

**INCULCATING THE CHRISTIAN MORAL STANDARDS
OF LIVING IN NIGERIAN SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN**

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**BY
BABAJIDE AJIBOLA FASHEUN-MOTESHO
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ABSTRACT

This study is titled 'Inculcating the Christian moral standards of living in Nigerian School Age children'. It is aimed at highlighting effective ways of inculcating the Christian moral standards in Nigerian school age children. The study was carried out in some of the state capitals of the south western area of Nigeria using the setting in the homes, churches and schools as case study.

A questionnaire specifically designed for the purpose of the research was administered using a stratified sampling technique to ensure that only Christian adults who were either parents or guardians to children or wards between the ages of six and above were administered the questionnaire. The data collated from the questionnaire was analyzed by the use of simple percentages.

The various means of inculcating Christian moral standards in enhancing morally well developed children were evaluated through the responses from these institutions. The study indicated that parents, churches, and school teachers are the major agents of inculcating Christian moral standards. Other key findings were the identification of key Christian moral standards and the various methods of effectively inculcating them.

Key recommendations of the study include the need for the training and guidance of the identified major agencies for inculcating Christian moral standards in order to ensure effective inculcation of the standards and the need for inculcation to be taken as a priority at this stage of development (school age) of the child since it will be more difficult to achieve effective results from any inculcation administered in the later stages of human development.

exemplary life to mention a few. Biblically, Galatians 5:22 which lists the fruit of the Spirit corresponds with many of the Christian moral standards given above.

Ways of inculcating Christian moral standards include, showing love, living an exemplary life, taking the children to church and spending quality time with them in teaching them about Christ and the word of God. Legal action, incarceration, denial of food, threatening with hell and showing favouritism should not be used as means of inculcating Christian moral standards into the children.

Conclusions

From the findings, the following conclusions are reached:

As can be seen from the study the use of beating, the old age method of inculcating moral standards should be sparingly used. This is not to say that the rod should never be used as the Bible affirms the use of rod in Proverbs 13:24 and 23:13-14 but says that it should be used because one loves the children and not because one hates them. It should be used in teaching, instructing and correcting with wisdom and in love. This same principle should apply to putting fear into them by threatening them with hell fire, petting them, incarceration, corporal punishment, showing favouritism and legal action.

The inculcation of Christian moral standards in Nigerian school age children aids in the development of their spiritual lives. They are to be lovingly taught the character and behaviour that Jesus Christ taught as right and discouraged from living contrary to them by parents, guardians, school teachers, church, siblings, and other relatives. The guiding of children by showing them love, living exemplary lives,

taking them to church regularly, spending quality time with them, teaching and telling them about Jesus Christ will go a long way in inculcating Christian moral standards of living in Nigerian school age children.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Christian moral standards should not be inculcated in the Nigerian school age child by the use of the following methods: by beating, denial of food, corporal punishment, incarceration, legal action, petting, threatening with hell and favouritism.
2. As seen in the findings, the most influential agencies for the inculcation of these Christian moral standards are parents, church, school teachers, other relatives, siblings and society in that order. Christian moral standards should not be taken for granted as inculcating them is a much more complex process and a plan must be worked out to achieve it if they are to be transmitted to the moral and spiritual life of Nigerian school age children in order to guide and mould them into Christian adult life. Efforts have to therefore be made to equip these agencies in order to make them effective and successful in fulfilling the task.
3. For the above to be effectively achieved, a thorough knowledge of what Christian moral standards are have to be understood by the agencies which from the findings of this study are: truthfulness, obedience, respect for elders, self discipline, being compassionate and loving, humility, contentment and not associating with bad peers in that order.

4. The relevant agencies should be educated, instructed, directed and trained in knowing effective methods and ways of inculcating the Christian moral standard in the Nigerian school age children. These according to the findings of this study are (in the order of importance): showing them love, taking them to church/fellowship regularly, spending quality time with them, living an exemplary life, putting them in care of godly relatives, sending them to private Christian institutions, intimating them of life hereafter, restricting association with bad peers and lastly, depriving them from what they like for a limited time.
5. Also recommended from the findings in the research is the fact that it is better to inculcate these Christian moral standards into the school age children while they are still at this stage of development, rather than when they have grown either into youth or adults. This is because, according to findings, at these stages (youths and adults) of human development, it will be more difficult to inculcate Christian moral standards.
6. The background of a powerful prayer life is necessary to enhance the effective inculcation of Christian moral standards through the use of method of inculcation of "living an exemplary life (role model)". Praying more and criticising less will make inculcating Christian moral standard more feasible and effective for God honours prayers. Prayer is a major ingredient to help ensure the inculcation of Christian moral standards in the Nigerian school age children making them grow up to youths and adults that will adopt a biblical value system which is the greatest heritage.