

THE MINISTRY AND RECREATION

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BY:

OLADOKUN, JULIUS ARABA

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ABSTRACT

This essay was designed to highlight the usefulness of recreation to the ministry and to encourage children and adult on recreation in the church setting. The essay highlights biblical base of recreation and how not to see recreation as anti-ministry but a viable tool for church planting and growth. Chapter II relates what other people have said about recreation for the members of the congregation over the ages. Chapter III discusses the concept of recreation in the Old Testament and the New Testament times and the good and bad effect of recreation. What happens to the ministry if the needs of the children and adults are met through recreation are discussed in Chapter IV.

Apart from discussing recreation as a means of physical and spiritual growth, chapter IV also discusses recreation as a means of making our ministry to grow. It cannot be over-emphasised that many Christians do not regard recreation as having any importance with regards to the growth of the church. Recreation has thus been seen as a sheer waste of time and money.

Some Christian families have physically prevented their children from participating in sports in schools hanging on the believe that such participation will affect their school work. This situation has degene-

rated to an alarming stage and has become a matter of concern for theologians including the writer.

CONCLUSION

This research raises topical issues of interest. This issues raised will motivate the church to promote recreation to help church members on their leisure to glorify God. This can happen when recreational programmes provide unique areas of service for the members of the congregation. Paramount amongst the issues raised in this essay is the fact that recreation has been pushed to the background and completely undermined in our church programmes. As pointed out in the first chapter, it has been discovered that recreational activities can be dedicated to the glory of God. Recreation ministry becomes a genuine ministry when it is connected with the ministry of a local church. The leaders have been made to be aware of dealing with stress of life for general well-being of church members. It has been pointed out that church recreation can aid human and christian development both physically and emotionally. Some of the ways church recreation can develop church programmes have been discussed in the second chapter while in chapter three recreational approaches in the old and new testament are considered.

The research has demonstrated that church recreation programmes can be mounted to meet the children, youths and adults spiritual needs. It has also been pointed out that well organised church recreation programmes in the church would go along way to attract more people to the church and would make the regular members to be more committed. From this point of view, it has been pointed out that a well-developed church recreation programmes can develop the skills of children and provide love and acceptance amongst the church members. These issues were raised and developed from a biblical point of view. Different kinds of sports and recreation programmes were discussed in order to foster the spirit of truth, cooperation, leadership and self control.

Finally, giving some hints and making recommendations on how the development of church recreation programmes can aid church ministry and church activities. It is believed that if church recreation is promoted churches will grow spiritually and numerically thereby giving the congregation an opportunity to be closer to God. The writer has pre-occupied himself with the desire to impart the knowledge that recreation can help us build a stronger church through sport, retreats and camping. Sports and retreat activities can also lead to our

discovering new activities and methods of handling such activities for a meaningful participation and leadership training. Those three things can certainly influence character. The person in leadership role has influence and power over the rest of the people. Church recreation is a special type of recreation, church recreation is recreation plus. It is fun play and there is much to church recreation because church recreation is leisure activities dedicated to God.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The fact that the church needs useful church recreational programmes to assist members cannot be over-emphasised. This point can be well illustrated by the style of our Lord Jesus Christ when he reached and touched the people where they were living. This was a strange characteristic of Jesus' Ministry. He met the Samaritan woman at the well. We also can do the same today by meeting our local church members in mission areas. We need to meet them at some basic level of need or interest. It has been proved beyond any reasonable doubt that recreational activity is a basic need to which many people respond readily.

