

COMMUNICATION AS A VERITABLE TOOL FOR EFFECTIVE
LEADERSHIP IN PASTORAL MINISTRY: A CASE STUDY OF UNITY
BAPTIST CHURCH, OGBOMOSO

MBTS
ILS-C
M. DIV.

OLUSOLA OLUFEMI ILORI

MATRIC NO. UJ/04/0047

“A Thesis in the Department of THEOLOGY,
Faculty of Theological Studies”

“Submitted to the Faculty of Theological Studies,
Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, Ogbomosho, in affiliation with
University of Jos”

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Award of the degree of
MASTER OF DIVINITY

UNIVERSITY OF JOS

ABSTRACT

Communication is central to any effective leadership in pastoral ministry. It is unfortunate that there is a shortage of pastors that are involved in effective communication in pastoral leadership. In order to achieve this, this work took a broad eyed view of the biblical basis and the theoretical frame work of communication and did the application in a local Baptist church in Ogbomoso.

The research used questionnaire as research instrument. It was discovered that more than 50% of the respondents considered their pastor as effective in the usage of both communication and leadership skills in his ministry. The rest of the respondents were of the view that he can still improve. By implication, as a pastor in contemporary times, there is the need for one to be abreast of skills that will enhance ones communication efforts, coupled with various leadership skills, which in turn will make one to be effective in the ministry.

Conclusion

Church leadership is ministry, not methods. It is people not paper work. It is human process, not inhumane policies. It is management, not manipulation. It is a science, an art and a gift. As a science church leadership involves procedures and techniques that can be learned by study and by practice. As an art, leadership calls for relational sensitivity, intuition, and timing. All of these can only be achieved through communication (Dale 3). The pastor, in other words, has to communicate as an agent of transcendence or of mystery beyond human experience and rational comprehension (Foster 13).

The twenty-first century provides unprecedented opportunities for leaders to impact positively their organization. However, the new millennium also brings unforeseen challenges to leaders. Those called to lead can find doing so a daunting task. Those expected to follow can experience frustration when their leader is unable to lead and their organization seems to be going nowhere. Struggling leaders may agonize in the knowledge that others resent them and blame them for their organization's failures (Blackaby and Blackaby 3).

Pastors must be aware of the fact that they are surrounded by high impact, intensive image-makers, and context creators. There are new

skills and sensitiveness needed if the contexts to which the biblical, religious and theological traditions apply are to be discerned (Phillips 175). A pastor must be conscious of the fact that his God-given ministry includes being an educator, preacher, evangelist, worship leader, shepherd, enabler, administrator, steward and Man of God. This does not in anyway suggest that he must do everything but his administrative skill must come alive here with the way he delegate responsibility and good practice of multi-staff ministry which will in turn lead to the overall goal of church growth (Larom 5).

Communication feeds Christians leadership because communication is basic to the gospel. Communication is essential to the life of the Church, and leaders are essential to effective communication. The flow of information to persons in an organization depends heavily on the leader (White 93-95). You cannot be a poor communicator and a good leader (Blackaby and Blackaby 83). Leaders can expect to transform their ministries and their people by communicating vision, clarifying purposes, making behavior congruent with belief, and aligning procedures with principles, roles and goals (Covey 69).

The most important characteristic of pastors is devotion to God – passion for God, authenticity before God, obedience to God, relationship with God. A vital relationship with Jesus Christ keeps us on track when we are tempted to quit: Honest when tempted to sin; centered when tempted to succumb to the latest leadership – how – to fad, and restrained when tempted to strangle the wet-blanket Council member who sees it as

his or her job to "keep the pastor in line," pastors must be ready to discharge their ministry with humility in the use of authority and power entrusted to them. He must be trustworthy and a man of integrity. He must be willing to lead out of leadership gifting rather than from leadership position. He must have the desire to encourage growth and development in others, a style of leadership that seeks to love and serve others and God. He must have an active prayer life.

Pastor that want to be an effective leader in his/her ministry must learn to delegate and should never stop learning. Must be ready to maintain spiritual passion and be ready to ask for feedback. He must maintain an attitude of gratitude. And he must never stop depending on God. The characteristics of successful leadership include: a relationship with God and man; a balance of the past, present, and future; a balance between the art and science of leadership; and a balance between people and the tasks of the organization (Janvier and Bitrus 11). The pastor must be ready to fulfill the tasks of leadership which includes: guiding the Church in the accomplishment of its mission; proclaiming the gospel to believers and unbelievers; lead in worship; equip believers; care for people; and under gird the work of the Church and the denomination (Tidwell 148)

One valuable way to assess the characteristics of an effective pastor is to consider the three major roles the pastoral role comprises: Teacher, leader and shepherd (Randy). The pastor must know God's word and must teach God's word. The pastor must each the congregation as a whole

and must train lay leaders. The pastor must give personal expression to the congregational vision and provide guidance over the long haul in pursuing that vision. Finally, the pastor is the shepherd of souls. Hearts and lives must be gently and firmly cared for in the spirit of the Great Shepherd and all of these can only be achieved through communication.

Recommendation

“Leaders make the difference and training makes the difference in Leaders” (Tidwell 202). Any pastor that desires to be effective in his pastoral ministry must be ready to be trained and re-trained. Seminars, workshops, retreats on pastoral leadership must be attended to enable him to be current with the trend of things in his area of vocation. The kind of leaders and leaderships a church needs and deserves rarely appears by accident, leaders must use certain skills to be effective leaders. These skills include: planning, initiating, promoting, organizing, delegating, directing, motivating, supervising, performing, influencing, controlling, evaluating and representing. All of these can only be actualized through the effective means of communication (203-221).

Pastors must be ready to challenge the process. This means being dissatisfied with the Church as it is and be willing to make improvements. The constant thing in life is change. Change for the better. The pastor must also inspire a shared vision for growth and development. This means pushing the goals of the Church. It means sharing and showing what the goals are and being willing to lead the way (Kouzes and Barry

