

**ADULT LITERACY AS TOOL FOR CHURCH GROWTH AND EVANGELISM
IN OGBOMOSO SOUTH-WEST BAPTIST ASSOCIATION:
A CASE STUDY**

AN ESSAY PRESENTED
TO

NBTS
Asa 13-9
M. Div Th

THE FACULTY OF THE NIGERIAN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,
OGBOMOSO, NIGERIA.

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE AWARD OF MASTER OF DIVINITY DEGREE IN
THEOLOGY

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JUNE, 2001.

07-0239

ABSTRACT

Adult Literacy has been an important dynamic ministering tool for church growth and evangelism. It is a powerful tool, which is capable of winning souls for Christ. The question addressed was how can we use adult literacy to evangelize and strengthen weak members and make them more useful in the service of God as Bible study leaders, Sunday school teachers, church training Directors, adult literacy instructors and so on?

To answer this question a Biblical survey, a review of related literature, use of questionnaire and oral interview were carried out. The scriptures and the literatures reviewed showed that adult literacy us an effective ministry tool for church growth and evangelism. The result revealed that through the adult literacy class it is possible to teach and win souls for Christ. It is therefore advisable for Churches to make use of adult literacy instructors who are already believers in Christ Jesus who are able to teach and win souls for Christ. This will no doubt contribute to church Evangelism and bring about the desired growth.

Chapter One gives a brief introduction to the whole research work. It contains the significance of the study, statement of the problem, research questions, scope and delimitation as well as definition of some key terms. Chapter Two discusses literature review for the research work. It gives the Biblical basis for Literacy Education. It also discusses literacy education in historical perspectives. This is with particular reference to Christian Missions, Christian Organizations, Nigerian Baptist Convention, and Literacy efforts in Ogbomoso South-West Baptist Association. It also discusses Literature materials dealing with adult literacy as tool for Church growth and evangelism.

Chapter Three gives the methodology of carrying out the research. The descriptive and historical research method was found most suitable for the study. This involves the use of a

questionnaire (Appendix I) as well as Oral Interview (Appendix II). The main focus of Chapter four is analysis of data and discussion of findings. One of the major discovery is the fact that adult literacy is a tool for Church growth and Evangelism. It is capable of helping the illiterate members of the church become literate, able to read their Bibles and sing from their Hymnals. It is also capable of winning souls of men and women to the saving knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Chapter Five contains the summary, recommendations and conclusion as well as suggestions for further research. Irregular attendance due to poor publicity was found to be a major problem common to all the churches. Suggestions were given as to how to overcome this and any other problem. Similarly, recommendation were given on how to bring about improvement in the adult literacy programme of all the Churches.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

Consequent upon the findings of this study, the following suggestions are made for more effective adult literacy education planning, coordination and implementations:

(1) To The Nigerian Baptist Convention (NBC)

- (a) The Nigerian Baptist Convention should continue to assist in the publication of Adult Literacy materials such as primers for use by all churches of the Convention.
- (b) That Seminars, symposia and courses should be arranged from time to time as a means of updating the knowledge of the adult education instructors.
- (c) For the purpose of uniformity and acceptability, the Nigerian Baptist Convention should continue to print Certificates to be awarded to adult literacy graduands from all the churches of the Convention.

(2) To the Conference

- (a) That the Conference should continue to assist in the training of adult literacy instructors for Greater productivity and over all development.
- (b) Where Adult literacy is not yet in existence, the Conference should encourage such churches to start.

(3) To the Association.

- (a) The association should continue to assist in the area of supervision and monitoring of Adults' Literacy programme of all churches within the Association
- (b) The conduct of examination should be handled by the Association for standard and credibility.

(4) Churches

- (a) That Baptist Churches give more recognition to adult literacy programme as an essential part of the Churches' evangelistic and educational programmes
- (c) Incentives such as writing materials be given free of charge to all adult learners as a way of motivation.

- (d) Employment opportunities such as church section or church driver be given to graduate who have proved their worth.
- (d) Churches should intensify their campaigns towards the eradication of illiteracy,
- (e) Churches should continue to encourage learners to attend. This may take the form adult literacy promotion Sunday.
- (f) Churches should continue to encourage adult literacy instructors. This may take form of monetary incentives or recognition services.
- (g) Churches should intensify their efforts on equipment drive. Recruitment is the process of attracting and inviting students for church literacy

(5) The Adult Literacy Instructors

- (a) The adult literacy instructors should see their job as a to serve others through teaching. Their aim should not be the monetary gain but leading others to Christ through teaching.
- (b) Adult literacy instructors must be friendly, nice and sympathetic. Never shout on the adult learner. Never laugh at their mistakes. Let each adult learners progress at his/her pace.

(6) The Adult Learners

- (a) Adult Learners are hereby encouraged to be punctual and regular in class at all times. Irregular attendance was found to be common to all the churches.
- (c) Learners are also encouraged not to lose hope but to brace up and face the challenge. There is no age limit to learning. It begins at birth and ends in the grave.

The following are some of the corrective measure to be taken to remedy the situation:

1. Start classes on time and end on time. This will encourage learners to come regularly.
2. Allow learners participation. This will encourage them to want to come to class

3. Let each adult learner progress at his/her own pace. Give praise and encouragement.
4. Never laugh at the mistakes of one adult learner.
5. Teachers of adults must be creative. Teach something new and interesting in every lesson.

C. CONCLUSION

The study has shown that adult literacy Education in Ogbomoso South-West Baptist association is a tool for church growth and evangelism. Problems that have to do with how can we recruit more adult illiteracies? How can we retain adult learners in their enrolled classes to enable them graduate and how can we help them to become useful after graduation? Were highlighted. Suggesting on how to deal with all of these problems were also given.

Adults should be treated with respect in order to retain their interests. Churches must continue to give incentives for retention purpose and to guide against drop-out in the programme. To guide against persistent failures, churches should first of all create a strong desire or motivation among the students before starting any adult literacy class. A programme design that will meet all these needs are the responsibility of adult educations in our various churches. If adult literacy is going to have a permanent success in all local Baptist churches of Nigerian Baptist convention, a programme that will create a strong design for learning continuously is required of adult educators.

As regards contribution to existing knowledge, the result of this research in line with the aims and objectives of the adult Education Department of Nigerian Baptist Convention has vividly shown that adult literacy Education can help reduce illiteracy rate within the Baptist Churches.

