the children's ministries department of the convention.

Sensitization for pastors: Church pastors should be sensitized during minister's conference and fellowships, calling their attention to the apathy and lack of commitment to children's ministry and pastoral leadership to them, and the need for a change to allow growth of children's ministry in our churches. This will help change the attitude of pastors towards issues that concern children and call of children pastor.

Pastors Effort: The church pastor should see the children as part of her congregation that he should minister to, in churches where there are no children pastor, the pastor should go to the children's department to minister to them

once in a while. The church pastor should educate the church on the need to call a trained pastor to head the children's department.

Call of children pastor: The number of children pastors in the association is only three out of twenty-two churches. It is recommended that the conference should encourage churches that are viable and have been established for over fifty years should arrange to call a children's pastor for the growth of children's ministry in Ogbomoso Baptist Conference.