

PASTORAL CARE WITH THE WIDOWS IN  
OGBOMOSO BAPTIST CONFERENCE

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BY

JOHN AYOO LAYEMISI OLATUNDE

OGBOMOSO, OYO STATE

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## ABSTRACT

This essay studied pastoral care with the widows in Ogbomoso Baptist Conference. It investigated and examined the plights of the widows and the challenges that attended such care in this conference. Hence, its aim was to provide solutions to the problems associated with widowhood through pastoral care and counseling approaches.

For data, some Baptist Churches in Ogbomoso Baptist Conference were selected. Oral interviews were conducted with some pastors and widows in their churches. Intensive library study was also done to complement the findings made through the interviews conducted.

The study stressed that a widow adapted and reacted differently to grieving depending on the Pastor's theological training, vision, drive and motivation. Also the writer found out that Pastoral Care was paramount and created positive effects on the widows. Thus effective Pastoral Care and counseling with the widows/widowers was discovered to involve the use of the Bible and prayer under the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

The study therefore agitated that widow could only be understood better by the Pastor from the Biblical point of view. Also the study revealed that the needs of the widows are vested upon the pastor of a local church and this usually led the pastor to develop pastoral care approaches to strengthening the widow's faith in his pastorate.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this essay has addressed the reality that death is a part of life phenomenon that every human being must experience. Death is certain and it is inevitable. Every person must die once, afterward, be judged (Hebrews 9: 27). Therefore, as long as death is certain, widowhood is bound to be experienced. Likewise, the study has also helped to throw light into the plight of widowhood such as the painful experience of the loss of a beloved husband. Thus widows incessant grief cannot be divorced from the death of their husband whom they once seen as their best halves. However, an ordinary man may not truly fathom the gravity of a widow's grief. Hence, the writer's desire in this essay has subjected the grieving of widowhood to pastoral care approach for healing.

It has also been stressed in the course of this study that although death will occur, life must continue. There is hope with God through our Lord Jesus Christ and His Church. Therefore, various caring approaches that a pastor can use to facilitate restoration and transformation in widowhood are also discussed. Since the study revealed that every widow needs to develop a clear sense of identity which will promote a feeling of wholeness despite the loss of a partner, it was clearly stressed at the same time that pastoral care and counseling are necessary for the widows.

In this study the writer discovered that transition to widowhood is embedded with problems. This is because the widow has much responsibilities to cope with alone. Culturally, to be a widow is a curse because people deal with her inimically. Also widows are mal-treated based upon the consideration that women are not to be in position equal to man in the society. This study revealed that widows are also liable to behavioural problems. Since it is apparently true that they are passing through grief process, such as shock, depression, hostility, anger, guilt and loneliness.

This study discovered in addition, that widow should be allowed to grieve or to express their feelings, because grief can kill, but this can be guided by pastoral caring and counseling. The task at this point is to bring transformation of an abnormal grieving into a more normal grieving by encouraging the widow to understand the grieving period.

Many interviews was conducted with some selected pastors and widows in Ogbomoso Baptist Conference. The interview is to get the correct perspectives of pastoral care with the widows. It is true that the pastoral care with the widows in this conference is done with the efficacy of prayer and the word of God as a guide under the leadership of the Holy spirit. Indeed, the Christian cure of soul is simply the application of Christian theology to pastoral situations, bringing the gospel to bear upon individual needs and circumstance. This is obvious in this essay. However, it is noted in this research that, pastoral care does not alter what life brings to us. It alters the way to take what life brings to the widows. Also from the interview, it was observed that, widows are generally receiving less attention after

the burial of their husbands. Exploitation and maltreatment are the possible fate of widows while at the same time, they are usually not being adequately catered for by their relatives and friends. Above all the church herself has failed in this regard. This essay clearly shown that a grieving widow requires an inordinate amount of pastor's attention for counseling.

This research established that widows are likely to become emotionally disturbed and "Spiritually sick because grief can drive widows into futility and loss of confidence in God's power. Also the writer found that the pastoral care and counseling in this conference involved special care and prayer for damaged emotions and unhealed memories. This essay pointed out that meditation on the word of , prayer and reliance on the Holy Spirit are all crucially important in pastoral care and counseling with the widows. It is therefore the duty of the pastor to offer meaningful and productive caring to the widows. In addition, this essay stressed the fact that counseling is a caring ministry approach to widowhood. It is better given by a pastor who are patient enough to listen properly to the widow. It was observed in this essay that with godly help from the pastors, widows may even come to find God in their widowhood.

Above all, this essay revealed that, of all care giving institutions in the modern society, no doubt the church of God with her pastor as the leader remains the most important and most effective in helping the widows to deal with their feelings. This is so because of the characteristics of the church and the nature of the pastor's duties. The importance of pastoral care and counseling however, necessitates its continued practices by the church and the pastor, no matter the

