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TOWARDS RECONCILIATION: YOUTH AND ADULT CONFLICTS
IN A LOCAL BAPTIST CHURCH.

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ABSTRACT

Thus says the Lord, "Can two walk together except they be agreed?"(Amos 3:3). In any relationship, disagreement or misunderstanding is inevitable. However, there is hope of agreement after disagreement. We can come together, laugh over our differences and be reconciled to one another. In this research work, the conflict that exists between the youths and the adults in Nigerian Baptist Convention churches is critically examined. The study comprises of five chapters. Chapter one is the introductory chapter. It introduces the readers to the subject matter, the motivation of the study, which comes from the researcher personal experience in a local church.

Chapter two studies the work of various authors as related to the subject matter. The root caused of the conflict have been traced to issues ranging from doctrine, mode of worship, concept of change and the influences of Pentecostal waves to mention but a few. The major effect of the conflict has been identified as the exodus of youths to other churches. However, the solutions to the conflict range from bridging the generation gap, integration, love, to many others.

The chapter three deals with research methodology, while chapter four deals with data analysis and discussion. The last chapter deals with conclusion, recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

Conclusion.

The result of this study has undoubtedly revealed that there is conflict between the youths and adults of the Nigerian Baptist Convention Churches. This conflict has caused a lot of havoc to the churches as they have lost many of their potential leaders. Besides, many resources such as money that would have been useful for development are taken to other denominations. Hence, there is lack of resources to execute some God's given vision.

The findings revealed that there is need for adults to soft-pedal on the changes in mode of worship being advocated by the youths though the ultimate vision of the church must not be compromised. In another dimension, youths are admonished to be patient because the finding shows that many of the youths are impatient. They want their desires to be met immediately and their suggestions to be implemented with immediate effect. This shows the reason for the youths persistent conflict with the adults.

However, both youths and adults should know that the ministry of reconciliation has been given to them since they have been reconciled to God. So, they should endeavour to maintain unity at all cost. They should be aware that in a time such as this, the body of Christ cannot afford to be disunited because all resources are needed to fulfil the tasks of the church.

Likewise the leaders of this great convention that have interest of the convention in mind and esteem high her future must not hold their peace at this very critical time. But arise and source for solution to the conflicts between youths and adults at all possible

cost. If otherwise, the convention will continue to be devoid of the presence of God (For the conflict blocks the flow of God's blessing) which guarantee fulfillment and future survival of every organization.

Recommendations.

Based on the findings from data gathered, the following recommendations are made:

PASTORS

In the first place, pastors should try to find common ground to most of the issues causing conflicts between youths and adults. For instance, instead of worship to be dominated by choruses as advocated by youths or hymns as advocated by the adults, both hymns and choruses could be blended together for meaningful worship.

The researcher further recommends that pastors should conduct thorough seminar/ training for youths and adults in the church on the dynamic nature of theological discourse and the nature of God's revelation. This will enlighten them on progressive revelation of God's word and it will prevent future conflict.

Pastors should give preference to adequate teaching of the word of God as it is being done in other churches where youths run to.

In addition, youths should be properly carried along in church programs and to be giving opportunity to utilize their God's given gifts for the progress of the church.

Again, the researcher recommends that pastors should endeavour to plan a meaningful worship within two hours. This can be done by cutting off every unnecessary aspect of the worship. If Pentecostal could be having meaningful service within two hours. Baptist can do better.