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**THE BAPTIST PASTOR AND THE CHALLENGES OF
RAISING LEADERS IN THE 21ST CENTURY**

**AN ESSAY SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF
THEOLOGICAL STUDIES IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF DIVINITY IN THEOLOGY**

BY

IJAOLA, ADELOKOJI OKEJINMI

OGBOMOSO, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

It is often said that the great problem we have as a nation is leadership. Over the years, theological institutions have been in the forefront of producing leaders i.e. Pastors. These leaders lead churches and are expected to produce leaders in turn. With the growing network of graduates in the churches who will find themselves in various leadership positions in the country, the question as to whether the Baptist Pastor is well equipped to raise leaders in different areas such as Business, Politics, Entrepreneurship, Management etc necessitated this research work.

Chapter one looks at the statement of research problem, purpose of the study, hypothesis, significance, scope and invitation of the study as well as definition of key terms. The purpose of the study is two fold: one is to examine the leadership relevance of the Baptist Pastor to the need of his congregation in the 21st century and secondly to examine the effectiveness of theological training in equipping pastors for the leadership challenges of the 21st century.

Chapter two looks at leadership concepts in the past as well as in the 21st century. The various challenges of leadership such as entrepreneurship, economic, management and political challenges were examined. Four types of model were studied: The Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary Ogbomoso, Daystar Christian Centre, Lagos, Centre for Management Development, Badagry, Lagos and FATE Foundation, Lagos.

Chapter three looks at the research design, data gathering tools and data analysis tools. The survey was arranged to cover Baptist pastors in the six geographical zones of the country. Explorative research design method was used to define the problems and to develop hypothesis to analyze the validity of this research

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Having gone through the study of the emergence and development of W.H. Carson Association, the researcher tends to appraise his findings and proffer some recommendations. Generally, W.H. Carson Association Churches would not have done better if they had remained under the umbrella of Buguma / Port Harcourt Association. The split therefore is to her a blessing and great advantage.

Considering her financial cooperative standing with the Rivers conference, one would give her a pat on the back. For about eighteen (18) associations that made up the conferences, the least position she have had (from the honour role from 1995 to 2003, a space of nine (9) years was 4th position. She had been either 2nd or 3rd position. The one that have been competing with her has been her sister association. Amakiri and Dale Moore that was given birth to by Amakiri, all in Port Harcourt.

Considering her givings to the convention, the researcher finds out that only a few churches are consistently and regularly bulling faithful to their financial contribution to the convention. There are also those who are contributing but not consistent. There are also those who are not contributing to the cooperate purse of the convention. In this direction, I want to strongly suggest that the workshop titled. 'The local church and the co-operative programmes" that was organized by the association at her early years of life for the benefit and understanding of her churches as regards their financial relationship with the conference and the convention should continue. I should also suggest that for now such workshop should be yearly. The association for the churches could organize it.

Churches who are well able can also organize such programmes. They may invite somebody who is an expert in the field and who you know can deliver the goods. Such a person should be able to revive the members of the churches. He is he could be from the conference or the convention. You need the best, if you desire improvement.

The associational advisers can this area. There are some churches in the association who know very well their financial obligation to these cooperative bodies but after the pastor is not interested and so do not encourage the members and or the pastor is willing while the members are kicking against his after. They many fell that they are not gaining from these bodies hence should use their financial resources for their internal projects. It is the place of the associational adviser to organize enlightenment programmes for the churches. The person of the associational adviser is also very important. He should be one that can influence and arouse interest in the lives of the churches. He has to be mobile and loves traveling. He must have a burdened concern for the general growth of the churches. The association should budget for this office so that money should not be a hindrance for such programmes. The water is earnestly praying and looking forward when the association will have a paid adviser, call him a traveling pastor. He is not to be attached to any church. The association should cave him for. He should not be less than a seminary degree holder. He should be filled with the anointing and power of the Holy Spirit and with the fruit of the Holy Spirit as his spiritual foundation. He should be one that has a burden for discipleship, church planting and church growth.

Among other things, he serves as adviser, plans preaching programmes with those churches that have no pastors. He should study to know the area of needs both weakness

and strength of the churches He should organize workshops, revivals, plan seminars on stewardship, fasting and prayers, significance of the word of God in Sunday school programmes and weekly Bible study. Such a pastor will be a great blessing to the association. No amount you spend on him will be a waster.

One other area, I found that the churches in the association lack badly are the area of record keeping. There are at least two major areas of this problem. There are those who keep these records but are not consistent. There are those who keep these records but not with durable materials and are not prepared to renew them so with time, they are worn out and turn away and hence become useless. The second aspect is that a lot of churches don't have permanent place of keeping their records. You will be surprise to go to a church for a particular document and it will take you days if not weeks to find it out.

In this computer age, record keeping should become a tradition, some thing we have been accustomed to, used to doing. Churches should begin to see the need and importance of recording keeping. Without record keeping you cannot determine the growth and the development of the organizations of the churches and the church as a body. With records, you can determine the area of the church that needs immediate spiritual attention. Churches should provide permanent room(s), call it library where documents and the literatures of the church are to be neatly and structurally kept. Shelves should be built. Sections should be provided for all decrements pertaining to the organizations and departments of the church. If you need Sunday school, church training, convention, conference etc. you know the exact section of the shelves you can find them they should be arranged according to their years. By this our age, record keeping should not be a novelty. The researcher pleads with church that are yet to have a written

document of the history of their churches to do so without delay. Now that they may still have among them some living founding fathers. It is a history that is so important for the present and generation yet unborn.

One other area that the association is bodily affected is the area of church planting and growth. The association became independent with 22 churches on September 1992. From 1992 to the present date October, 2003 is exactly eleven years the records have it that at most nine (9) churches have been added to the association. It is an indication that the association is not completely stagnant. It has grown from 22 to 31 churches. If one should consider the number of churches (22) and the number of years (11) that gave birth to these nine churches, one should pause to ask some questions the clear fact that not all the 22 churches contributed to these nine churches. How many out of these 22 churches that actually gave birth to the nine churches what are the rest of the churches doing? It is true that there are some villages which nature has made church planting not very viable but could that be true of all the churches which have remain for these eleven years and more without one single church. The answer should be no. Apart from aside the disadvantaged villages, the researcher believes that there are still more churches, which could do better than there present state. The problem, which has been a one standing one, is that of pastoral leadership. It is true that there are churches, which by their financial and numerical strength cannot pay a seminary-trained pastor. They are forced to depend on lay leaders for their pastoral ministry. There are those who can maintain trained pastoral but do not see the need. There are those who manage to call pastors to call pastors but do not have a vision, a focus of the type of pastor who should meet up the needs of their churches. Generally the visions of evangelism and church planting have