

DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING: A TOOL FOR LEADERSHIP
DEVELOPMENT IN A LOCAL BAPTIST CHURCH

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ABSTRACT

Leadership is central to any denomination or church. It is unfortunate that there is an acute shortage of trained leadership at all level in the church today. One of the consequences of this shortage is an increased in the number of observers in the church rather than co-labourers. And this had led some churches to overworked a few of their members who were committed and available for service. Similarly, some offices are rotated among this few in the church. The effects of these are spiritual stagnity, unfaithfulness and Hypocrisy.

The way out of this problem suggested in this work is discipleship training. A well-developed discipleship training is fundamental to raising of leaders in our churches. Hence, a pastor, first and foremost, has a responsibility to have a right perception of discipleship training as a God ordained task in raising leaders for the local church. It is this perception that will motivate him to do all that will take to plan a sustainable discipleship training and at the same time promote it in a church.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

Having enumerated the benefit of Discipleship Training on the participant, church and the pastor. In this chapter, relevant conclusion will be drawn and recommendation shall also be made.

5.1 Conclusion

Summarily, this paper has revealed that, a well-organized discipleship training programme is a vital means of reproducing future leaders both for the local church and the universal church. That is the Body of Christ.

Therefore the following conclusions are drawn from the paper;

5.1.1 Discipleship Training is Biblical and Imperative

Disciple making has its foundation in the scripture. It is not a one man idea or method. It was practiced by Jesus. He also commanded His disciples to do the same. And by extension this present disciples were to do the same. This commission given by Christ is not to be one of the ministries of the church. Rather, the main task of the church. This understanding is what propelled the disciples to discipled others. Likewise it was this mind that helps Paul to disciple Titus, Silas and Timothy et cetera. He later commanded Timothy to follow suit 2 Tim. 2:2.

5.1.2 Discipleship Training is Indispensable for leadership Development

Discipleship training is essential for leadership development. It is crucial and necessary because of the impact it has on the potential leaders, the church and the pastor of the church. For instance, discipleship training has high impact on the character, family, spiritual life and ministry of potential leaders. Similarly, it influences the spiritual and numerical growth, fellowship and commitment of the members to the church. In addition, the pastor's work is softened.

5.1.3 Discipleship Training has Hindrances

The effectiveness of discipleship training can be hindered. Some of the things that can incapacitate the effectiveness includes; lack of fund, learning material, illiteracy, language and enlistment problem. If proper measures are not taken care off, all of the above can truncate the success of discipleship training.

5.1.4 Discipleship Training for Leadership development depend on the pastor

The success of the programme largely hang on the pastor. He is the key to its establishment and sustainability in the church. If he did not see the need to develop future leaders the programme cannot see the light of the day. Likewise, if he is ignorant on what discipleship training is or how to develop it, the programme will also fail. Hence, his vision of the programme is indispensable.

5.2 Recommendations

A critical look at what had been discussed so far it is now necessary to ask: how will a pastor and his church have a sustainable and continuous discipleship training for leadership development?

5.2.1 Pastors should acquire knowledge of discipleship training

In order to help pastors to develop a right perception for discipleship training, they should acquire knowledge of the programme. This can be done, by attending seminars and conferences that may be organized by Convention, Conference or Association. Similarly, they should endeavour to purchase resourceful materials like books, journal or magazine on discipleship and leadership. This, the writer believes will help them acquire knowledge of discipleship training.

5.2.2 Churches should create enabling environment for Discipleship training

The church has a vital role to play in sustaining discipleship training. For instance, if they cannot fund the purchase of the discipleship material totally, they should endeavour to give a subsidy. This definitely will go a long way to encourage full participation of the world-be future leaders. Likewise, the problem of illiteracy will be best tackled if the church can organized a school for uneducated members of the church -like Adult education class for Adult. The same can be done for young Adult too.

5.2.3 Areas for Further Research

The following topics can serve as areas for study in the field of discipleship:

- Discipleship training: An effective tool in developing tertiary Students of Nigerian Baptist Convention.
- Building an effective discipleship training manual for Local Baptist Churches.
- Discipleship: A Tool for Developing Nigerian Baptist Convention Teenagers.